



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

Placements Handbook for Students of
BSc (Hons) & MA Social Work
Programmes.

September 2019

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1. Introduction

Welcome to Northumbria University and the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences.

This handbook provides you with an overview of how your placements are organised and how it affects you. Please read it carefully so that you can make best use of your placement experience.

Placements are an integral part of your Programme. Throughout your time on the Social Work Programme you will spend a total of 170 days in practice settings. You will be required to meet and achieve a variety of learning outcomes whilst on placement. In order for this to happen, we will have ensured that there are appropriate staff to support you and that the learning environment is suitable to meet the requirements of the placement modules.

Our aim is to ensure that students have a meaningful placement experience. If you need additional support or advice when on placement, please seek support from your Practice Educator/Supervisor, Personal Tutor or Practice Learning Lead.

We hope this booklet will answer many of the questions you may have before and during your placement.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Student Placement Team by emailing practiceplacements@northumbria.ac.uk or telephoning 0191 2156300.

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2. Overview of the Student Placement Team

The Student Placement Team, in conjunction with the Practice Learning Lead, are responsible for organising any placements that are required for Social Work students. The term “placement” refers to those practice learning opportunities where a student will observe and work with service users with support and guidance from practitioners and academic staff, in order to achieve the required standards as set out in the Practice Handbook/Portfolio. Please note the professional requirements identified within this Handbook refer not only to ‘placements’ but also Shadowing and Fieldwork Days.

The Student Placement Team has a number of coordinators and administrators, each with responsibility for administering practice learning for a different Programme. The Director of Placements has responsibility for providing strategic leadership for practice placement development, for devising policies for risk identification and management and for assuring the quality of the placement experience.

2.1 Contact Information

The Student Placement Team is located in Student Central – Coach Lane Library, Coach Lane Campus (East) at the Faculty of Health & Life Sciences and are available:-

- **Monday to Thursday:** 08.30 – 17.00
- **Friday:** 08.30 – 16.30



practiceplacements@northumbria.ac.uk



0191 2156300

When we are closed, our Ask4Help service may be able to help; they can be contacted on:- 0191 227 4646 or ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk

2.2 The Placements Website

We strongly advise all students to regularly visit the Placements website at www.northumbria.ac.uk/hcesplacements to keep up to date with news and developments, and to obtain up to date versions of handbooks, policies and procedures etc. A set of frequently asked questions are also available from our website.

We are continually looking to evolve and enhance our website service, so please do not hesitate to get in touch with suggestions of how you feel it could be improved.

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3. Allocation of Practice Learning Opportunities

3.1 General Information about Practice Learning Opportunities

Practice Learning at Northumbria University has been designed to enable students to demonstrate the Standards of Proficiency (SOPS), Professional Capabilities Framework (BASW), the requirements of the Department of Health, and the Quality Assurance Agency's Benchmark Statement for Social Work (QAA, 2008).

Students are required to spend a total of 170 days in practice. Students will undertake Shadowing days within Level 4, one 70 day placement at Level 5/MA Year 01 and a final placement of 100 days to be undertaken at Level 6/ MA Year 02.

We aim for each student to experience:

- At least two practice settings
- Statutory social work tasks involving legal interventions
- Providing services to **at least** two service user groups (for example child care and mental health).

Students may be allocated a placement in one of the following:

Residential settings, fieldwork teams, day service/centre provision, schools, advice shops and advocacy services. These settings may be in either statutory or non-statutory environments such as the private, independent or voluntary sector (it should be noted that this list is not exhaustive).

Students may be expected to work with one or more of the following service user groups (list is not exhaustive): Carers, older people, refugees and asylum seekers, disabled people, families, children, adolescents and offenders.

All social work students must sign a Professional Suitability Declaration on commencing the Programme which commits them to adhering to the HCPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics and to abide by the rules and procedures set out in the Northumbria University Handbook of Student Regulations that form part of the contract between a student and the University. The HCPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics can be accessed: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-conduct-performance-and-ethics/>

The University, Stakeholder Agencies and Practice Educators all share responsibility for enabling the PCF and HCPC requirements to be met. Students also have responsibility for their own learning, practice and professional development during the social work programme see HCPC Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/resources/guidance/guidance-on-conduct-and-ethics-for-students/>

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3.2 How Practice Learning Opportunities are Organised

Students will be allocated to suitable practice learning opportunities throughout the duration of their Programme. Procedures are in place to ensure that student placement requirements are managed in a systematic and objective way, ensuring equity throughout the process.

Students on the BSc (Hons) and MA Programmes will usually have at least 2 assessed practice learning opportunities known as placements. Students will be required to complete a Placement Profile via the ARC Student Profile Management System which will be used by the Practice Learning Lead in conjunction with Stakeholder Agencies and the Student Placement Co-ordinator to identify the location of your placements. The contents of your Profile will be shared with placement providing agencies. **Profiles submitted after set deadlines may impact upon the availability of a placement and may raise concerns about your professional suitability.**

We cannot accept requests from students to be allocated to a specific practice learning opportunity. **Students must not approach any agency to seek a placement opportunity.**

Copies of “Policy and Procedure relating to the allocation of Practice Learning Opportunities to Social Work Students” and “Practice Placements Travel information for Students of Social Work Programmes” are available at the end of this handbook: see appendix 1 & 2.

3.3 Sharing Personal Data with the Practice Learning Area

Both the University and the placement providers we work with have a legal obligation to ensure that the people involved in clinical practice, or those working with vulnerable people, are suitable and do not pose a risk to those they will come into contact with. We therefore have a duty to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to verify that the people we place into this environment are both appropriate and capable of working in it.

This requires that the University share information with placement providers so that they can make appropriate assessments of capability and, where required, reasonable adjustments to accommodate your individual needs. If we do not share relevant information, the placement provider cannot take you, for this reason processing does not require the consent of the individual.

Information is shared under the lawful basis provided under:

GDPR Articles 6 (1)

- (b) processing is necessary for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is party or in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering into a contract;
- (e) processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller;

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GDPR Article 9 (2)

(b) processing is necessary for the purposes of carrying out the obligations and exercising specific rights of the controller or of the data subject in the field of employment and social security and social protection law in so far as it is authorised by Union or Member State law or a collective agreement pursuant to Member State law providing for appropriate safeguards for the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject;

(g) processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, on the basis of Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject

UK Data Protection Act 2018

Schedule 1 Part 1 Para 1 – Employment, social security and social protection:

(1) (a) the processing is necessary for the purposes of performing or exercising obligations or rights of the controller or the data subject under employment law, social security law or the law relating to social protection

Schedule 1 Part 1 Para 2 (1 & 2) – health or social care purposes:

(1) This condition is met if the processing is necessary for health or social care purposes.

(2) In this paragraph “health or social care purposes” means the purposes of—

- (a) preventive or occupational medicine,
- (b) the assessment of the working capacity of an employee,

The data required to facilitate your placement includes:

- Your name, student number and cohort.
- Your University email address.
- Your birth day and month (not the year).
- Your DBS reference number and clearance date.
- Your Occupational Health clearance date.
- Requirement for ‘reasonable adjustments’ in practice. Recommendations for reasonable adjustments will have been identified in Occupational Health reports. The full report will be shared with the personal tutor who will liaise with the Practice Educator about any reasonable adjustments required to support the student in the placement area.
- Verification of good health and good character as required by the professional bodies.
- Verification of statutory and mandatory skills that have been undertaken before commencing in practice.

Students undertaking professional programmes are required to declare criminal records, disciplinary records or health issues that would affect the suitability for the programme or admission into the

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appropriate profession. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the University and/or placement organisation immediately of any transgression or change of circumstance that may affect their suitability. Students who fail to disclose information and are subsequently discovered to have failed to notify, or who are no longer deemed suitable to continue studies, may be withdrawn from their placement and or programme immediately pending review.

Please refer to the Northumbria University Handbook of Student Regulations for further information.

Students on Social Work Programmes who have previous convictions, cautions etc. will be required to declare this on their Placement Profile and in most cases provide the Programme Leader with a written statement disclosing details of the incident(s). This information will be given to an appropriate person within the Agency where the student is to be placed.

You must inform the Programme Leader immediately if you are the subject of police investigation or prosecution during the programme. This also includes any disciplinary investigations, Section 47 Investigations under the Children Act 1989 and investigations under Safeguarding Adults procedures as well as any involvement with statutory social care services (i.e. Section 17 assessment or Care Act assessment).

4. Practice Learning Allocations with ARC-WEB

4.1 Accessing Your Placement Allocations with ARC-WEB

Students will be required to log-in to a system called ARC-WEB in order to access their placement allocations and view other related information. Data collected and displayed in ARC-WEB is stored on an externally hosted web server (within the EU) which is maintained by ARC Technology Ltd.

ARC-WEB is a web-based system that enables students to obtain details about their placement allocations, and evaluate their placements online. ARC-WEB or even 'ARC' is not an abbreviation for anything. It is simply the name of the system/software. For further information including details of how to log-on, please access the ARC-WEB Student User Guide, that can be downloaded from the Placements website at:

www.northumbria.ac.uk/hcesplacements

4.2 Evaluating your Practice Learning allocations using ARC-WEB

At the end of your practice learning experience you are required to evaluate your experiences by logging into ARC-WEB via the student Portal. Practice learning needs to be evaluated in this way before ARC-WEB can reveal details of the next allocation. Students should be aware that the evaluation of placement process is a requirement of the programme. This also applies to students on final year placements as confirmation of completion of the programme cannot be forwarded to the Exam Board or the HCPC until a completed evaluation is submitted. For further information, please consult the ARC-WEB Student User Guide, downloadable from the Placements website.

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In order for us to monitor and improve the quality of practice learning, data and information collated via the practice learning evaluation questionnaire shall be used to produce anonymised reports for partner placement providers and the HCPC which will be submitted annually in line with the 2010 Quality Assurance of Practice Learning protocol. However, to support the quality enhancement of the practice placement and to meet the HCPC requirements, Academic colleagues will be provided with reports that include the name of the person who has submitted the evaluation. You should note that information gathered via the evaluation process, may be shared. We do remind all students to take this into consideration when making comment about individual members of staff or identifying specific practice learning areas. All information entered on the system will be collected and managed in accordance with the Northumbria University General Data Protection Regulations notification and under the terms outlined within the Student Privacy Notice.

5. Contacting the Placement Area

Students are required to make contact with their allocated placement **within one week** of receiving notification. You will usually be expected to visit the agency prior to the commencement of the placement period to introduce yourself, provide copies of relevant paperwork (including a copy of your DBS Certificate from commencement of the programme) and to ask any pertinent questions. This pre-placement visit will also provide you with the opportunity to meet the Practice Supervisor and/or the Practice Educator.

In addition, you will find information regarding the placement within ARC-WEB such as learning opportunities available, hours of placement and description of client groups and services provided.

6. Placement Support

The three main support routes for the student whilst on placement are as follows:

- Practice Educator and/or Practice Supervisor
- Personal Tutor
- Practice Learning Lead

In addition, the student will be supported by their Programme Leader.

6.1 Practice Educator & Practice Supervisor

For every 'placement' within the BSc and MA Programmes all students will be allocated to a Practice Educator who will be a qualified Social Worker, some may also have a Practice Supervisor onsite.

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If the Practice Educator is directly employed by the agency providing the practice experience then they usually have overall responsibility for the student, their learning and management of their workload.

Some agencies will need to employ the services of an off-site Practice Educator. In these instances an on-site Practice Supervisor, employed by the agency will be appointed. Management of the practice learning opportunity and student will be shared between the Off-site Practice Educator and the Practice Supervisor.

The Practice Educator is responsible for the overall assessment of the student's practice for each module and for marking of relevant assignments as detailed in the module outlines.

If the student has any concerns regarding the support or assessment of their placement learning, they should aim to discuss the matter as soon as possible with their Practice Educator/Practice Supervisor/Personal Tutor. If there has been no satisfactory resolution to this issue then the Practice Learning Lead should be contacted.

6.2 Personal Tutor

Your Personal Tutor will be able to provide advice, counselling and other pastoral care support in relation to academic matters. All qualifying Social Work Programmes have a requirement to ensure that students are 'fit for practice', both in terms of demonstrating proficiency in the threshold standards required to enter their chosen profession and that they meet the professions' and public expectations of conduct and behaviour.

During the placement ongoing contact between the Personal Tutor and student is required to ensure that the student be assisted in their Personal and Professional Development and to monitor the students overall professional suitability. In order to provide continuity between placements, support Educators/Supervisors and identify potential difficulties, it is required that each student have practice learning team meetings during their placement with their Practice Educator/Supervisor and Personal Tutor during the placement.

The Personal Tutor Group meet on recall days during the placement.

6.3 Practice Learning Lead

The role of the Practice Learning Lead is to ensure the quality of the learning environment meets the standards set by the Professional, regulatory and statutory bodies. In order to achieve this they must work in partnership with representatives of the agencies providing placements, Programme Leaders, Educators and staff within the university.

Broadly the role is to increase the range, quantity and quality of practice placements. Based within Northumbria University Social Work Programme Team they are able to support the needs of

students and educators based within a range of settings including local authority and the independent and voluntary sector. Specific responsibilities include the following:-

- **To increase the range of practice placements**
- **To increase the quantity of practice placements:**
- **To ensure quality of placement provision is being monitored, maintained and improved in line with HCPC and University requirements:**

The Practice Learning Lead for Social Work can be contacted by email: jeannine.hughes@northumbria.ac.uk.

7. Preparation for Placement/Shadowing Days

The Academic Programme is designed to prepare students for practice learning opportunities. Specific sessions will also be held to familiarise students with placement documentation and to explore the requirements of each stage of learning. Attendance at these sessions is compulsory and part of the attendance requirement of the Programme.

Prior to the first practice learning experience, students will be given the opportunity to shadow a qualified social worker during Level 4 of the BSc (Hons) Programme and during year 1 of the MA Programme. Please note that attendance is compulsory for all Shadowing/Fieldwork Days. Failure to attend could impact negatively on your progress through the programme.

8. Health and Safety

All students must adhere to the requirements for health and safety, as demanded by the programme, and practice placement. If you are unsure about these requirements, you must contact your Programme Leader.

9. Working Hours

9.1 Working Hours during Placement

Each placement has a specific number of days that need to be completed within the agency. Whilst the HCPC does not stipulate a specific day length, students are expected to work the same hours as other workers within the agency. This may vary between different organisations; students hours of work should be detailed on the Practice Learning Agreement, the *usual* range of hours worked per week is between 37 – 40. Students should be aware that this may include working a shift pattern. Should any difficulty arise, students should contact their Personal Tutor for further information.

Students may be required to work weekends and Bank Holidays as some agencies provide continuous services. Bank holidays that occur during a placement are to be classed as a normal working day. Please refer to your Practice Handbook/Portfolio for further information.

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9.2 Working Hours OUTSIDE of Placement

Students working outside of placement hours for personal earnings, or to gain work experience, should follow the Universities recommendation that you work no more than 16 hours per week. Students who are undertaking work outside of Placement hours must ensure that this does not interfere with attendance on placement.

<https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/study-at-northumbria/student-life/earn-while-you-learn/>

10. Making up Time

In order to meet the regulations of the programme, students will be required to make up any placement days lost through illness or negotiated leave at the end of their placement. This is to ensure that they have completed the number of days set per placement. (Level 4 shadowing days, Level 5 70 days practice, Level 6 100 days practice – BSc Programme, Year 1 70 days practice, Year 2 100 days practice – MA Programme).

Please refer to the Sickness Absence Policy within your Social Work Programme Handbook/Practice Handbook/Portfolio.

11. Professional Behaviour

As your Programme leads to eligibility for professional registration, it is your responsibility to be fully aware of the HCPC Guidance on conduct and ethics for students and additional advice and guidance provided in *appendix 3*. The Guidance on conduct and ethics should be the behaviour aspired to by student Social Workers. Please remember you are also bound by the agency and the Universities policies and procedures.

11.1 *Unauthorised absence including non-attendance*

Absence from the placement, such as non-attendance which has **not** previously been negotiated, and is not sick leave, demonstrates unprofessional behavior that reflects negatively on the student in terms of their professional accountability, ability to communicate, show respect for others and meet the professional proficiency requirements. This should be reported to the Personal Tutor/Programme Leader/Practice Learning Lead immediately by the placement staff. It will be taken up with the student at the University **and could lead to disciplinary action**.

11.2 *Private Appointments*

Students will be expected to arrange these types of personal appointments outside of their placement hours. Any time missed will be part of the overall make up time at the end of the placement (see section 10).

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11.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times:-

- Students should never discuss service users outside of the placement area, particularly in public places. Any theory assignments directly related to the placement should maintain anonymity for both staff and service users. Please refer to your Practice Handbook/Portfolio for further guidance.
- Students should also think very carefully about what information is disclosed to service users about themselves e.g. where they live, who they live with or place in the public domain by way of social media.
- There are situations where it is highly inappropriate to discuss any level of personal information with service users – please refer to your Practice Supervisor/Educator for further guidance.
- Students must be aware of their rights, and the rights of others (e.g., members of staff, clients, relatives etc.) to access information.

11.4 Inappropriate Behaviour

Where it is felt by a student that a member of staff's behaviour has been inappropriate, the student **must** in the first instance, report and discuss the matter with their Practice Supervisor/Educator. If they feel this is not possible, they should inform their Personal Tutor, Practice Learning Lead, Programme Leader or the Director of Placements. A copy of the Faculty's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure is available for download via the Placements and Partnerships website at www.northumbria.ac.uk/hcesplacements

If a member of the practice learning team feel that the student's behaviour is inappropriate, this will initially be discussed within the practice setting and involve the Personal Tutor. The discussion may also involve the Practice Learning Lead where there may be a problem. A meeting will be organised which will include all relevant people to address the issue, or invoke the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, a copy of which is available via the Placements website at www.northumbria.ac.uk/hcesplacements

11.5 Dress Code

- The Student must ascertain whether there is a dress code for the organisation within which they are placed at the Pre-placement meeting. The student's appearance and personal hygiene should be commensurate and acceptable to the professional context and practice arena.
- The values and religious/ cultural sensitivities of service users in relation to dress should be remembered and due respect given to this. Care must be taken to avoid dressing in such a way that could be seen as politically, culturally, ethnically or sexually provocative or inappropriate.
- Religious requirements regarding dress will be treated sensitively and will be agreed on an individual basis with the Programme Leader.

11.6 Student Identification

University identification cards must be carried all the time for security purposes. You may also be required to wear a name badge relevant to the organisation.

11.7 Use of Social Media

Students should refer to the Student Handbook of Regulations, "Using Social Media – Guidance for Students". Further information can be found at <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/leadership-governance/vice-chancellors-office/legal-services-team/handbook-of-student-regulations/>

Students should adhere to the relevant standards from the HCPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics when using social media to ensure any usage is consistent with those standards. Further information can be found at <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registration/meeting-our-standards/guidance-on-use-of-social-media/>

12. Library Services for Students on Placement

There will be occasions when you are on placement that you need access to library materials, for assignments, portfolios or to find evidence to support your work.

If you have a computer with access to the internet, you can open many electronic resources available from our Library & Learning Services pages.

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**POLICY AND PROCEDURE RELATING TO THE ALLOCATION OF
PRACTICE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Health and Life Sciences is responsible for the allocation of all undergraduate-Social Work practice learning opportunities. Currently we negotiate and contract with a range of statutory, independent and voluntary organisations. We also have responsibility for health and safety issues, indemnity and contracting.

1.1 The following procedure is used by the Programme to allocate students to practice learning opportunities.

2. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a means of dealing with the students in a systematic and objective way and to try and ensure equity amongst all students in relation to their practice learning opportunity.

This policy is divided into:

- 2.1 The procedure
- 2.2 The responsibilities of students
- 2.3 The rights of the individuals

2.1 PROCEDURE

The procedures used for the allocation of a practice learning opportunities for BSc (Hons) and MA Social work Programmes are as follows:

2.1.1 All students undertaking a placement organised by the Student Placement team will be required to complete a Profile using the ARC Student profile system. This system supports the student placement allocation process and allows students to complete their Profile and their Personal Tutor to review and submit by a set deadline. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that the Profile is submitted by the deadline date.

2.1.1.1 Students will be required to complete a Profile for every Placement undertaken as part of the Programme. This will not be required for the Shadowing Day experience.

2.1.2 The student Profile provides the student placement team with relevant information including practical details such your address, limited personal details and any extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered to be an extenuating circumstance. The contents of the profile will be shared with placement providing agencies.

2.1.3 If student profiles are not received by the deadline date students **may not** commence placement on the expected start date and this may affect the availability of placements.

2.2 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2.1 Students are expected to inform the Student Placements Team of any change of address, University email address or personal circumstances.

2.2.2 Students will be allocated to suitable practice learning opportunities throughout their Programme and will be told of these at the relevant time. Changes to placement will not normally be considered. This is due to the careful matching process that takes place to ensure that students are allocated to placements that meet with their learning requirements. However, should a student feel that they have an extenuating circumstance that may require a change to their allocation, they should discuss this with their Personal Tutor in the first instance. Should the Tutor feel that the change should be considered, they will discuss this with the Practice Learning Lead. This request should be made within the first two weeks after notification.

2.2.3 We cannot accept requests for specific practice learning opportunities from students, nor can students source their own placement opportunities.

2.2.4 In normal circumstances students **MUST** make contact with the placement within one week of you being notified of your practice learning opportunity.

2.2.5 Students who have previous convictions, cautions or have been subject to disciplinary proceedings, investigated under Section 47 of the Children Act (1989) as part of child safeguarding procedures, any occasions where visited/sought contact from children's social work/care services with respect to children in your care (may be under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989) or have been investigated by any social services department or health body in connection with the abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult (may be referred to as Safeguarding Adults or POVA), must declare this in the relevant section of the Placement Profile. Where applicable, students will also be required to provide the Programme Leader with a written statement disclosing dates, details and the context of the incident(s). Once the Programme Leader has agreed to this statement, the student should transfer this information onto their electronic profile (only visible by relevant personnel within the Placement Team, Practice Learning Lead and the Agency Co-ordinator). This information will be given to an appropriate person within

the Agency where the student is to be placed. By signing the Pre placement agreement form you have given permission for the sharing of this information.

2.2.6 The University aims to be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 (formerly the Disability Discrimination Acts (DDA) 1995, 2005). Students with disabilities, including dyslexia or other Specific Learning Difficulties, sensory, mobility or mental health issues, medical conditions are encouraged to discuss any placement related needs with their Personal Tutor at the earliest opportunity. An Occupational Health assessment is required for any reasonable adjustments to be negotiated.

We would also like to draw disabled students' attention to the support available: <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/study-at-northumbria/support-for-students/disability-and-dyslexia-support/>

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PRACTICE PLACEMENTS TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMMES

1. Travelling to your Practice Placement: Our Expectations and Your Responsibilities

All Students will be allocated to suitable placements throughout their programme.

The University works with social work and social care agencies that cover a wide geographical area north to the borders of Scotland and south to County Durham, Teesside and Darlington. While it is accepted that practice learning opportunities need to be reasonably accessible, travel is an implicit part of the programme. Students may also have further travel in the course of your work after arriving at your placement. Unless a student can provide evidence of any personal extenuating circumstances, our expectation is that ALL students will make every effort to attend the practice placement they have been allocated.

2. Using Public Transport and Planning Your Journey

Attending your practice placement may require the use of various modes of public transport, e.g., The Metro, Buses and/or Trains. Nexus, the organisation responsible for the Metro Subway system of Newcastle and Sunderland have a website at <http://www.nexus.org.uk/>. This site provides an excellent journey planner facility that links metro, bus, train and ferry timetables. It is our expectation that ALL students will make every effort to plan their journey in advance, so to avoid delays in arriving at their placement on time.

3. Use of Personal Vehicles

Students are not insured by the University to use their own cars. To undertake visits whilst on placement students will need to have **Business cover** which includes the statement that you are empowered to carry people whilst on business as part of your car insurance. Some Insurance Companies make a charge for this but others do not charge. You will be asked to let the programme know whether or not you have the use of a car before practice learning opportunities are allocated as there are some placements which will only be available to students who are able to have the use of a car. Some placements will require sight of your insurance documents.

4. Mileage Expense Claims

For Students in receipt of an NHS social work bursary an amount per year is included in the bursary payment and is a contribution towards their travelling costs to and from their placement agency. Please refer to the Guidance notes within the Application forms via the NHS BSA webpages <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students/986.aspx> . Some students not in receipt of a bursary may still be able to seek help for placement travel expenses from the NHSBA and are encouraged to clarify this with the NHSBA. Those unable to access any financial support for placement should discuss options with their Personal Tutor.

It is expected that students should not be financially disadvantaged whilst undertaking placement duties. It is anticipated that the placement providing agency will contribute to costs for any travel expenses incurred as part of undertaking any necessary work whilst on placement.

We strongly advise that any student struggling to meet placement travel expenses, make contact as early as possible, with Student Support and Wellbeing. They will be able to support you with budgeting and coping with financial shortfalls and will also be able to provide information and advice on the Access to Learning Fund (a means tested hardship fund available to assist with costs relevant to your programme). Further information and contact details are available via their web pages at <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/study-at-northumbria/support-for-students/>

5. Seconded Students

For students who are supported on the Programme by an employer (and therefore not in receipt of an NHS social work bursary) they should receive financial support from their employers in relation **to travelling expenses to and from their placements.**