



University Hospital Birmingham 
NHS Foundation Trust

Birmingham City University

Faculty of Health

Occupational Health

Guidance for Students

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1.0 Introduction

All students who are offered a place on a Health and Social Care Professional programme in the Faculty of Health need to ensure they are able to meet the health requirements before they go out to their allocated placement learning opportunity.

For students who will be eligible to apply for Registration with a Regulatory Body they need to ensure they meet the necessary criteria and the following guidelines are provided;

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) offer guidance for prospective students on 'good health'. They advise;

'if you have a disability or a health problem that you should seek advice about whether you can be adequately supported to be capable of providing safe and effective practice without supervision'.

You are recommended to read this information on 'good health' before you submit your application. This is available on their websites at:

www.nmc-uk.org/Students/Good-health-and-good-character-Guidance-for-students-nurses-and-midwives
www.hcpc-uk.org/publications/guidance

The Regulatory Body guidelines are not intended to replace Occupational Health Screening, they are complimentary to it. If you require any further information you will have an opportunity to discuss this with the Occupational Health Department.

The Equality Act 2010 protects people with a wide range of disabilities and health conditions from unfair discrimination. The Act also provides that organisations, such as the NMC and the HCPC, have a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to policies, practices, procedures and to physical access to ensure that disabled people are treated fairly. The NMC and the HCPC does not have a 'list' of acceptable or unacceptable health conditions. If you declare a disability or health condition your case will be considered on an individual basis to determine whether your fitness to practise is impaired. The NMC and HCPC's overriding concern in considering 'reasonable adjustments' will be whether a Health and Social Care Professional is capable of safe and effective practice without supervision. The University in conjunction with the Placement Provider will consider how reasonable any adjustments would be to support a person's capability for safe and effective practice and make a decision about providing them.

A health problem does not necessarily mean that you will not be eligible to undertake a programme. The Occupational Health Department decides if you meet the health criteria required to function as a Health and Social Care student. This may involve them obtaining a report from your General Practitioner or Specialist. However, the final decision on whether an applicant is able to access the programme lies with the University.

2.0 General Principles

If you have a history of skin conditions, back problems, mental health problems, heart conditions, diabetes or epilepsy you will be assessed on an individual basis.

Asthma is common within the general population and you will not normally be excluded from applying, unless you are prone to sudden prolonged attacks of breathlessness.

3.0 Health Clearance

Once you have been offered a place on the programme you will be asked to complete the Occupational Health screening form and return it with your immunisation history to the following address;

Occupational Health Department:
Birmingham City University,
Room 236, Seacole Building,
City South Campus,
Westbourne Road,
Edgbaston,
Birmingham. B15 3TN

Delay in returning these forms will result in you not being able to attend your allocated placement learning opportunity.

Once the forms have been received the University will arrange for you to attend the Occupational Health Department. You will receive an appointment and you must attend.

You will be asked to sign an Occupational Health Agreement (Appendix A). If you do not attend occupational health appointments you will be charged a fee of £30.

Once your screening has been completed the University will be informed, by the Occupational Health Department, of your fitness for the programme. The outcome of this screening will also be shared with our Placement Providers.

Once you enrol on the programme you are required to sign a declaration of good health and good character annually confirming your continued fitness to practice. It is your responsibility to inform us if there is any change in your health which may affect your ability to practice safely.

4.0 Health Clearance for Seconded Students

If you are a seconded student you are required to ask your employers Occupational Health Department to complete the Evidence of Screening for Infectious Diseases form (Appendix B) and return it to the Occupational Health Department in the Faculty, to ensure you meet the health requirements and are able to undertake the placement learning which forms part of your programme.

5.0 Immunisations against Infectious Diseases

The Occupational Health Department will require information concerning your immunisation history for the following infectious diseases:

- Tuberculosis (TB) (BCG)
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella (German Measles))

Please ask your GP or previous Occupational Health Department to provide evidence of the above immunisations.

Your Tetanus vaccinations should be up to date. The current programme of life-long immunisation is 5 doses of Tetanus vaccination. This is usually offered as 3 doses at intervals of 4 weeks, booster dose at 1 year and the final dose 5 – 10 years later (Department of Health 2006 Immunisation against Infectious Disease- the Green Book).

If for any reason you are not able to tolerate vaccinations then we would normally advise that you pursue an alternative career other than nursing, midwifery or operating department practice and paramedic science.

If you are from a culture or life style that is at high risk of HIV then you should discuss screening with your GP.

6.0 Exposure Prone Procedures

Certain programmes require you to participate in exposure prone procedures. Exposure prone procedures relate to workers whose gloved hands may come into contact with sharp objects whilst undertaking invasive procedures on a patient where the gloved hands are not always visible.

If your programme of study requires you to participate in exposure prone procedures, such as midwifery or working in operating departments, then you will also be tested for infection of blood borne viruses i.e. Hepatitis C, HIV and Hepatitis B.

If you are found to be positive, then you may not be able to undertake a programme where you participate in exposure prone procedures such as midwifery or operating department practitioner.

7.0 Non-Adherence to Occupational Health Requirements

As part of the programme of study, it is essential that you meet the health requirements for placements. Failure to comply with requests from the Occupational Health Department or repeated failure to attend appointments means the University will reserve the right to withdraw your placements.

The health requirements must be met and failure to comply may result in a referral to the Student Governance Department which may lead to a Disciplinary / Fitness for Practice Panel.

8.0 Referrals to Occupational Health during the Programme of Study

As a student, you are able to self-refer to the Occupational Health Department, this is a confidential service.

Your Programme Director may also make a formal request for you to be seen in Occupational Health Department, if;

- you have been absent/sick for a period of time
- placement or academic staff have raised concerns about your health
- you are returning the programme after a period of interruption which is more than 6 months in duration

Before the referral is made, the Programme Director will meet with you to discuss their concerns, complete a referral form and ask you sign it.

Once you have been seen in the Occupational Health Department, an outcome letter will be sent to your Programme Director and copied to you. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the Department of Practice Learning and used to inform an Occupational Health Action Plan for Practice Learning Opportunities where necessary.

The Occupational Health Action Plan will then be forwarded to the appropriate designated person within the practice setting; you are allocated to, this is ensure that the placement area will able to accommodate your reasonable adjustments.

9.0 Occupational Health Action Plan and Reasonable Adjustments in Practice

If any reasonable adjustments are recommended, the letter will also be forwarded to the Health Database Administrator, who will summarise the recommendations and add them to an Occupational Health Action Plan

The Occupational Health Action Plan will be forwarded you to the placement provider, once we have gained your consent; this is to ensure that the placement area will able to accommodate your reasonable adjustments

In addition, Disability Services may provide a personal management plan, if you have a chronic health conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, asthma etc. These plans will simply detail your usual management regime including any medications you regularly take to manage your condition on a day to day basis. These plans also provide emergency contact information which third parties in either University or placement settings can act upon in the case of an emergency.

These plans are forwarded from disability services to Database Administrator and are then disseminated to academic staff and placement providers; the student will be provided with a copy.

9.0 Quality Monitoring and Enhancement

These guidelines will be formally reviewed annually by the Head of School Professional Practice. Any amendments to this policy will be submitted to the Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (FASQEC), a sub-committee of Faculty Board, to ensure that it remains current, and continues to reflect good practice and comply with PSRB requirements.

Faculty Board will approve any amendments to the policy for implementation in the Faculty of Health.

Head of School
School of Professional Practice

Birmingham City University's commitment to equality means that this policy has been screened against the aims of the general duty in relation to the relevant protected characteristics, the use of comprehensible, inclusive language, and the avoidance of stereotypes. This document is available in alternative formats on request.

Equality Analysis completed 21.9.12



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

STUDENT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AGREEMENT

STUDENT NAME

D.O.B.

PROGRAMME
(i.e. Dip HE)

EMAIL ADDRESS

I agree to attend Occupational Health appointments as arranged in order to complete my Immunisation and Vaccination Programme. I understand that failure to do so may put me at risk of contracting an occupationally acquired infection, which could result in serious health problems.

If I fail to attend an appointment I will incur a cost of £30 prior to being offered any further appointments.

I have read and understand this agreement.

Signature

Date

Appendix B

Evidence of Screening for Infectious Diseases required for exposure prone students and all other students who are seconded by an organisation.

Exposure Prone Student (EPP)		
This is defined as a worker whose gloved hands may come into contact with sharp objects whilst undertaking invasive procedures on a patient where the gloved hands are not always visible; e.g. surgeon, midwife, dentist.		
Blood test	Exposure Prone Students	All other Students
Hep B surface antigen	✓	✓
Hep B core antibody	✓	✓
Hep B surface antibody	✓	✓
Measles Antibody	✓	✓
Rubella Antibody	✓	✓
Varicella (VZ) antibody – unless history of disease.	✓	✓
Hep C antibody	✓	
HIV	✓	
Other Screening		
Tuberculosis	Check for history of BCG vaccination and presence of scar on left deltoid – if no scar present or documented evidence of BCG vaccination then book for Mantoux skin test.	Check for history of BCG vaccination and presence of scar – if no scar present or documented evidence of BCG vaccination then book for Mantoux skin test.

Note: All sample results for students should be identified validated samples (IVS) that is students must ask their employing organisations Occupational Health Department to confirm their identity was checked at the time of testing by means of photographic evidence e.g. Passport, Driving license, university ID badge etc.