

Evidenced based assessment

Reference: PA3-A-1 Last Updated: 19/12/2018

All assessments must be supported by a diverse and reliable evidence base. These are the standards that set out our expectations of evidenced based assessment.

Standards for student supervision and assessment

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:

7.3 practice assessors make and record objective, evidenced-based assessments on conduct, proficiency and achievement, drawing on student records, direct observations, student self-reflection, and other resources

7.8 practice assessors have an understanding of the student's learning and achievement in theory

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

5.10 students are assessed across practice settings and learning environments as required by their programme

5.12 practice assessment is facilitated and evidenced by observations and other appropriate methods

5.13 students' self-reflections contribute to, and are evidenced in, assessments

5.14 a range of people including service users contribute to student assessment

In order to make an evidenced based assessment the practice assessor must first gather together the relevant evidence. In order to do this they must judge what evidence is required. This can depend on the student, their learning needs, their stage of learning, the placement they are in and the course outcomes. The practice assessor must be able to show that the evidence they have gathered comes from a variety of relevant sources and that it informed their assessment decisions.

Sources of evidence can include the following:

- Direct observation of the student
- Communication with practice supervisors
- Student documentation, such as a practice assessment document or ongoing record of achievement
- Communication with any other practice assessors
- Communication with anyone else who may be involved in the education of the student
- Communication with the academic assessor
- Student self reflection
- Communication and an ongoing relationship with the student

In order to build an evidence base, practice assessors must be given access to the relevant documents, processes and databases for a good assessment. This includes contact with practice supervisors and access to student documentation (for example the student's ongoing record of achievement).

The AEI, with their practice learning partners, should develop and manage appropriate systems and processes to facilitate access to student learning and achievement records. They should be able to evidence that the practice assessor was given suitable access to student documentation, the learning environment, and other relevant resources.

The practice assessor must be able to show that their assessment decision was suitably evidenced based, and that they included all relevant sources.

All assessment decisions must be evidenced by good record keeping. It is the responsibility of the practice assessor to ensure that all records they provide are accurate and up to date. For nurses, midwives, and nursing associates this is in line with the following section from the Code:

The Code: professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates

10 Keep clear and accurate records relevant to your practice

This includes but is not limited to patient records. It includes all records that are relevant to your scope of practice. To achieve this, you must:

10.1 complete all records at the time or as soon as possible after an event, recording if the notes are written some time after the event

10.2 identify any risks or problems that have arisen and the steps taken to deal with them, so that colleagues who use the records have all the information they need

10.3 complete all records accurately and without any falsification, taking immediate and appropriate action if you become aware that someone has not kept to these requirements 10.4 attribute any entries you make in any paper or electronic records to yourself, making sure they are clearly written, dated and timed, and do not include unnecessary abbreviations, jargon or speculation

10.5 take all steps to make sure that all records are kept securely, and

10.6 collect, treat and store all data and research findings appropriately

The AEI, with their practice learning partners, is responsible for ensuring good record keeping takes place.

Practice assessors must base their assessment decisions on a diverse evidence base, and take responsibility for those decisions.

While the evidence base should include a variety of sources, the following is an area of particular of importance for gathering evidence:

Observing the student

Standards for student supervision and assessment

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:

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7.7 there are sufficient opportunities for the practice assessor to gather and coordinate feedback from practice supervisors, any other practice assessors, and relevant people, in order to be assured about their decisions for assessment and progression

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure:

5.10 students are assessed across practice settings and learning environments as required by their programme It is a requirement for the practice assessor to observe the student when making an assessment of their practice learning. We do not specify when or how this must happen, only that it must form part of the overall assessment, and evidence base.

Observations should help to build an overall picture of student performance. We do not require that assessors must assess every placement. How often and in what environments observations will be done will vary depending

on, student performance, their outcomes, the skills and knowledge of the assessor, and how practice learning is organised.

The practice assessor, working with the AEI and its practice learning partners, must make a judgment about what number or type of observations may be needed for individual students.

If the practice assessor is working outside of the practice learning setting then arrangements must be put in place for them to observe students within that placement, if necessary. It will be the responsibility of the AEI, with their practice learning partners, to manage how practice assessors might access learning environments.