

# Placement Handbook and Guidance for Mentors

## Message from Programme Lead

Thank you for taking an active role in the education and development of student nurses from the University of Portsmouth. Throughout this document we refer to 'mentors' as a generic term relating to those who support, teach, assess and manage students in placement but we recognise that specific terms/titles do apply in some areas. Practice placements, and the associated practice assessments, are an integral, highly valued part of the course.

Students have a great deal to achieve during their programmes of study; both the University and Practice Placements have a role to play in maintaining the highest standards of care for the public. The course prepares students to graduate as a newly qualified Adult Nurse, eligible to seek registration as such with the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

In making the award of BN (Hons) Nursing (Adult), the University must be assured of the student being:

- I. Fit for Practice - Practice outcomes which demonstrate the threshold requirements meet the standards of proficiency and subject benchmarks.
- II. Fit for Purpose - The students must meet the changing needs of the Health Service, standards of professional conduct and ethical practice.
- III. Fit for Award - The Educational Standard is commensurate with the level of award, and has been upheld with appropriate academic rigour.

The University of Portsmouth course is delivered over three years and meets the Nursing and Midwifery Council standards for pre-registration nursing (2010).

The programme philosophy and the standards set by the Nursing and Midwifery Council have the patient as the central focus, with the emphasis on safe patient care. The Mentor, as a registered practitioner who has undergone an NMC approved mentorship programme, is considered to be the

“expert” in making a judgement about a student’s performance in practice. Additional support is always available from a range of sources for all mentors.

All the practice outcomes within the PAD have been set by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and are attached to three specific units of study – one at each stage [year] of the course. Further details are in the BN (Adult) programme and Unit handbooks. The recording of placement outcomes is via the Practice Assessment Document (PAD), which is integral to the student’s professional development and assessment of their performance in practice settings.

Finally, on behalf of the programme team, we wish you a productive and rewarding relationship with your students and thank you for your support and continued commitment.

Kind regards

Isobel Ryder  
Programme Lead

## **Guidance for Mentors**

### **Development and Assessment of Practical Skills**

The development of nursing skills and competencies are key elements of the curriculum, many of which are initially practiced in simulation, before embarking on assessed placements. Learning in acute and community placements is an essential, integrated and valued part of the programme. Students are required to achieve specific competencies, which have been identified by the NMC and are explicit in the PAD. For mentors, observation of the student's work in clinical practice will normally be the main assessment method; however, it is possible that the student will work with others while on placement. In this case, mentors are able to gain information or evidence about the student's performance from these colleagues.

Students will benefit from guidance, supervision and support from their mentors throughout a range of practice settings. In addition to their PAD, students are expected to demonstrate further knowledge of practice, by reflecting on and analysing their clinical practice through structured reflections on each placement.

### **NMC Mentor Standards and Requirements**

An NMC mentor is a registrant who, following successful completion of an NMC approved mentor preparation programme – or comparable preparation that has been accredited by an AEI as meeting the NMC mentor requirements – has achieved the knowledge, skills and competence required to meet the defined outcomes (NMC 2008, p 23).

It is recognised that at times the student will not be working with a designated mentor. However, they **MUST ALWAYS** be supervised by a registered practitioner. A register of mentors is maintained by the Faculty Placement Office and the ongoing development of mentors will be monitored as part of the audit process. All placements are subject to an education audit.

## Your Role as a Mentor

The support and teaching that students gain in the practice setting is an enormously important aspect of this programme. We really value the contribution that you make and are keen to support you throughout the process.

The NMC (2008) indicate that mentors are responsible and accountable for:

- Organising and coordinating student learning activities in practice.
- Supervising students in learning situations and providing them with constructive feedback on their achievements.
- Setting and monitoring achievement of realistic learning objectives.
- Assessing total performance – including skills, attitudes and behaviours.
- Providing evidence as required by programme providers of student achievement or lack of achievement.
- Liaising with others (e.g. mentors, sign-off mentors, practice facilitators, practice teachers, personal tutors, programme leaders) to provide feedback, identify any concerns about the student's performance and agree action as appropriate.
- Providing evidence for, or acting as, sign-off mentors with regard to making decisions about achievement of proficiency at the end of a programme.

**Please note**, in some areas of the PAD documents, it asks students to complete reflections to an academic standard, using APA referencing. It is not the responsibility of supervisors/mentors to review the style in which the reflection has been written, or if the referencing is accurate. The nursing team at the University of Portsmouth will answer any questions or queries students have about this, and review as necessary.

## Key Contacts

Please do not hesitate to contact the course leader, course team or Faculty Placement Office for any advice or information at any time, or if you experience any issues.

<b>Faculty Placement Office:</b>	Phone:	02392 845530
	Email:	sci.placements@port.ac.uk
<b>Nursing Placements Contact:</b>	Email:	nursing-placements@port.ac.uk
<b>Completed Documents:</b> (please email all completed Practice Assessment Documents to this email address. We ask that you please ensure you use your work/professional email address when sending these documents).	Email:	nursinglandt@port.ac.uk
<b>Technology Enhanced Learning Support:</b> (please email with any technical issues or other problems related to completing the documents within the Practice Assessment Document).	Email:	sci-elearn@port.ac.uk

**Mentor Support number (07712232202)**

## Cause for Concern Guidance

Many issues which are minor can be resolved immediately and at the earliest stage. The purpose of the BN Mentor/Practice supervisor Cause for Concern form is to ensure both the student and the University are aware of any issue which sits beyond this or has not been resolved through the normal action plan.

Whilst this is not limited to, it is particularly directing you to consider the following concerns:

- Any concern about patient safety.
- Concern about the student's well being.
- Lack of professionalism.
- Lack of clinical/skill progress.

The best practice is to complete this form either during or immediately after discussion with the student, please complete the initial section and email to the placement learning environment leads/practice educator and link lecturer of the student.

[Please Click Here to access the BN Mentor/Practice supervisor Cause for Concern form.](#)

## Placement Assessment Procedures

- There are two assessed placements in each year of the BN programme and these make up the formal opportunities for a student to meet the practice competencies required by the NMC. Each of these formal assessed placements will enable formative assessment (at initial and mid-point interview), prior to final formal assessment and the end of the placement.
- If the mentor feels that a student is not making satisfactory progress at any formative point and on any assessed aspect of their placement, they will need to give the student appropriate feedback and support the student to develop an action plan, so that the student can work towards the end-point assessment with support and guidance.
- The record of achievement for practice skills for students is recorded within the Practice Assessment Document (PAD). The PAD remains the responsibility of the student, for the management of names, dates and competency completion.
- Within the PAD document itself, a number of competencies are listed, all of which must be achieved at specified stages during the programme. All competencies are assessed more than once and a progression of skill is expected, with the student being deemed competent in all required skills, prior to qualifying with the award of BN (Hons) Nursing (Adult).
- During the final week of placement, the mentor and the student should meet to conduct the final interview. At this stage, the mentor and the student should review any outstanding competencies and professional behaviours and complete the final interview. The mentor should take account of decisions made by, and feedback from, other registered colleagues during the specific placement, although this is augmented by the mentor's experience and judgements from the time that they have spent working with the student.
- Please remember that the final decision recorded in the PAD at the final interview should not be a surprise to either the student or the mentor.

- At (or shortly after) the final interview, the mentor needs to record the final assessment of the student's development and progress. The mentor should be confident in the decision that they make in relation to the assessment of the student.
- Students are supernumerary throughout all placement allocations. However, this does not mean they are an observer; they are expected to engage as part of a team and contribute to patient care commensurate with the stage of their programme, always under the supervision of a registered practitioner, whose expertise and professional judgement of the student define the scope of engagement at all stages.
- If there are any concerns with regards to the student throughout their Placement, these should be recorded using the 'Mentor cause for concern' form.
- All interviews (initial, midpoint and final) between supervisors/mentors should be face-to-face.

## **Introduction to the Practice Assessment Document and the Placement Process**

The Practice Assessment Document (PAD) provides a record of achievement in practice for BN (Hons) Nursing students, currently on a programme of study, leading to eligibility to seek registration as a Nurse, with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC), and subsequent use of this protected title.

Within the PAD, a number of clinical competencies and professional behaviours are identified, alongside the Essential Skills Clusters. These competencies are derived from the current standards for pre-registration nurse education. Some skills and behaviours will be assessed several times throughout the programme and we anticipate that students will grow and develop throughout the programme. By the end of the programme, the student must be deemed competent in all required aspects, in order to pass.

The following offers guidance to mentors with regards to the (PAD) and recommends what should be covered with the student at each stage of the placement.

It is the responsibility of the student to arrange to meet with their mentor at each of the three stages detailed below.

Please see the [Mentor and student PAD process flowchart an overview of this process](#). The table below gives the same information but in more detail.

Initial Interview	Midpoint Review (Not required for foundation placements)	Final Review
Recommended within the first meeting	Recommended within 3-4 weeks from start of placement	Recommended during final week of placement
<p>Student and mentor (or/and buddy mentor) meet to undertake the Initial Placement Interview and Induction Programme for Students.</p> <p>This meeting should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Duty rosters negotiated with the mentor/coordinator to enable the student nurse to complete 37.5 hours/week plus 5 hours reflecting on their learning from placement (40% of time should be spent with mentor as an NMC requirement).</li> <li>● Identify learning objectives and additional learning opportunities, and discuss any possible EU Directives.</li> <li>● For assessed placements, the <b>Progression Point Competencies</b> document can also be discussed.</li> <li>● Student Induction Programme undertaken based on areas identified</li> </ul>	<p>Student and mentor meet to undertake the Midpoint Review. Progress so far towards learning needs set from initial interview. Feedback should be given so that, where identified, there are opportunities for the student to improve prior to the Final Review. Feedback should be delivered with sensitivity and in a manner that will enhance learning.</p> <p>This meeting should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussion of the service user feedback obtained by the Mentor, and to review with student nurse (if required, feedback can formulate an action plan accordingly).</li> <li>● Student Nurse to self-reflect on progression and include achievements and any areas of difficulty prior to meeting, and discussed during the meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Student and mentor meet to undertake the Final Review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prior to the meeting, the student nurse should reflect upon the placement, including what they felt went well and any ideas about what they would want to develop in their next practice placement, and this should be discussed within the Final Review meeting.</li> <li>● Any outstanding competencies should be assessed.</li> <li>● Mentor to discuss a summary of progress and make a final assessment of the student's development.</li> <li>● If a fail is recorded, any learning needs must be documented and made explicit in the comments section.</li> </ul>

<p>within relevant section of the “Initial Placement Documentation”, and any other areas identified by the mentor and/or student.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Review whether the student nurse is on track for achieving competencies and essential skills clusters.</li><li>● If the student is unlikely to meet objectives for reasons beyond the control of the student, this should be raised with the link lecturer/course tutor.</li><li>● If the student is unlikely to meet their learning objectives by the end of the proposed placement due to lack of effort or aptitude, this should be highlighted to the University tutor (via the link lecturer). An Action Plan should also be completed by the student and sent to their Mentor.</li><li>● Mentors should then email the action plan to the University of Portsmouth. The completed action plan should be sent to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a> and <a href="mailto:nursing-placements@port.ac.uk">nursing-placements@port.ac.uk</a>. This will then allow the University to support both the student and the mentor.</li></ul>	
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Initial Interview Documents to Complete	Midpoint Review Documents to Complete	Final Review Documents to Complete
<p><b>1. Initial Placement Documentation</b></p> <p>The student will complete the following sections of the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Details of the placement.</li> <li>● Their learning objectives.</li> </ul> <p>In conjunction with their mentor, the student will complete the following sections of the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Points discussed at the initial placement interview.</li> <li>● Student Notes in relation to the induction programme.</li> </ul> <p>The student will then email this document to their mentor. The mentor should then complete the “Mentor Completion” section and email the final document to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>.</p>	<p><b>2. Midpoint Progress Interview</b></p> <p>The student will complete the following sections of the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Details of the placement.</li> <li>● Student self-assessment (outcomes achieved, areas to develop etc.).</li> </ul> <p>The mentor will complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mentor Midpoint Review section.</li> </ul> <p>Please send this document to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a> once finalised.</p> <p>If you consider that the student is not on target to successfully complete and pass the PAD by the end of the placement, it will be necessary to send a completed <b>Action Plan</b> to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a> and <a href="mailto:nursing-placements@port.ac.uk">nursing-placements@port.ac.uk</a>, once completed.</p> <p><a href="#">Please see the Action Plan guidance.</a></p>	<p><b>3. Final Interview and Completion</b></p> <p>The student will complete the following sections of the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Details of the placement.</li> <li>● Student reflection.</li> </ul> <p>The mentor will complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mentor Final Review section.</li> </ul> <p>The student will also need to complete their <b>Progression Point Competencies</b> document (not required for foundation placements).</p> <p>The mentor should add comments and complete both the Progression Point Competencies and Final Review documents.</p> <p>Please send all documents to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a> once finalised.</p>

**Please contact the University at any stage if you need any clarification, advice or support.**

## Assessing the Student

Questions that you may want to consider when making an assessment:

- Are you confident that you have good evidence that the student has consistently met the performance criteria for achieving a pass?
- Are you confident that the student can, and should, progress to the next level?
- Are you confident that the student can discuss the knowledge underpinning their practice?
- Do you agree that the student's self-assessment accurately reflects their performance?

**The following guidance has also been developed to help your decision making.**

Students must achieve and **maintain** each stage of proficiency and skill in order to:

- Ensure standards of service user care are maintained.
- Progress from each part of the programme.
- Prepare for the responsibilities of registration – at the end of the 2nd part of the programme.
- Enter the register – at the end of the 3rd part of the programme.

## Assessment Outcomes

Assessment Decision	Criteria
<b>PASS</b>	<p>During this placement, the student has <b>consistently</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated achievement of all of the specified competencies.</li> <li>• Demonstrated professional values and/or behaviours.</li> <li>• Demonstrated safe, person-centred practice.</li> </ul>
<b>FAIL</b>	<p>During this placement the student has <b>NOT</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently demonstrated achievement of some (during Placement 1, 3 and 5), or all (during Placement 2, 4 and 6) of the specified competencies.</li> <li>• Consistently demonstrated professional values and/or behaviours.</li> <li>• Consistently demonstrated safe practice.</li> </ul>

## Feedback from Those Receiving Care

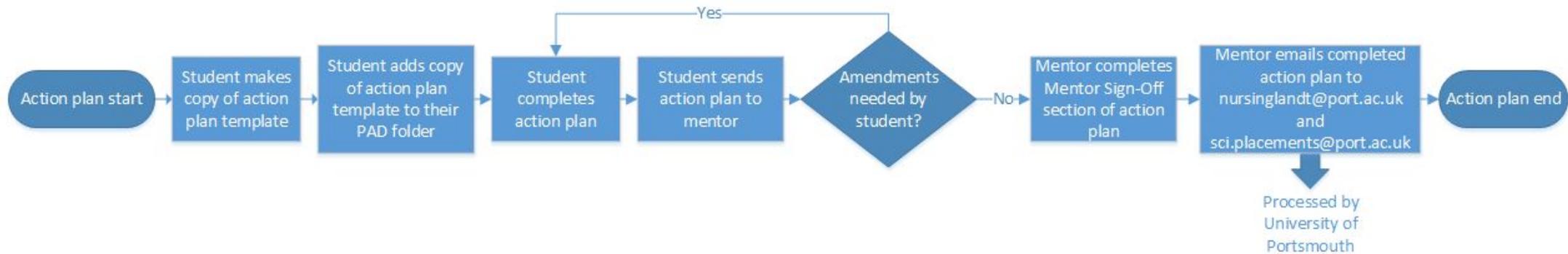
Feedback from those receiving care is required for each assessed placement. The student will be provided with a copy of this forms within their Essential Skills Cluster booklets. The student will need to give their mentor access to the person receiving care form within their Essential Skills cluster book. p. The mentor will approach the service user/carer/relative (anonymously) to ask them to complete the feedback. The student should wait in a different room/area whilst the feedback is undertaken, to ensure the service user can give open and honest feedback.

The mentor should discuss the feedback with the student either before or during the mid-point and/or final interview. The student is required to reflect on this feedback and discuss with their mentor during the mid-point and/or final interview.

## Action Plan

Should a student not make satisfactory progress on any assessed aspect during their placement, they will receive appropriate feedback, and an action plan will be put in place to support them and the mentor on return to placement. The mentor should also complete the 'Mentor Cause for Concern' form.

The process for completing the action plan template can be found on the action plan flowchart. Please note, this is only required if a student is failing the placement.



[Click Here to access the Action Plan Template.](#)

## Progression Points

The NMC has set minimum requirements that **must be met by the first and second progression points**.

In addition to these, programme providers will identify their own outcomes that students must achieve by each progression point. These will be based on local need, programme design and organisation of learning in practice. They will make sure that a student is safe and adequately prepared to take part in the full range of practice learning opportunities without risk to the public. NMC quality assurance processes will confirm this through approval and monitoring.

### First Progression Point

The NMC has identified skills and professional behaviours that a student must demonstrate by the first progression point. These criteria must normally be achieved during the student's practice learning but some may be met through simulation.

These criteria cover:

- Safety, safeguarding and protection of people of all ages, their carers and their families.
- Professional values, expected attitudes and the behaviours that must be shown towards people, their carers, their families, and others.

The criteria reflect public expectations about nurses' basic skills and their ability to communicate effectively with people in vulnerable situations, ensuring their dignity is maintained at all times. The essential skills clusters in Annexe 3 (page 103 in the NMC Standards for pre-registration nursing education) also address some of these concerns and form guidance within these standards.

[CLICK HERE to access this document \(requires an internet connect\).](#)

If a student is unable to demonstrate these skills and behaviours by progression point one, through the assessment procedures set by the programme provider and their partners, they will not normally be allowed to progress to the second part of the programme.

Most of the assessment will take place when providing direct care but some may be through simulation.

Students will evidence where competencies have been achieved/met throughout their Placements.

At the end of a placement, Mentors will be asked to initial and date against competencies that the student has achieved/met during that placement, via the Competencies Progression Point document.

## **Second Progression Point**

The NMC has set minimum requirements that must be demonstrated by the second progression point. Programme providers must set learning outcomes that allow the student to show that they can work more independently, with less direct supervision, in a safe and increasingly confident way to extend their knowledge and skills. Students must be allowed to demonstrate their ability to work as autonomous practitioners by the point of registration. This will also ensure that students are able to make safe and effective use of practice learning, which includes less direct supervision in the final part of the programme. This enables students to be confident and fit for practice by entry to the register.

Students must demonstrate this before being allowed to progress to the third and final part of the programme.

## Essential Skills Clusters (2010)

Essential skills clusters (ESCs) support the achievement of the competencies at all progression points, and criteria for assessment at the first progression point. However, the ESCs do not include all the skills and behaviours required of a registered nurse.

There are five essential skills clusters:

- Care, compassion and communication.
- Organisational aspects of care.
- Infection prevention and control.
- Nutrition and fluid management.
- Medicines management.

Skills have not been identified for all progression points. Therefore, not all columns in the ESC table have been filled. Where there is a gap, skills identified at a later progression point might be achieved at an earlier point.

[A full list of all the ESCs for the first progression point can be found HERE.](#)

[A full list of all the ESCs for second progression point can be found HERE.](#)

[A full list of all the ESCs for third progression point \(entry to the register\) can be found HERE.](#)

## Meeting EU Directive 2005/36/EC

A student studying to become a Registered Nurse (Adult) must achieve EU Directive 2005/36/EC and gain experience in:

- General and specialist medicine
- General and specialist surgery
- Child care and paediatrics
- Maternity care
- Mental health
- Care of the older person
- Home nursing

The academic tutor will support the student to identify and plan how they will meet this requirement. The student should discuss this with their mentor in practice to determine whether the opportunity will arise in that practice placement. Please use the document 'Meeting EU Directive 2005/36/EC' to support this.

## Naming conventions for documents and emails

As part of the placement process, mentors and students are required to complete various documents in the PAD at different stages of the placements. The table below recommends the naming convention that should be used for these documents and the email subject that should be used when sending these documents to the student.

For further guidance on completing documents for placements please see the [Mentor and Student process flowchart](#).

Placement	Document file name	Action required by supervisor/mentor	Email subject
Foundation Placement 1 / Development Placement 1	F1.0. Foundation Placement One / Development Placement 1	Read student comments. Conduct Initial Placement Interview and Final Placement Interview. Complete "Final Review and Completion" section, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	F1.0. Foundation Placement One - complete / D1.0. Development Placement One - complete
Foundation Placement 2 / Development Placement 2	F2.0. Foundation Placement 2 / Development Placement 2	Read student comments. Conduct Initial Placement Interview and Final Placement Interview. Complete "Final Review and Completion" section, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	F2.0. Foundation Placement Two - complete / D1.0. Development Placement One - complete
Placement 1 / Placement 2	P1.1. Initial Placement Documentation / P2.1. Initial Placement Documentation	Read student comments, conduct Initial Placement Interview, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	P1.1. Initial Placement Documentation - complete / P2.1. Initial Placement Documentation - complete

Placement 1 / Placement 2	P1.2. Midpoint Progress Interview / P2.2. Midpoint Progress Interview	Read student comments, complete Mentor Mid-Point Review, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	P1.2. Midpoint Progress Interview - complete / P2.2. Midpoint Progress Interview - complete
Placement 1 / Placement 2	P1.3. Progression Point One Competencies (Placement One) / P2.3. Progression Point One Competencies (Placement Two)	Read student comments. Initial and date under "Mentor Completion" column of Progression Point Criteria table. Add Mentor comments on Progression Points, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	P1.3. Progression Point One Competencies (Placement One) - complete / P2.3. Progression Point One Competencies (Placement Two) - complete
Placement 1 / Placement 2	P1.4. Final Interview and Completion / P2.4. Final Interview and Completion	Read student comments, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a> Complete action plan if required	P1.4. Final Interview and Completion - complete / P2.4. Final Interview and Completion - complete
Placement 3 / Placement 4	P3.1. Initial Placement Documentation / P4.1. Initial Placement Documentation	Read student comments, conduct Initial Placement Interview, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	P3.1. Initial Placement Documentation - complete P4.1. Initial Placement Documentation - complete
Placement 3 / Placement 4	P3.2. Midpoint Progress Interview P4.2. Midpoint Progress Interview	Read student comments, complete Mentor Mid-Point Review, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	P3.2. Midpoint Progress Interview - complete / P4.2. Midpoint Progress Interview - complete
Placement 3 / Placement 4	P3.3. Progression Point Two	Read student comments. Initial and	P3.3. Progression Point Two

	Competencies (Placement Three) / P4.3. Progression Point Two Competencies (Placement Four)	date under “Mentor Completion” column of Progression Point Criteria table. Add Mentor comments on Progression Points, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a>	Competencies (Placement Three) - complete / P4.3. Progression Point Two Competencies (Placement Four) - complete
Placement 3 / Placement 4	P3.4. Final Interview and Completion / P4.4. Final Interview and Completion	Read student comments, name and date and return to <a href="mailto:nursinglandt@port.ac.uk">nursinglandt@port.ac.uk</a> Complete action plan if required	P3.4. Final Interview and Completion - complete P4.4. Final Interview and Completion - complete

## Guidance on the use of IT, Chromebooks and Google Drive

For information on guidance on the use of IT, Chromebooks and Google Drive, please see the [PAD IT Policy](#).