

Policy for requesting a change to an allocated placement for Health learners

Prior to publishing the placement allocations, the placements team will already have:

- Checked the placement aligns with the learner's course requirements to maintain a range of practice experiences.
- Checked the placement has a valid educational audit with qualified and updated educators/ supervisors/ assessors.
- Checked the placement meets the learner's learning support plan (LSP) or any other previously identified and formally agreed requirements.

Once the placement allocations have been published, we are only able to request changes to the placement for the reasons outlined below. Learners would need to email their placement lead to request change and provide rationale for this.

The following are considered valid reasons to request a change of placement:

- 1. Learning Support Plan (LSP)** – if a learner has specific provision for certain practice areas to be avoided this should be detailed in the LSP. This will have been considered when allocating but this may not have been fully addressed and changes may be needed. Most LSP requirements can be accommodated in the allocated placement with support from the Inclusive Practice Lead (Patricia Fordham).
- 2. Exclusions** – a learner may have a particular reason for not going to a placement e.g. an incident, issue of harassment, conflict of interest etc. The details of the exclusion will need to be provided and verification may be sought.

The following are not normally considered valid reasons to request a change of placement:

- 1. Travel time** – Placements can be anywhere in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, and may sometimes be further afield. Up to 90 mins is considered a reasonable commute each way but we know that for some this is too far so learners would be required to find suitable accommodation and stay away. Learners can negotiate different start and finish times with their educators to optimise travel times and/or cost (see below).
- 2. Cost of travel** - learners should seek support from the Learner Support and Guidance Tutors SSGTHHealthSciences@brighton.ac.uk or the Learner Advice Service learneradvice@brighton.ac.uk. Learners may be eligible to apply for the hardship fund or the emergency loan of £50 to help with up-front costs. International learners can also apply to the international hardship fund which has a maximum of £500 per year: [International Learner Hardship Fund \(brighton.ac.uk\)](http://InternationalLearnerHardshipFund.brighton.ac.uk). Learners are recommended to claim travel expenses on a monthly basis rather than at the end of the placement, but expenses will be considered weekly if learners need the money more quickly. Learners should consider other options to daily travel such as use of bed and breakfast accommodation.

- 3. Type of placement** – learners should be prepared to experience a range of practice settings in order to meet the learning outcomes of the course and eligibility for professional registration (NMC / HCPC). For some courses, learners will experience the same type of placement more than once.
- 4. Reputation of placement** – all placements are subject to an educational audit and will have educators who have attended training and regular updates. Learner evaluations will have been monitored and followed up, and any reports of concern will have been investigated.
- 5. Reasonably foreseeable childcare or caring responsibilities** – learners will need to manage their caring commitments alongside the course. The scheduled placement dates and holidays are available on the programme planner to help learners arrange their time accordingly.
- 6. Pregnancy** - learners who are pregnant are able to attend any placement and a risk assessment is carried out in the practice area. The following link has guidance for learners who are pregnant [Pregnancy and parenthood \(brighton.ac.uk\)](https://www.brighton.ac.uk/learning-and-teaching/learning-experiences/placement-and-practice/learning-experiences/learning-experiences/pregnancy-and-parenthood). Learners are expected to inform the course lead of maternity / paternity leave requests.
- 7. Previous / current experience as a service user** –previous admissions or care episodes should not impact on a placement assuming the learner is fit for practice. Similarly, if a learner is a current service user e.g. in the same GP practice as an allocated placement this should also not influence learner learning in practice. All learners need to develop their professional identity and learn how to work within professional boundaries. For some this may include developing strategies for managing long term health conditions in the workplace. If an educator is allocated a learner in whose care they have previously or currently been involved with, the learner should request an alternative educator. If no other educators are available this should be raised with the placements team so they are aware of the need to change the allocation. If a change in a learner's health is impacting on their attendance / learning in practice this should be managed through a LSP and requirements for avoiding specific placements formally identified.
- 8. Personal relationship with a staff member / service user** – if a partner or significant other is based in the same placement as a staff member or service user this should be manageable as the learner will need to develop a professional persona and learn to be able to separate personal and professional roles. According to the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code (NMC 2015) nurses owe a duty of confidentiality to all those who are / have been receiving their care. This includes respecting a person's right to privacy in all aspects of their care. Similarly, health professionals are to stay objective and have clear professional boundaries at all times with people in their care (including those who have been in their care in the past). Some placement sites, however, will view this as a conflict of interest and will request that the learner's placement is changed and this will be respected.