

A Short Guide to... Educational Supervision

The role of supervision at Liverpool

The University of Liverpool regards Education Supervision as a fundamental component for the delivery of safe and relevant learning opportunities on clinical placements. It is a key contributor to a positive student experience. For students, time spent on clinical placements provides the opportunity to apply their scientific knowledge in the clinical context and to develop their skills as a medical practitioner. Clinical placements are also the time when students develop as professionals with an understanding of the important concept of professionalism

In order to develop these skills in a way that protects patient safety, supervision by senior clinicians is essential during clinical placements. Supervision is broadly divided into Clinical Supervision whereby there is always a senior clinician responsible for a student during any episode of patient contact (e.g. on the wards, in clinics and whilst undertaking any other patient contact) and Educational Supervision where a designated senior clinician will have overall responsibility for individual student's progress on a placement. They will see the student on a weekly basis, either individually or as a small group. This guide focusses on Educational Supervision.

Knowledge and Skills for Effective Supervision

In order to carry out the required duties of undergraduate supervision, you need to be accredited as a supervisor and recognised as a trainer by the GMC. If not, for example you are a specialty trainee doctors, you must be working under the guidance of a nominated Consultant who is a recognised trainer. This will involve undertaking the basic supervision courses provided by most Trusts and quality assured by Health Education Northwest (HEENW). In addition, all supervisors must be trained in equality, diversity and cultural awareness. Additional specific skills needed for undergraduate educational supervision include:

- Understanding the requirements of the undergraduate curriculum
- Understanding students' workplace assessments, e-portfolio and workbooks.
- Ability to give constructive and timely feedback to undergraduates.
- Familiarity with School processes.
- Awareness of how and when to report a student about whom there is a concern.

To allow the best chance for student support or remediation it is important that the School year team is aware of any concerns as soon as possible and not only at the end of a placement.

This information is all available via [Liverpool Educators Online](#) (link).

In addition, Educational supervisors need to be familiar with:

- Supporting students with a range of educational needs and learning agreements
- Principles of coaching, mentoring and pastoral care (for students this is managed centrally)
- Assessment and appraisal processes
- Career support

Time allocation for Educational Supervision

Educational supervision requires adequate time allocation for senior clinicians undertaking this role. This is estimated to be of the order of 0.25 PA per student per week. The overall calculation will reflect group size. If a supervisor supports 4 students then the following calculation for a four-week rotation provides an approximate guide:

Per Four Week Placement per 4 students

- Week 1 Initial one-to-one meeting 30 minutes per student or group meeting: 2 hours
- Weeks 2 and 3 one hour per week in groups of 4: 2 hours
- Week 4 Final one-to-one meetings one hour per student - 1 hour per meeting plus 1 hour for preparation and completion of portfolio report: 8 hours
- Email correspondence, training, support of students in difficulty, (1 hour per student): 4 hours

TOTAL: 16 hours over 4 weeks = 1 PA (4 hour session) per week (for 4 students)

Note: This allocation is needed during the time that students are present within a placement and is not a commitment for the whole year. The actual time allocation can be annualised and is agreed between the individual clinician and their Trust.

Ahead of a quality visit to a Trust, the Quality Team will send out a survey to Educational Supervisors with questions regarding time allocation for Educational Supervision and undergraduate education more broadly. Participation in this survey would be greatly appreciated by the School.

For a more detailed overview of Educational Supervision within the School, please see the full [Clinical and Educational Handbook](#) (link) available on the [Educational Supervisors page](#) of [LEO](#) (links).

Contact this documents author, or the [School of Medicine Engagement team](#) [mednews@liverpool.ac.uk] if you find any digital content difficult or impossible to use, either directly or with an assistive technology such as a screen reader.

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