

**Information for Prospective Practice Educators**  
**Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals**  
**University of Leeds**

*You have been asked to act as a Practice Educator (PE) by a physiotherapist or paramedic intending to undertake the Independent and Supplementary Prescribing course at the University of Leeds. This document is designed to address any questions or concerns you might have about becoming a PE.*

*If you have any questions that are not answered below, please do not hesitate to contact the module lead:*

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### **What is a Practice Educator?**

A Practice Educator (PE) is a healthcare professional who is annotated as a prescriber with their professional registration body. A PE directs and supervises a trainee non-medical prescriber (also called independent prescriber) during a period of learning in practice. This is a required element of non-medical prescribing (NMP) courses. PEs will also be responsible for assessing whether the learning outcomes have been met and whether the physiotherapist or paramedic has acquired the necessary competencies.

While there are a number of Independent and Supplementary Prescribing courses offered by Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in the United Kingdom, all courses will differ slightly in terms of teaching and assessment requirements. If you have been a PE for a physiotherapist or paramedic undertaking the course at another HEI, it is important that you know what the requirements are in terms of training and supervision for students at the University of Leeds.

### **What qualifications do I need to become a PE?**

The criteria to act as a PE are as follows:

- ✓ have 3 years prescribing experience
- ✓ is qualified as an Independent Prescriber
- ✓ have active prescribing competence applicable to area in which they will supervise the trainee prescriber
- ✓ have appropriate patient-facing clinical and diagnostic skills and the ability to assess these skills

The prospective PE can confirm that:

- ✓ Have supported or supervised healthcare professionals and have undertaken supervisor training (please provide details below)
- ✓ Are new to the role of Practice Educator
- ✓ Have undertaken Health Education England's Education and Clinical Supervisor module (<https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/educational-and-clinical-supervisors/>)

**What training and experience do physiotherapists or paramedics need to have before they can undertake the Independent and Supplementary Prescribing module at the University of Leeds?**

Physiotherapists or paramedics must have at least two years appropriate patient-oriented experience in a UK hospital, community or primary care setting following registration and they have up-to-date clinical, pharmacological and pharmaceutical knowledge relevant to their intended area of prescribing practice.

**How is the Independent and Supplementary course at the University of Leeds structured?**

Physiotherapists or paramedics attend the University for 12 of these 26 days but are expected to engage with online materials for the remaining 14 days.

They will also complete 12 days (7.5 hour days) (equivalent to 90 hours) of *Supervised Learning in Practice* over the duration of the course.

Those who start the course in September can expect to complete in April. Those who start the course in January can expect to complete in August. Some physiotherapists or paramedics choose to undertake an accelerated form of the course and complete within three months. While it is challenging to complete the course in this shortened timeframe, it is possible for a student to do this with the right support and mentorship both from the University and their workplace.

The course meets the HCPC requirements for the preparation of physiotherapist or paramedic prescribers in terms of programme curricula, content, length, mode of delivery, supervision in practice and assessment strategies.

**What is involved in *Supervised Learning in Practice*?**

Physiotherapists or paramedics are required to undertake a period of supervised learning in practice that covers a total of 12 days (7.5 hour days) (equivalent to 90 hours).

The trainee physiotherapist or paramedic prescriber will be supervised by you, the PE. You need to agree to provide supervision, support and shadowing opportunities for the student and be familiar with the requirements of the course

You as the PE are not required to directly supervise all of the hours detailed above, however, you must be satisfied with the level of knowledge and experience of any prescriber that will supervise the student. Following completion of the Supervised Learning in Practice, you as the PE will be signing your trainee off as a competent non-medical prescriber. Therefore, we recommend you supervise at least 50% of the practice hours. We do not support supervision of students by doctors in Foundation Years 1 or 2.

There is no financial reward from the University of Leeds for being a PE.

### **What is my role in supervising the non-medical prescriber?**

As the PE, you have a crucial role in educating and assessing non-medical prescribers. This involves:

- Establishing a learning contract with the trainee
- Planning a learning programme which will provide the opportunity for the trainee to meet their learning objectives and gain competency in prescribing
- Facilitating learning by encouraging critical thinking and reflection
- Providing dedicated time and opportunities for the trainee to observe how you as PE conducts a consultation / interview with patients and / or carers and the development of a management plan
- Conducting a Midway Progress Review with the trainee physiotherapist or paramedic prescriber
- Allowing opportunities for the trainee to carry out consultations and suggest clinical management and prescribing options, which are then discussed with you the PE
- Helping ensure that the trainee integrates theory with practice
- Taking opportunities to allow in-depth discussion and analysis of clinical management using a random case analysis approach, when patient care and prescribing behaviour can be examined further



- Assessing and verifying that, by the end of the course, the trainee is competent to assume the prescribing role

### **What qualifies as supervised learning practice?**

The supervised learning practice may include or be based upon some of the following:

- Joint review of a role profile/job analysis to identify areas of existing work where prescribing competencies can be developed and to identify areas where additional experience will be required.
- Periods when the physiotherapist or paramedic observes you conducting assessments, consultations, monitoring and prescribing, normally in areas which are related to the medical conditions and circumstances in which the physiotherapist or paramedic is likely to work. During this time there should be sufficient time to discuss each case and it is important that you not only examine the clinical skills you demonstrated but the other knowledge, skills and attitudes you brought to bear on the process, for example the detection of non-verbal cues, hidden agendas and the value of intuition.
- Periods when the physiotherapist or paramedic conducts assessments, consultations, monitoring and prescribing, under your direct supervision. Direct supervision should be accompanied by reflection; for example ask questions such as “how did you know when to...? Could you explain why...”
- Periods when the physiotherapist or paramedic conducts assessments, consultations, monitoring and prescribing, normally in areas which are related to the medical conditions and circumstances in which the student is likely to work and prescribe, without your direct supervision but with specific opportunities to seek advice to clarify or confirm decisions made. This is also a good opportunity to review any evidence claimed by the student.

It is important that the emphasis is on patient management and use of diagnostic equipment in the area of practice selected by you and the student.



### **What supports do the University offer to me if I agree to become a PE?**

A comprehensive handbook containing information on the course structure and content, requirements for supervised learning in practice and your responsibilities as a PE will be provided to you, through your trainee, at the outset of the course. You are also invited to attend a 2-hour induction and course overview session delivered to the new intake of non-medical prescribing students and their PEs. This will take place at the University of Leeds on the first day of the course, either in September or January. You can also access online training materials to supplement the information provided to PEs during the induction session. PEs will also have the opportunity to attend 'Educational Supervision in the Workplace' sessions which include:

- Clinical education supervisors training: essentials for all who support pre and post registration physiotherapist or paramedics and technicians in the workplace
- Developing learning and teaching in the workplace
- Supervising and assessing your trainee in the workplace
- Monitoring progress and supporting trainees who require additional support

Please note places on this course are subject to funding approval.

Evaluating the training programme: leading change to enhance practice A member of the University team can also speak with you by telephone or Skype/FaceTime at any point during the course to answer any questions that you might have.

*Thank you for taking the time to read through this document. We hope that you will be happy to act as PE for a physiotherapist or paramedic undertaking the Independent and Supplementary course at the University of Leeds. Experience has shown that student progress is directly linked to the amount of time invested in their clinical supervision by their PE. It is a role that is highly valued by students and the course leads alike and is vital for the future development of the healthcare workforce.*