

Title	Graduate Program Clinical Experiential Learning Placements
Date	May 10, 2024
Applies to	<p>Master of Nursing <i>MN- Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner (MN-PHCNP)</i> <i>MN – Leadership in Professional Nursing Practice (MN-LPNP)</i></p> <p>Graduate Diploma <i>Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner – Graduate Diploma Program (PHCNP)</i> <i>Graduate Diploma in Professional Practice, Clinical Leadership and Education (PPCLE)</i></p>

Clinical experiential learning placements are an integral component of the graduate nursing program to provide students opportunities to develop nursing competencies and skills related to future graduate-prepared nursing practice. The Placement Coordinators, with input from Faculty Leads and course instructors, arranges the clinical learning opportunities for the MN Program fields (i.e., Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner – PHCNP and Leadership in Professional Nursing Practice -LPNP) and the Graduate Diplomas to ensure alignment with the course and program learning outcomes.

This policy will address:

1. Clinical Placement Processes
2. Placement Assignment Following an Unsuccessful Attempt
3. Conflict of Interest
4. Quality of Learning Environment

1. Clinical Placement Process

All aspects of experiential learning coordination occur between the Placement Coordinators, Faculty Leads, and the designated agency contacts. This typically includes Student Affairs, nurse practitioners, physicians, executive directors, managers, etc. Coordination involves several key tasks such as arranging placements, confirming the availability and expertise of mentors/preceptors/agencies to meet clinical requirements, verifying affiliation agreements, communicating assignments to students and agency contacts, conveying agency onboarding requirements, and providing preceptor resource information.

Students **are not** permitted to arrange their own clinical experiences and **must not** contact agencies (including staff and/or leadership) for the purpose of arranging placements. Interference in the placement assignment process will result in the student’s removal from said placement. In some situations, students in the MN-LPNP program may contact potential preceptors/mentors only after receiving explicit approval from the Faculty Lead. The experiential learning opportunities **are not** paid employment and students **cannot** be compensated for their role during the course.

The following principles apply to clinical practice placements:

- Clinical schedules are coordinated directly between student and preceptor(s).
 - Students are expected to be available for the weekly practice hours as outlined by course/learning plans.
 - In the PHCNP programs, students are expected to adhere to the placement schedules of their preceptors including day, evening, overnight and weekend shifts, as negotiated with their preceptors.

- For the NP Programs, placements are arranged within Western’s southwest geographic area defined by the Ontario Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Program <https://np-education.ca/about/clinical-placement-area/>.
- For the MN-LPNP program and PPCLE diploma, placement locations are made on an individual basis as appropriate, and the placement schedule is determined between the student and preceptor with a requirement that all hours will be completed within the designated timeframe.
- Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from placements.
- In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, students will follow the School of Nursing’s direction regarding attendance at the clinical setting.

2. Placement Assignment Following Unsuccessful Attempt

If a student is unsuccessful in an experiential learning course, the Faculty Lead/Course Coordinator will inform the Remediation Committee and the Placement Coordinator. The subsequent placement assignment processes for the student will be determined by the remediation committee.

3. Conflict of Interest

Experiential learning opportunities are an integral component of graduate nursing education. In the placement experience, the learner role takes precedence. The Graduate Program is committed to supporting students to have access to a fair clinical learning experiences and mitigating risk associated with real or any perceived conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest includes previous and/or current work/volunteering experience or employment of family or friends in the placements and any pre-established relationships that may exist that could influence students’ clinical placement experiences and evaluations. In some instances, e.g., rural settings, students may be required to care for family members or other community members as part of their clinical training. The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) Practice Standard on [Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationships](#) provides guidance in these situations. As practicing RNs, graduate students are expected to be familiar and adhere to this standard of practice.

Responsibilities

Student

1. Routinely review and assess for real or perceived conflicts of interest that may apply to their circumstances, using the CNO’s Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationships Practice Standard as a guide.
2. Disclose conflicts of interest to the Placement Coordinator via email in advance of any placement assignment.
 - 2.1. Students who do not disclose a conflict of interest in a timely manner prior to placement commencing may be subject to the [Involuntary Withdrawal policy](#) from clinical practice courses.
3. Provide supporting documentation as requested by the Placement Coordinator.

School of Nursing

1. The Placement Coordinators will consult with Faculty Leads as necessary to review disclosed conflicts of interest and request any supporting documentation from student.
2. The Placement Coordinators, in collaboration with Faculty Leads, will make the final decision as to whether a clinical setting is appropriate for a student with disclosed conflicts of interest and assign placements accordingly. If deemed necessary, the placement coordinator, in collaboration with the Faculty Lead(s), will consult the potential preceptor/mentor regarding the conflict of interest.
3. The Placement Coordinator will notify the Faculty Lead/Course Coordinator regarding any students who do not disclose a conflict of interest in a timely manner prior to placement assignment, which will be put forward to the Remediation Committee.
 - 3.1. The Faculty Lead or Placement Coordinator will communicate the outcome to the student.

4. Quality of Learning Environment

The faculty in the School of Nursing Graduate Programs are invested in supporting students to have clinical experiential learning in quality learning environments. All concerns related to safety and/or adverse events during placements are managed as per the [Adverse Events Reporting policy](#). Should students have concerns during their placement regarding their experiences, their first point of contact is their preceptor and course instructor. Concerns are escalated as needed to other Graduate Program representatives, including: Faculty Lead/Course Coordinator and Placement Coordinator. In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the Graduate Program representative will communicate with practice partners as needed to investigate and address concerns as appropriate.

Definitions

Clinical Experiential Learning: The use of clinical experiential learning in the context of this policy includes all program activities related to experiential learning, including but not limited to laboratory practice, clinical placements and experiential learning in research, practice and leadership.

Faculty and University/College Policies and Documents
Faculty of Health Sciences Policies and Procedures
University Policies
Senate Policies and Procedures and SGPS Regulations
School of Nursing Graduate Policies