

Guide to Practice Based Learning for Allied Health Professional (AHP) Students in Education

Building capabilities for teaching and learning

Practice-Based Learning

Practice learning takes place during placements which involve a range of learning opportunities to support the student's development. A placement is where students apply and consolidate their learning, bringing together academic theory, workplace practice to develop skills and competences needed to register (HEE 2020). Practice learning is supervised and structured to enable progress towards learning outcomes and usually involves assessment of the learner.



Practice Based Learning in Education - building the skills for teaching & learning

Practice based learning in education refers to learning environments and placement design whereby AHP students can specifically develop the capabilities necessary to facilitate effective teaching & learning.

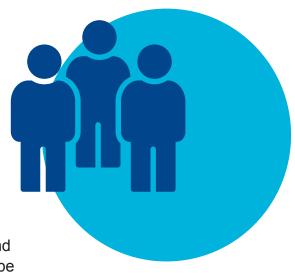
This may be to develop the knowledge and skills required as an educator of other health care practitioners – either in an academic (university) or workplace (both client-facing or non-client facing) setting. It may also include developing the knowledge and skills required to educate patients / service users, whether adults or children & young people, and the skills to work with individuals with additional educational needs. It will also include development of the knowledge and skills required to excel as an effective, autonomous learner.

This form of practice-based learning may occur in a range of learning environments, such as:

- higher education (universities) or further education settings (colleges)
- primary and secondary schools
- schools catering specifically for individuals with special education needs and disabilities (SEND)
- online teaching and learning environments
- local authorities and social care providers
- Arm's length bodies (ALB) or non-departmental public bodies (NDPB)
- learning and development teams within NHS Trusts, Primary Care Networks, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Integrated Care Systems.

Introduction

This guide shows the possibilities and benefits of offering practice learning in education for AHP students. The ideas and examples show how practice placements in education can enable students to achieve their learning outcomes and enhance their professional skills and employability. We hope that it will inspire those working within educational settings to offer these innovative types of placements to AHP students.



The guide will be updated as we hear of new examples in education practice-based learning.

The guide is for those working in educational roles across different sectors, including but not limited to:

- NHS service providers
- · Local Authorities and providers of social care
- Private, Independent, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations
- Arm's length bodies
- Higher education institutes
- Further education institutes
- Schools
- Online education providers

This guide will benefit those who:

- may not be aware of the benefits of hosting AHP students on practice-based learning;
- are considering offering innovative practice-based learning for AHP students and would like some guidance on where to begin;
- already offer education practice-based learning opportunities to students and are looking for ideas to improve the experience;
- are students involved in education practice-based learning who want to know what to expect;
- who would like to develop or incorporate teaching-based opportunities to create a placement.

Background

Practice-based learning is recognised in the NHS Long Term Plan (2019) as a vital investment in the future NHS and social care workforce. The plan drives a vision of 21st century care which requires an all-rounded, skilled, and flexible AHP workforce. By



providing aspiration for a varied career ahead we can improve retention. The subsequent People Plan (2020) detailed the need for significant growth in numbers of AHPs for the future workforce. This increase needs to be matched by equivalent expansion in the amount of practice learning required to deliver these numbers.

Education is integral to service delivery and quality improvement in every sector and service. The drive to offer more practice-based learning opportunities in educational settings and guide & support innovative solutions will help us to deliver safe and effective healthcare. This will mean innovative ways of working, new roles and opportunities. Practice based learning must adapt to meet these requirements and AHP students are encouraged to experience practice-based learning that extends beyond clinical work to encompass wider areas of AHP practice.

In 2017 Health Education England, in partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvement, developed a multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England, which includes a national definition and standards to underpin the multi-professional advanced level of practice. This framework details the requirements for AHP's working as Advanced Practitioners.

The concept of the 4 pillars of practice relate not only to advanced practice, but also much earlier in the career development journeys of healthcare practitioners – including at pre-registration level. Guidance has been published on developing leadership at pre-registration level, as well as developing the capabilities for research at pre-registration level. The case exists to ensure at pre-registration level the capabilities for facilitating teaching and learning (education) are also addressed.

Within this framework the four pillars that underpin this practice are:

- 1. Leadership and Management
- 2. Education
- 3. Research
- 4. Clinical Practice

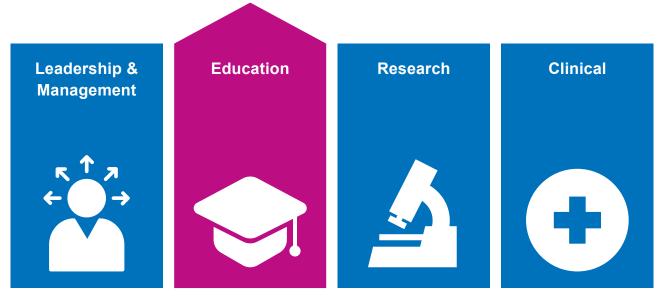


Figure 1. Four pillars of practice



The importance of Education in Practice Based Learning

As qualified AHPs, our graduate workforce invariably have a role to play in educating service users, family and carers to maximise their own health (DHSC, 2021). The shift towards a new way



of working, enabling our AHP students revolutionise 21st century care, has stimulated many innovative practice learning opportunities. Students develop key professional skills such as communication, negotiation, influencing, working with others and project work. By supporting students to gain experience in education and learning we can ensure that new graduates have the skills required for their future career.

In addition to providing students with a rounded view of the roles available to them in their career, there are sound pedagogic reasons for involving students in education. An iterative learning approach suggests that repetition can embed knowledge and skills (Malhotra et al 2021). Peer learning, and indeed peer teaching, has benefits to both learners and "educators" as students feel more open to asking questions of their peers than they do of teaching staff. The student in the educator role is motivated to ensure that the information they pass on is accurate and relevant, thus expanding their own knowledge and skill base (Markowski et al 2021).

The GROW model (Mindtools, 2020) is a fantastic framework to develop coaching and communication skills in practice-based learning environments. Samantha Nolan, Programme Manager, Health Education England used this coaching approach during PBL with several students from various professions. Students were introduced to the GROW model of peer supervision to support each other on a weekly basis. This worked well with a 4:1 or 5:1 model as a minimum. Students from a variety of universities led specified projects and contributed to the development of the national student self-care guide. Feedback from students speaks for itself.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your help and support. I truly appreciate it. It has been a great experience and I have enjoyed every minute of it."

BSc Physiotherapy 2nd year Student, Teesside University

"It has been an absolute pleasure working alongside you and the national team at HEE. I have thoroughly enjoyed my short time here and would recommend it to all AHP students as the transferable and lifetime skills I have learnt are exceptional. I had the right balance of autonomy and support throughout placement."

BSc Physiotherapy 2nd year Student, Northumbria University

All educators working within professionally registered courses need to maintain their own professional registration and as such, continue to practice as AHP's within their educational roles. Student practice learning can and should occur in ANY setting where AHP's are working, including education.

"Ensuring the students' voice is at the heart of all we do was never more so than on an educational practice-based learning opportunity. Occupational therapy and Physiotherapy students learnt to work together and had an interprofessional impact on policies, processes, teaching and learning, curriculum and especially practice learning. We were a team, we were peers and the students felt like they have left a legacy behind that will support future students, the university and the wider practice environment."

Sarah-Jane Ryan, Senior Lecturer, University of Brighton

Considerations and tips for practice-based learning in education

Practice learning in education settings should be treated in the same way as any other placement; students must abide by their standards of professional conduct and follow the local information governance and safety protocols of the organisation. See the HEE AHP Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) Practice Based Learning Guide for more details.

Students can learn from any education activities – teaching, designing learning resources, evaluations and so on.

Enable students to get started by being clear about the aims and scope of a project, introducing them to key people, giving them freedom to be creative and arranging regular supervision.

"The students had a musculoskeletal, neurological or inter-professional focus with face-to-face and / or online teaching. The placement had 3 strands: teaching preparation and delivery, an asynchronous teaching and learning theoretical component to ensure understanding of the underpinning theories and an independent project."

Helen Batty, Principal Lecturer, Sheffield Hallam University

Practice learning in education is suitable for all students from BSc year one through to final year MSc students; with activities being adapted to suit different stages of learning.

"Students worked in small groups to attend on-line live sessions and to complete related tasks facilitated by academic tutors including case discussions, exercise prescription and delivery of education sessions. Students have a group timetable for live sessions but are expected to be proactive and manage their own self-directed learning and work together as a team to engage in peer learning, reflection, and support (vital skills for effective learning during practice placements)."

Lorna Johnson, Senior Lecturer and Lead in Practice Education, Kings College London Anyone working in an education role can supervise students on placement, whether in a university or college or in clinical education. Depending upon professional body requirements, the supervisor may not have to be a registered AHP; the learning outcomes are focused on developing educational skills, rather than clinical knowledge.

Consider hosting more than one student. Many different models have been found to work well including 2:1 (2 students supervised by 1 educator) and 4:1. Feedback suggests that this promotes peer learning, exchange of ideas and student autonomy and may reduce supervision time.

"Having two or more students on the placement together means they can support each other, which I felt underpinned their sense of empowerment and ownership."

Ben Ellis, Physiotherapy Lecturer, University of Birmingham

"I think [if I had had] just one student, I would have needed to give a lot more of my time in terms of managing my own workload. I think 2:1 is infinitely better".

Terri Grant, Senior Lecturer, University of Worcester

Take time to plan and organize the placement with your team. Consider setting up a shared folder for all documents so everyone can input comments and feedback easily. Have regular catch ups to review the placement and refine it as you go along.

"We had clear objectives and met regularly to check progress towards these and resolve problems, but I didn't micromanage the students at all in terms of hours / location etc. So, trust your students to be self-directed and empower them to make decisions."

Ben Ellis, Physiotherapy Lecturer, University of Birmingham

Placement Format/Design

Consider your plans for placement design, this could include:

- Designing a structure for the practice placement that is reviewed and refined as you go along. Involve the students in the design and review process.
- Students can meet their practice learning outcomes by completing a placement which
 is 100% education or a hybrid version combining education and clinical practice, e.g.:
 2 days clinical, 3 days education. Think what opportunities you might be able to offer
 and start from there.

"The 3 strands of the education placement complimented each other well and enabled the students to have a robust knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning."

Helen Batty, Principal Lecturer, Sheffield Hallam University

"Students on the inter-professional placement completed the placement entirely online during the pandemic, enabling 1 student to work from her home in Hong Kong."

Gerry Scott, Senior Lecturer, Sheffield Hallam University

A blended learning approach which could include self-directed learning to ensure underpinning knowledge and understanding of education theories, face to face sessions, on-line live sessions and project work i.e., co-creation of student and / or patient facing information.

Think about the foundation the learners need prior to the placement and the content which will complement their learning during the placement enabling them to meet the learning outcomes.

"Our students were able to attend a 2-day "new to teaching" course followed by most sessions of module 1 PGCert Teaching & Learning in Higher Education, both of which were running for University staff. Whilst they didn't complete any assessment or receive any academic credit for this, it was hugely beneficial in helping them feel valued members of the teaching team and developing their knowledge of this new intervention called 'teaching."

Terri Grant, Senior Lecturer, University of Worcester

Ensure a mapping exercise has taken place against the learning outcomes for the placement and this is clearly documented for both mentors and students.

Include peer support within your placement design and opportunities for shared learning experiences.

Take responsibility for safety and wellbeing of self, staff and service users employing a patient centred approach **LO1** Service users = students Safety and wellbeing in relation to resource production, data protection, student facing resource to meet needs of the population Apply effective verbal, non-verbal and written communication skills to develop and sustain the therapeutic relationship and contribute effectively to Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) working Therapeutic relationship = professional relationship with students LO₂ involved during the placement Range of communication skills employed with developing resources/ teaching MDT working with professional disciplines across the College Apply clinical reasoning through the process of service user assessment, problem identification and treatment planning and deliver safe and effective physiotherapy intervention with a range of service users LO3 Treatment and interventions = academic/ educationall interventions Students will need to address the situation and environment they are in, identify problems and potential intervention strategies, verbalise knowledge as part oof their clinical reasoning process Reflect on feedback and learning experiences to demonstrate own continuous professional development LO4 Reflect weekly, what they have developed, how this feeds forwards into their development goals and employability.

Figure 2. Example of mapped learning outcomes from Sheffield Hallam University Education Placement 2020.

Professional Skills

The professional skills below are some of the skills which will develop during an education placement and are all highly relevant to future clinical practice.

Transferable skills to practice

Communication	Organisation
Teaching skills	Inclusivity
Flexibility	Motivation
Time management	Teamwork
Reflexivity	Multi-tasking
Project planning	Creativity
Leadership	Emotional Intelligence
Confidence	Commitment

Tips for educators

- Practice learning in education may be a new experience for both student and practice educator. Allow for errors; it is a learning opportunity for all involved.
- Seek support from the HEI and work in partnership to co-design.
- Empower and prepare meet with your students before the start of placement to ease any anxieties and to optimally prepare for success.
- Include the students in the placement design team right from the start so they can contribute their ideas, shape the practice learning opportunities and feel valued. Co-creation is important for success and student satisfaction (JISC 2021).
- Ensure students speak to peers who have already completed an educational placement.
- Help the students to understand what they might expect (even if the plans are still very fluid!) and support them to feel fully prepared for the opportunity. Ideas include developing messages that can be left for subsequent students, facilitating the ability to talk to students who have been through this experience themselves, ensuring that the opportunities presented by the role are clearly expressed (for example, the opportunity to build their own workload)
- Discuss why it is an excellent opportunity for them and the skills they will develop. Relate these to their future clinical practice.

- Acknowledge that the students may be apprehensive about not doing clinical work or working online.
- Reassure students about the opportunities available but understand that the student may not (for quite some time) be able to see how the placement will fit together. Hearing "it's going to be ok" is insufficient because students really want to know that they have earned their pass or grade.
- Help students to develop their own style by observing experienced teachers and educators, or by arranging access to resources provided by your HEI for clinicians transitioning to practice.
- Consider how much work each student might take on. Enable them to control their own diary to meet their own learning objectives and make sure they have 'thinking time' and see the value in this.
- Try to involve different team members.
- Including an interprofessional element will mirror clinical practice and multidisciplinary working.
- Trust your students to be self-directed and empower them to make decisions.
- Have a plan, but do not be afraid to deviate from the plan.
- Establish opportunities for direct observation to enable educators to give high quality feedback - this could be in attending meetings with the students, observing a presentation, or sitting in discretely on student preparation meetings (in person or via videoconferencing).

- See it as a reciprocal relationship, what unique insight can a student add to your service.
- Have regular review meetings to review progress towards the learning outcomes and share expectations.
 Opportunities to meet learning outcomes may emerge as the placement progresses.
- Be clear about what it means to meet the Learning Outcomes in this setting and share this with the students. Talk about the global assessment of a population of service users, rather than individual face to face assessments, and developing interventions that will benefit the population, rather than one service user.
- Plan opportunities for students to meet up with each other across similar placements to support them to manage their own wellbeing.

- Consider inviting students into staff training sessions such as QSIR (quality, service improvement & redesign), leadership & coaching, new to teaching courses. They will develop skills & knowledge and begin to network with the appropriate people in the organisation.
- Provide lots of information about potential projects early on – students would rather feel busy and productive than wondering what they should do next, particularly when learning to manage their own time in the learning environment.
- Support and embrace the uncertainty students can feel. Label it as "normal" and help your student to see this as part of their learning and development.
- If you are involving clinical partners in some way, it's important to make sure that they have a good understanding of what you are asking of them and what they are committing to.

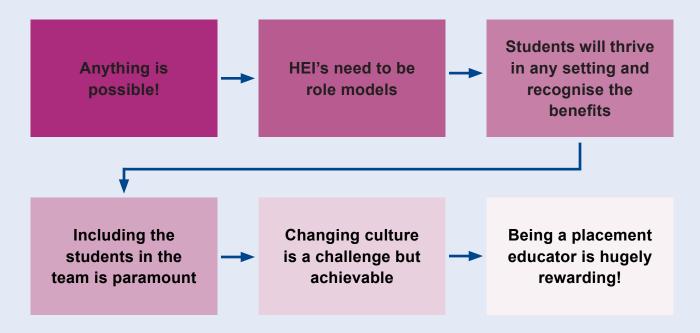


Figure 3. Comments from staff following an evaluation of an education placement at Sheffield Hallam University

Tips for students

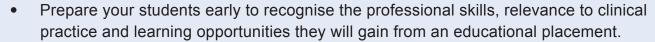
 Embrace the opportunity to learn in new and different ways; an education placement will help you develop your clinical reasoning, communication, and professional skills, demonstrate your flexibility and enhance your employability.



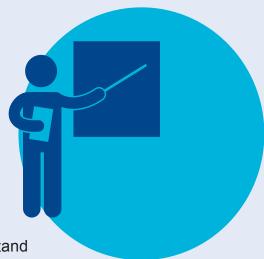
- Understand and apply adult learning and teaching theories. Your practice educators
 will support you to be able to do this. The paper <u>Adult learning theories: Implications</u>
 for learning and teaching in medical education (Taylor & Hamdy, 2013) gives a nice
 overview of adult teaching and learning theories and is a good place to start.
- Make contact with your educator before you are due to start placement to help you
 prepare and discuss what learning opportunities might be available to meet your
 learning outcomes.
- Talk to other students who have completed a placement in an education setting.
- Make sure to arrange regular meetings with your practice educator to help you make the most of your learning opportunity. Be proactive in doing this.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help or ask questions you are a student, and you are there to learn. It may feel very uncertain at first, but this is all part of the learning process.
- Be proactive in your learning. Look for opportunities. Don't be afraid to ask to attend staff meetings, leadership team meetings, watch teaching sessions to gain experience of different teaching styles and different types of teaching.
- Share your learning with your peers and equally learn from them.
- When working on any shared projects, show leadership within this and take ownership for your contributions.
- Voice your learning and understanding to your practice educators.
- Seek support when needed.
- Reflect on your learning throughout and document this in a variety of ways, e.g. formal written reflections, vlogs, blogs, Twitter etc.
- Take time to link with other students in similar settings. Support each other. You
 may appreciate the peer support. Peer-learning and regular reflection sessions can
 be valuable. The <u>GROW model</u> (Mindtools, 2020) is a great framework to develop
 coaching and communication skills.

Tips for Universities

- Educational placements should be integrated into the normal placement allocation pathway to ensure success.
- Ensure staff and placement educators all understand the value in educational placements.



- Work closely with placement providers to prepare students prior to the placement and manage the expectations for all parties.
- Use creative thinking to meet their learning outcomes with learning opportunities that are not clinical.
- Consider the overall placement profile of the students when allocating.
- Take care to make a clear distinction between your "students" and your "student lecturers" to assist with developing mutual respect.
- Integrate students into the staff team and wider departments.
- Include an inter-professional element to mirror clinical practice.
- Celebrate successes.



Case study: University of Derby

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent cancellation of Occupational Therapy placements, the Occupational Therapy teaching team at the University of Derby sought to identify creative and innovative learning opportunities for our students.



To address some of the placement capacity needs, we identified new role emerging placement opportunities and these included opportunities within the University. To date we have 8 students who have undertaken a placement within the Higher Education Institution (HEI).

Practice Based Learning within Occupational Therapy Lecturing Team

Initially 4 students, experienced a placement facilitated by a team of the OT lecturing staff. These students undertook a group project in which they produced a reusable learning resource designed to provide knowledge and understanding of student mental health for lecturers across the institution.

They also completed an individual project which focussed on the health needs of a specific student population e.g. international students, mature students etc. They were able to interview, assess and implement interventions remotely with actors. The whole placement was completed remotely, with one student able to return home to Cyprus and complete the programme.

Initially, all the students were concerned about how the placement would prepare them for clinical practice and what the benefits of the placement would be. However, upon completion and evaluation of the placement all the students reported a significant increase in confidence, improved digital literacy, greater professional reasoning to support decision making and a beneficial learning experience which they felt supported their transition into Occupational Therapy practice well.

Practice Based Learning with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within Derby University

Four students have had a placement based within the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing (EDIW) department within the University. Following a similar framework, which was again mapped to the placement assessment document, these students were involved in a group project and an individual project. The focus of this placement was linked to both staff within the University and our students. With the students supporting a project focusing on BAME student success within the University and individually focussing on the impact of menopause, mental health and neurodiversity in the workplace.

The placement was supported by a mentor within the EDIW and a long arm OT supervisor who had experience of working within the University. Initially the students were challenged to see how relevance of the placement to Occupational Therapy. However, as the placement developed, they all reported benefits to working within an emerging area of practice and with populations rather than individuals.

Case Study: University of Worcester and Coventry University

At a time when placement capacity is stretched further by the pandemic and the need for varied opportunities in which to develop core skills is heightened, higher education institutions should



be modelling good practice in regard to practice education. One way that this can be achieved, and students can undertake rich learning experiences, is to consider offering a student lecturer placement opportunity.

Students from University of Worcester and Coventry University undertook a reciprocal placement in this role in September 2020 for the first time. Two students from Coventry University were hosted by a Senior Lecturer at University of Worcester.

The students participated in first year teaching and learning, preparing pedagogically sound lesson plans and running sessions independently after they had attended an in-house "new to teaching" course and undertaken some shared group teaching. They focused on Anatomy & Physiology practical teaching, where they helped students to apply their learning from lectures, and also contributed to the "Philosophy & Practice of Occupational Therapy" module, developing activity analysis teaching and supporting first year students to understand new and challenging concepts.

Students from Worcester placed with Coventry University were hosted in a similar way, focusing on the teaching of anatomy & physiology and psychology. Supported by a lecturer as Practice Educator, they also devised and developed an online support group for new 1st year students, aimed at developing study skills and confidence. They also got involved in some research in the form of a service user satisfaction survey and met some of Coventry's panel of people with lived experience who are paid to assist our teaching and wider events, gaining valuable insight which helped inform our admissions processes.

As their placement progressed and they got to know the cohort of first year students, all students developed and ran some study skills sessions independently of their Practice Educator. They were also required to engage with the academic side of the role and cowrite an article for OT News about their experience.

Students reported that, although they were initially apprehensive, they appreciated the independence and empowerment afforded by this placement. Using occupational therapy skills and building a therapeutic relationship with the first-year students enabled them to find barriers that affected learning and develop a study skills intervention that addressed those barriers, thus using their core professional skills.

As Practice Educators, we had high expectations that we would be able to provide a valuable learning experience, but this came with some anxieties as we realised how chaotic, responsive to need and challenging to define our job roles are. Universities bring with them opportunities for students to become more engaged in all aspects of academia and can provide a valuable learning experience prior to graduation.

Terri Grant, Senior Lecturer University of Worcester and Sue Kenney, Lecturer Coventry University



Figure 4. Student Lecturers finishing their journey at University of Worcester and Coventry University

Case Study: Sheffield Hallam University

A blended learning approach to practice placement within the education setting of the Allied Health Department at Sheffield Hallam University was introduced for seven BSc level 6 Physiotherapy students and two MSc pre-registration 1st year students.

Students had a neurology, interprofessional or musculoskeletal focus and taught on the relevant level modules. The placement consisted of 2 days a week teaching, 2 days a week working on a project and 1 day a week completing an asynchronous online package which gave them the underpinning knowledge around teaching and learning.

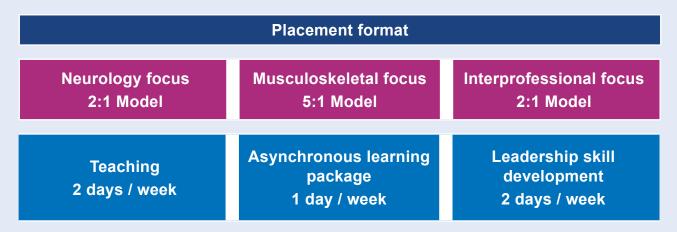


Figure 5. Education Placement Format at Sheffield Hallam University

Supervision was a 2:1 or 5:1 model which worked well and students valued the peer support throughout the placement. The students completed a project independently to develop their leadership skills. They created musculoskeletal anatomy or neuroanatomy resources for students, a resource for new students to explain inter- professional learning and a resource for students to explain the marking and moderation process.

Students were very much part of the team and attended team and department meetings. It was important they were seen as 'student lecturer's'. Their progress during the placement was huge. By the end of the 6 week placement all students were able to plan and lead teaching sessions independently. Students with the interprofessional focus planned and led an online interprofessional teaching session to 60 students from 14 different professions in their last week. They commented 'that they would never have believed they would achieve this' and were very proud of themselves.

The placement was evaluated as successful by both staff and students. The students liked the blended learning approach as well as the peer support which they found particularly valuable. They all recognised the skills they had learnt and recognised their value for future clinical practice.

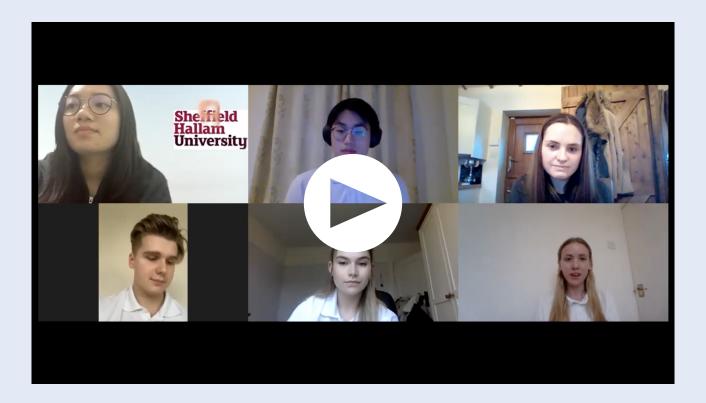


Figure 6. Reflections from students at SHU

"Throughout the placement I was able to learn and apply many skills relevant to clinical practice."

"This placement has facilitated me to start reflecting on a deeper level."

"This education placement has been a journey of self-discovery and I feel I have developed both personally and professionally."

"This placement has made me realise my own abilities; I have grown!"

Resources

GROW model (Mindtools, 2020) www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR-89.htm

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