

Pre-registration Optometry Student Placements at the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital: A Guide for Students & Supervisors

The Ophthalmology Directorate is pleased to be able to offer clinical placements to pre-registration optometry students seeking Hospital Eye Service experience as part of the scheme for registration. Supervisors and students should read the following before considering whether to apply for a pre-registration placement.

Apply early & be flexible

As we have limited capacity for clinical placements, the supervisor should contact the Trust at the earliest opportunity to arrange the placement. Where possible, we will arrange a placement within 'stage 1' of the scheme for registration (July to March inclusive), but you should be prepared to be flexible with respect to dates¹.

Reference and contract

Prior to confirming a placement, the Trust's Human Resources department will require a reference to be reviewed by the Head of Optometry, and will require the student to sign an honorary contract before commencing the placement.

Busy clinics

The Ophthalmology Directorate has become increasingly busy in recent years due to increased referrals and the availability of new treatments. We will endeavour to provide as comprehensive an experience as possible, but at times the busy nature of the clinics may impact on the extent to which the clinician can engage the student.

Hands-on experience

As is anticipated by the Scheme for Registration Handbook¹, we are unable to provide hands-on experience. Whilst we will endeavour to provide a varied clinical experience, we are unable to guarantee that the student will encounter every condition or assessment that they hope to see. In this event, the supervisor should endeavour to make arrangements for the student to gain such experience elsewhere¹.

Timetable

We will provide a timetable for the full placement on the first day, or sooner if possible. Placement timetables are difficult to organise and may be subject to change at short notice. If you miss a session which you regard as key, we will endeavour to provide that experience on a different day. The timetable will normally include experience of surgery in theatre where possible.

Fees

Trust will charge a fee for pre-registration placements. The income generated will be used to pay for equipment for the eye clinic or training for eye clinic staff. Please email optometry@nuh.nhs.uk for details of the current fee.

Cancellation

The Trust retains the right to cancel the placement with immediate effect in the event of nonattendance without prior notification or inappropriate conduct on the part of the student. In this event the full placement fee will still be payable.

Top Tips for a Successful Placement

Top tips: Supervisors

- Contact the Trust early
- Be flexible with respect to dates

Top tips: Pre-reg Students

- Arrive on time
- Dress smartly
- Be polite and respectful to patients at all times
- Be polite and respectful to hospital staff at all times – remember you need us more than we need you!
- Remember that patients may be anxious, and clinicians may have to break distressing news to patients at times
- If you are asked to leave the clinic room at any time, do so without hesitation or complaint
- Ensure your mobile phone is silent and hidden during clinic time & do not use it at any time whilst in a clinic room (unless you have requested to use it to access relevant clinical resources and this request has been agreed).
- If your timetabled clinic runs behind, you may be asked to leave the room. If this happens, please leave immediately and without complaint. Where possible we will try to accommodate you in an alternative clinic, but this may not always be possible.
- Be prepared for the fact that you may not necessarily see all the conditions/scenarios that you hope to see.

Contact Details

Before the placement: Ophthalmology Secretariat (EyeSecs@nuh.nhs.uk)

During the placement: Helen Friend (Optometry Department) 01603 288067
(optometry@nuh.nhs.uk)

Human Resources: Sue Hipperson (Recruitment Administrator)
(recruitment@nuh.nhs.uk)

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References

- 1 College of Optometrists (2019). Scheme for Registration Handbook 2019-20.
<https://www.college-optometrists.org/COO/media/Media/Documents/Scheme%20for%20Registration/Stage%20One/Scheme-for-Registration-NHS-HES-logbook.pdf> [accessed 29/03/2023]