**Placement Allocation Policy**

Background:

A required component of health and social care curricula is practice placements. Learners are expected to attend all the placements they have been allocated. If you miss your scheduled placement without a valid reason, you risk failing your placement module, which could hinder your chances of finishing the course.

Placements are distributed over a large geographic area by the University of Huddersfield. In accordance with the relevant professional statutory regulatory bodies (PSRBs), such as the Health & Care Professions Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council, and Social Work England, this is crucial to guarantee that the variety of placement experiences and types are available to meet the necessary standards and proficiencies.

Programme needs, service level agreements, contracts with placement providers, and provider capacity all affect placement availability. Throughout the recruitment, admissions, and induction procedures, learners are informed about the variety of placements that are available.

Over the course of the degree, placement availability may change as providers may modify their offers for reasons outside of the University's control. There may also be the addition new placement areas or existing ones may be removed.

To make sure they comply with the study program's standards, every placement location will undergo an audit.

Placement Allocation Criteria:

The Placements team allocate placements based upon the principles of transparency and fairness. Although placement availability and capacity will be considered the priority, the team will also consider the following criteria during this process:

* Placement availability and capacity
* Programme requirements (including those set by the relevant professional statutory regulatory bodies)
* Disclosed disabilities/ occupational health recommendations and any reasonable adjustments required
* Registered or exceptional caring responsibilities (for example if you have children with additional needs)
* Travel time (up to 1.5 hours each way from the University, where possible, unless suitable accommodation provided)

It is important for learners to understand that factors such as regular childcare, travel time (up to 1.5 hours each way), expense, and weather conditions will not be used to determine priority.

Placement Allocation Process:

The Placements team aims to release the allocation details six weeks prior to the start of the placement block. There may be instances when this is not achievable because of issues beyond the University's control, such as a placement location no longer being able to support a learner, or placements being provided by out of area Trusts for Blended Learners. In this situation the Placements team will contact the impacted learner/s and keep them updated on any plans.

**Placement Change Appeal (PCA) policy**

The Placements team completes extensive planning and preparation to secure your placement allocations according to capacity, suitability, and professional body requirements.

This policy relates to appeals to change your specific placement allocation.

After allocation, placement areas cannot be changed unless there are exceptional circumstances. Even then, changes may not always be attainable due to limitations in placement capacity and availability.

Exceptional circumstances are those aspects of your life that, at the start of an academic year, you could not have fairly predicted to have an impact on your performance in assessment, including attendance on placement. Such as;

Something occurring, or being diagnosed, suddenly and unexpectedly during the academic year

or

Pre-existing challenging and complex life conditions which have gotten worse during the academic year.

Each request for placement change will be considered on an individual basis, this is not a first come first served system. Guidance on what will and will not be considered as exceptional circumstances is listed below:

Examples of Exceptional Circumstances include, but are not limited to, the following:

* Having a relative in the clinical area (as a patient or staff member) which presents a conflict of interest or where the placement is associated with a bereavement or traumatic event
* Holding a current or previous job within the area (although this should have been declared in the placement planning form at the beginning of your course)
* Previous issue with a placement area – which has been reported and documented appropriately
* A recently identified disability where reasonable adjustments are required – with evidence from Disability Services/Occupational Health
* Mental health or medical issues which prevents you from attending the placement – must be supported with a fit note from your GP
* When pregnancy related placement changes are required

Examples of situations that are not considered Exceptional Circumstances:

* Routine childcare concerns
* Previous experience with the service users
* Personal preferences
* Concerns over travel, including public transport or disruptions to shared travel arrangements
* Concerns over shift time (learner are expected to experience 24/7 care as part of their course)
* Moving house
* Holidays
* Paid work commitments
* Disabilities for which reasonable adjustments have been made or where you have time to manage the situation
* Poor time management

How to request a change of placement

It is advised that learners take the necessary time after receiving their placement allocation to examine the PARE profile and learn about the environment, as well as any necessary arrangements (such as travel). A PCA should only be made in exceptional circumstances as outlined above. To request a placement change, you should:

Complete the PCA form within 1 week of your placement allocation release date, providing as much detail and evidence as possible of how you meet the exceptional circumstances outlined above. Late requests will not be considered unless it is a sudden change of circumstance.

[PCA Form](https://forms.office.com/e/HKeucJiF0n)

The PCA forms are not considered on a first come first served basis, all submissions will be considered by the PCA Panel comprising of academic and professional services staff at the end of the one-week period.

A final decision will be communicated to you via your university email address from the Placements team.

The Placements team will make every effort to find you a different placement if your request is approved; however, please be aware that this may not be feasible due to the placement circuit's limited capacity. This could prevent you from completing the necessary placement hours and hinder your advancement, therefore you may need to seek further support from student guidance and/or your course lead.

If your request is declined, you will be expected to attend your allocated placement. This decision is final, and failure to attend placement, without a valid reason, will result in failure of your placement. Failure in placement will impact on your ability to progress in your studies.

If you would like to appeal the decision made by the panel a formal request for review by the Subject Area Lead for Nursing Practice Education can be made by submitting an appeal via the below link. The submission must still fall in line with the PCA criteria from your initial submission, you may also attach any further evidence you would like to submit.

[PCA Decision Appeal](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=2p8utZEGhUW9_FzK4c4YkKuqhzkn1ghHkXhPgNbEnGNUMkpLQ1JRSlNVMVdVWUxCWUQxRDFUMVhNMy4u)

The appeals link is only open for 48 hours after your panel decision has been communicated to you. Once this time has passed the submission will be reviewed and you will receive a response within 5 working days, please do not chase this as this causes delays in reviewing the submissions.