

BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science Link Lecturer Strategy.

A link-lecturer strategy for a dynamic workforce:

Paramedic practice is dynamic and peripatetic by nature; this presents a challenge to the provision of pastoral support unique to this field of healthcare practice. This complexity is further impacted for the paramedic provision at the University of Suffolk by the rural geographical spread of hubs throughout the region which currently include Suffolk, North Essex, and Norfolk. As a consequence, the University of Suffolk has reviewed traditional models of 'link-lecturing' practice used to support other pre-registration programmes to recognise the need for an evolving model of support to students and practice partners.

The model outlined below reflects the blended learning approach used throughout the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, utilising virtual learning platforms and face to face contact to provide an innovative means of supporting practice learning.

The link-lecturer model adopted by the BSc Paramedic Science has four key components:

- 1) University of Suffolk has implemented a programme of virtual support available to students and paramedic educators. A designated member of academic staff has been allocated each placement area to provide targeted support and guidance to both staff and students. This support is offered via the means of Skype, phone call, face to face or online virtual meetings to facilitate and support Paramedic educators and students in the practice setting.
- 2) All modules have had online assessment tutorials uploaded accessible to students to access at all times, this providing guidance on assignments and the practice components of the course when in the practice setting.
- 3) The course team have developed, in collaboration with practice representatives, a Paramedic Educator handbook with course information and advice for supporting learning in paramedic practice. This will be complimented by a content hosted on the University of Suffolk's 'Supporting Practice Learning' webpage and Paramedic educator updates.
- 4) The course team will continue to visit learners and paramedic educators in practice if required to support staff or student development, and to audit and monitor the quality of the practice learning environment.

Link Lecturer core principles:

1. To foster collaborative working relationship between the university and its stakeholders to ensure a progressive and innovative partnership with placement areas.
2. Promote paramedic educator awareness and appropriately signpost mentors to relevant information to support learning in practice.
3. Provide support to Paramedic educators and students around documentation, learning integration, learning opportunities and completion of practice competencies in line with the university's learning outcomes and assessment requirements.
4. To provide clear and accurate signposting and guidance around issues arising in practice, including mentor student relationships and the failing student.
5. Provide monitoring and feedback of student progress in conjunction with acquisition of clinical skills and mandatory competencies.
6. Promote a culture of inclusion and provide guidance to mentors in practice who support students with a declared disability.
7. Promote quality assurance of practice placements through regular assessment and monitoring of learning environment which may include practice visits and student evaluations.
8. Promote and foster opportunities for continuing professional development and support lifelong learning values for both mentors and students.
9. Facilitate and engage with stakeholders to allow opportunities for engagement with curriculum development.
10. Promote and maintain effective channels of communication with all stakeholders and students to ensure timely support and guidance for all placement matters.

