



Appendix II

HIGHER DIPLOMA IN NURSING (CHILDREN'S NURSING)

THIS PROTOCOL PERTAINS TO THE FOLLOWING EVENTS: WHEN A STUDENT IS HAVING SIGNIFICANT DIFFICULTIES IN MEETING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS DURING A PRACTICE PLACEMENT OR WHEN A STUDENT IS UNSUCCESSFUL IN THEIR CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

The UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Systems and our Healthcare Providers are committed to supporting students as they progress through their Higher Diploma in Nursing (Children's Nursing) (Post Registration Children's Nursing) practice placements, which prepare them to become registered Children's nurses.

This protocol will be enacted when a student has significant difficulties in meeting performance indicators during a practice placement and outlines the events that should follow when a student is unsuccessful in meeting the required performance indicators and competencies in the final assessment of the National Clinical Assessment Document (NCAD). This protocol is implemented in the context of the programme derogation on progression, which all students, preceptors, Post Registration Course Co-Ordinator (PRCC) and personal tutors should be familiar with¹

The following actions should occur to assist the student in meeting the required performance indicators in the NCAD while on any practice placement. They are sub-divided into sections reflecting the sequential steps, commencing at the intermediate meeting, that outline all processes until the repeat and final opportunity for the student.

If students finalise the completion of their NCAD documents before their practice placement period is completed and if subsequently, a serious performance or professional issue is identified during the remainder of the placement period, then the original successful NCAD module outcome will be rescinded i.e., the pass grade will become a Fail Grade and a repeat placement with a new NCAD will be required.

General note:

Students on the Higher Diploma in Nursing (Children's Nursing) programme are 'employees'; the student should also refer to the CHI/HR/HSE policies and guidelines.

Programme Progression Requirements

- Students enrolled in the Higher Diploma in Nursing (Children's Nursing) will be evaluated through NCAD assessments at entry phase (1A), Intermediate Phase (1B), and Exit Phase (4A & 4B) during their practice placements. To advance in the program, students must pass the Entry Phase NCAD assessments (1A) and Intermediate Phase (1B) before proceeding to the Exit Phase (4A & 4B) clinical assessment. To complete the program, students must pass all clinical components 1A entry phase 1B .
- Students must complete their outstanding clinical time before being considered to have completed the programme. This may require the completion of clinical placements 4C +/- 4D which are considered part of the Exit Phase. If a student subsequently fails during Exit phase (4C or 4D), this will be entered into the Exit Phase exam board.

- Students undertaking the Higher Diploma in Nursing (Children's Nursing) are entitled to one repeat attempt at each practice placement. If unsuccessful, students will be ineligible to continue in the nursing programme.
- Students on all placements who require a second repeat attempt may apply to the SNMHS Governing Board. This subsequent attempt will be at the Governing Board's discretion and with the support of the Director of Nursing at the HCP
This protocol reflects these pathways for progression.

Step 1- Intermediate Meeting and 'Intermediate Learning Plan'.

- If the student is having significant difficulties in achieving the NCAD standards, it is vital that these difficulties are identified as early as possible to allow time for improvement within that practice placement period.
- If significant difficulties in meeting performance indicators are identified, they should be formally addressed in the intermediate meeting. The preceptor will prepare a plan to support the student to addressing the competencies that require improvement during the remaining weeks of that placement. If difficulties in achieving performance indicators occur after this intermediate meeting, an additional meeting must be held to identify these difficulties and a plan to support students in meeting the performance indicators.
- Where an intermediate meeting is not scheduled (practice placements of 3 weeks or less), the steps pertaining to a formal Intermediate Meeting and 'Intermediate Learning Plan' will apply. The student can request an 'Intermediate Meeting Form' from the PRCC or UCD Programme Director.
- An 'intermediate learning plan' is developed for the student. In this plan detailed notes of the students learning needs and the proposed actions to address these needs are made. This learning plan should be written in the NCAD.
- The PRCC will support this student throughout the placement and focus on their learning needs. They will also contact and inform the personal tutor of the specific issues raised. The UCD personal tutor/UCD nominee may meet with the student at this time or any other time. The student is also advised to contact their UCD personal tutor for additional support.
- It is advisable that the preceptor document any further meetings/observations with this student between the intermediate and final meeting. This can be done briefly, giving dates and a brief description of the support offered, and it should also be documented at the end of the 'intermediate learning plan'.

Step 2- Final Meeting NCAD.

- Subsequent to the final meeting, if the student has not met the required domains/performance indicators in the NCAD for that placement, the preceptor will inform the PRCC, who will inform the UCD personal tutor by e-mail.
- The PRCC may attend the final meeting if requested by the student, preceptor, or UCD personal tutor.
- The UCD personal tutor may attend this interview.
- A record of how the student has not met the domains/performance indicators in the NCAD will be documented in detail by the preceptor in the final interview outcome sheet in the NCAD.
- Students can prepare for step 3. A copy of the 'Final Learning Plan' is included in the NCAD appendix. Students should consider doing some preparatory work on their learning prior to the 'Final Learning Plan' meeting.

Step 3- Implementing a 'Final Learning Plan' after an Unsuccessful Practice placement².

- The student, PRCC, UCD personal tutor/nominee and preceptor will arrange to meet (if possible, by the end of the placement or after the final meeting, but it must occur within two weeks of the end of the placement unless there are exceptional circumstances).

- The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the student's learning needs and draw up a 'Final Learning Plan' that will guide and support them in their subsequent clinical learning. (These documents are available from the UCD programme office.) In conjunction with the input from the PRCC, preceptor, and the UCD personal tutor, the final learning plan is drawn up with the student.
- This 'Final Learning Plan' will identify the student's learning needs and guide them in areas that require further development during both their subsequent and repeat practice placements.
- During the final learning plan meeting, the personal tutor should advise the student of the following important considerations, which should be documented as actions in the final learning plan.
 - In the case of the 'repeat' practice placement, it is mandatory that the student presents their 'Final Learning Plan' to their new preceptor so that they can avail of the required support.
 - The UCD personal tutor should emphasise that the domains of competence are pertinent across all practice placements/assessments. It should also be emphasised that the opportunity to receive early support from a preceptor is in the student's best interest.
- The 'Final Learning Plan' will be agreed and duplicated so that the student, CPC & UCD personal tutor retain a copy.

Step 4 - NCAD Presentation to the UCD Personal Tutor.

- The student presents this NCAD to their UCD personal tutor on the designated date for presentation of the clinical assessment documentation. In addition, the student submits the details of subsequent practice placement requirements to the PRCC.
- The 'Fail grade' is recorded at the next available examination board.
- The student is offered one repeat attempt at practice placement, which will be the final opportunity to complete the clinical module.
- The duration of the repeat practice placement will normally be of 4 weeks duration unless the duration of the original placement was of less than 4 weeks. In which case, the duration of the practice placement will be the same duration as the original practice placement. The duration of the repeat practice placement will have been documented in the final learning plan.
- The repeat clinical module will incur a repeat fee.

Step 5 - Repeat Practice placement: First Repeat Attempt.

- The student is offered an opportunity to repeat the practice placement with a new NCAD.
- Students normally return to the original practice placement area to repeat the practice placement however, a new practice placement area may be provided.
- A new NCAD is provided with the required domains/performance criteria assessed at the same level as the original NCAD.
- As early as is convenient on the repeat practice placement, the PRCC, the student and new preceptor will hold a preliminary meeting with the student³. During this meeting, the student must present the 'Final Learning Plan' to their new preceptor, outlining their documented learning needs and the areas where the student requires additional support. The intermediate meeting initiates the same protocol as step 1 if the student has significant difficulties.
- Given that this is the final opportunity for this student in this practice placement/module, the UCD personal tutor/nominee in their supportive role shall meet the student at a convenient time soon after the intermediate meeting.
- If a student does not meet the required domains/performance indicators in the NCAD in this repeat practice placement, the final meeting follows the same protocol as outlined in step 2.
- Presentation of this NCAD to the UCD personal tutor is mandatory.
- If a student is unsuccessful in this first 'final' repeat attempt, the student will be considered ineligible

to continue in the nursing programme.

- No subsequent attempt can be considered except with the written agreement of the Director of Nursing/Midwifery of the clinical partner site and through application to the Programme Board(See Programme Derogations below).

Step 6- Repeat Clinical Placement Second Repeat and final Attempt.

- The student is offered a second repeat and final opportunity to repeat the practice placement/clinical module.
- A new NCAD is provided with the required domains/performance criteria assessed at the same level as the original NCAD.
- As early as is convenient for practice placement, the student, PRCC and the new preceptor will hold a preliminary meeting with the student.
- During this meeting the student must present the 'Final Learning Plan' to their new preceptor, outlining their documented learning needs and the areas in which the student requires additional support.
- The intermediate meeting initiates the same protocol as step 1 if the student is having significant difficulties. This is the student's final opportunity in this practice placement/module. The UCD personal tutor/nominee in their supportive role shall meet the student at a convenient time soon after the intermediate meeting.
- If a student does not meet the required domains /performance criteria in the NCAD in a repeat practice placement, the final interview follows the protocol outlined in step 2.
- Presentation of this NCAD to the UCD personal tutor is mandatory.
- If a student is unsuccessful in this second and 'final' repeat attempt, the student will be considered ineligible to continue in the nursing programme.
- No subsequent attempt can be considered.

Programme Derogations⁴

- A letter of support from the hospital site's Director of Nursing is required to accompany a letter from the student outlining why they warrant a second repeat (and final) attempt. The letter should be submitted to the Standing Committee at UCD. Following this committee meeting, it will be referred to the Governing Board at UCD, with support from their UCD personal tutor.
- The programme director will communicate the Governing Board's outcome to the Director of Nursing, the PRCC, the UCD personal tutor, and the student.
- If the Governing Board determine that the student should be afforded a second repeat and final attempt, the PRCC will arrange the placement site.
- In the event of the student's application being rejected by the Governing Board or does not receive a letter of support from the clinical partner site, the student will be considered ineligible to continue in the nursing programme.

² A Derogation describes where a module or programme wishes to be granted exemption from the University Academic Regulations and a formal derogation is required. Derogation approval is granted by the University Undergraduate Governing Board.

Description of Outcomes	
Outcome	Description
PASS (P)	<p>Domains / Performance Indicators in NCAD or Principles / Assessment Criteria in MCAT have been achieved.</p> <p>The student is required to complete outstanding clinical time at the end of the programme.</p>
Incomplete Assessment (IM)	<p>Incomplete (IM) Must Pass (temporary)- the student has not satisfactorily completed a 'must pass' component of a practice assessment and on in module repeat for that component was not available.</p> <p>Domains /Performance Indicators in NCAD or Principles /Assessment Criteria in MCAT have not been achieved, as the student cannot be assessed due to insufficient time in the clinical area, and the student has no extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>The incomplete assessment will only become a Pass (P) once overall domains/ performance indicators in NACD or principles/assessment criteria in MCAT have been achieved. The student is required to complete outstanding clinical time before completion of the stage.</p>
Extenuating Circumstances (IX)	<p>Domains/ Performance Indicators in the NCAD or Principles/ Assessment Criteria in MCAT have not been achieved due to extenuating circumstances. (See current UCD policy on extenuating circumstances)</p> <p>An 'Incomplete with Extenuating' (IX) grade is awarded based on a recommendation from the Extenuating Circumstances Committee.</p>
Fail (F)	<p>Domains /Performance Indicators in NCAD or Principles/Assessment Criteria in MCAT have not been achieved during the practice placement.</p>
No Grade (NM) or Absent (ABS)	<p>Failure to attend and/or present a completed NCAD assessment document to the UCD personal tutor, with no evidence of extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>NCAD or MCAT submitted did not merit a grade (e.g. performance indicators or assessment criteria are not signed appropriately or missing signatures in signature bank).</p> <p>NM or ABS outcome is treated as a fail grade and a clinical attempt. The student will need to undertake a repeat placement which is a first and final attempt and will incur a repeat fee.</p>