

ASSESSING YOUR FITNESS TO BECOME A REGISTERED HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL



Please take your time to read through the information in this handout. If you have any questions or queries, please contact Jane Hibberd or Marie O'Donovan, School Disability Liaison Officers via email - hsc.support@uea.ac.uk

Being a healthcare professional is a rewarding and satisfying career, however it can also be demanding, both mentally and physically. This document is intended to raise your awareness of the competencies and functions that you will be expected to carry out as a learner which will help you assess your **fitness to be a healthcare professional**.

Being a healthcare professional requires professional standards of behaviour, both at university and when on placement. You should have and be willing to develop your interpersonal skills and the ability to relate to a range of different people, understanding their needs and preferences to sensitively support realistic co-creation of health and social care plans, respecting confidentiality at all times.

Practice placements are physically and mentally demanding, and may include long days and/or night shifts, with start and end times dependent on the expectations of the placement provider and working pattern of the health and social care team in practice. Your working day may extend to time outside of the placement setting, with preparation, travel and other extra-curricular activities. The taught course at UEA also requires full time attendance and teaching days usually start at 09:00

and finish between 16:00-17:00 but on occasion may extend to 18.00.

We have a responsibility to ensure that our learners have the health and physical capacity to withstand the demands and expectations of the programme and will not put service-users or themselves at risk of harm. The activities that a healthcare professional must be able to perform are set out in the following documents:

- For NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council) regulated programmes:

The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates – The Nursing and Midwifery Council
<https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code/>

- For HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council) regulated programmes:

Standards of Proficiency
<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/>

The **Higher Education Occupational Physicians/Practitioners (HEOPS)** has produced sector-specific policies and guidance for learners – note that Operating Department Practice guidelines have not as yet been developed. These standards meet the criteria in the Equality Act in that they are a proportionate means of achieving the legitimate aim of ensuring service user safety. There are some impairments that will need careful assessment to ensure safe practice - note that the list

is not exhaustive. Click on the link below then navigate to the Fitness Standards for the programme of study relevant to you: <https://heops.org.uk/guidance>

Emotional Health

As a trainee healthcare professional, you must consistently look after your health and wellbeing and seek appropriate support when required. Over time your resilience will develop as you progress on your chosen course.

You must demonstrate:

- Adaptability to changing environments.
- The ability to function effectively under stress.
- The development of professional and effective relationships with service-users, families, healthcare professionals, fellow learners and colleagues.
- The ability to develop and adopt strategies to manage your own physical and emotional wellbeing and reach out for support when required.

Learning to become a healthcare professional is challenging and a variety of situations and pressures will frequently arise within the course. In recognition of this, the university has a comprehensive support network, and all learners are assigned to an academic member of staff (Advisor) to guide them through how to access these.

Occupational Health Screening

Anyone who accepts an offer of a place on one of our pre-registration healthcare programmes is required to complete an Occupational Health Pre-Registration Questionnaire. You will be sent a link with instructions for completion, and it is important that you do this as soon as possible.

Satisfactory clearance by Occupational Health is a condition of your place on the programme.

We welcome all applicants, and we strongly recommend that you disclose any health needs you may have. It is important that your health or wellbeing needs do not compromise your safety or that of others. By disclosing your health and wellbeing needs we can be proactive in working with you to identify and implement appropriate reasonable adjustments to make the most of your learning experience both at university and on placement. In some cases, it may be helpful for the university to explore your needs on an individual basis. We have a Reasonable Adjustments Panel dedicated to this purpose.

As a university, we will consider reasonable adjustments, which must be balanced with the requirements of the professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements.

We hope you have found this document helpful in raising your awareness of some of the key features of the healthcare programmes delivered within the School of Health Sciences. Please note that this is intended as a general guide and is not exhaustive.

FURTHER INFORMATION

E: hsc.support@uea.ac.uk

