

# School of Nursing and Allied Health BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing Operational Guidance for Academic Assessors

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This guide should be read in conjunction with SNAH Supporting Learners in Practice Policy, SNAH BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing Placement Handbook and Operational Guidance for Supporting Students in Placements

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## INTRODUCTION

The Academic Assessor (AA) is a Nursing Midwifery Council (NMC) registrant and part of the academic programme team, who holds appropriate equivalent experience for the student's field of practice. Academic assessors must have valid and current registration in the appropriate profession. A database confirming currency regarding registration is held by the Placement Administrator and checked quarterly.

Each student will be assigned an AA, this will differ across the parts of the programme, thus ensuring an AA is not assigned concurrent parts with the same student. A part is equivalent to a year of the course for the BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing course.

The AA is responsible for collating and confirming all student achievements that occur during placement learning as well as programme outcomes in the academic environment for each part of the programme and recording this in the student's electronic Ongoing Achievement Record (e-OAR). As such the AA makes and records in the e-OAR objective evidence-based decisions on the student's conduct, proficiency and achievement and will work with the students Practice Assessor to make recommendations for progression, taking into consideration the students learning and achievement across theory and practice

A key aspect of the AA role is to preserve public safety and as such the AA is expected to appropriately raise and respond to concerns regarding student conduct, competence, and achievement, whilst ensuring that their decisions are carried out in a fair and evidenced based way. The AA will act as a role model for safe and effective practice in line with professional codes of conduct for each profession. To enable this to occur, the AA should be aware of any concerns regarding student performance including any concerns that may have been raised in the practice environment or by Practice Assessors. Once the AA is aware of concerns around student performance they may have a role in improving the student's performance. For example, they may have a role in developing and making recommendations for an action plan for a student who is struggling to achieve their programme outcomes. Communication with the Practice Assessor can be in person, via email, telephone, e-meeting as appropriate. Any meeting and its outcome(s) are documented in the student's e-PAD. The Placement Learning Lead and Programme Lead are available to support the AA (Please refer to [What happens if a Practice Supervisor/Assessor contacts an Academic Assessor](#)).

## SUITABILITY FOR THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC ASSESSOR

The School of Nursing and Allied Health (SNAH) require all AAs to have been prepared and supported to take up their role and have current knowledge and expertise relevant for the proficiencies and programme outcomes they are collating and confirming. The AA should hold or be working towards a qualification in education such as the Higher Education Academy Fellowship. This aligns to the NMC (2018) Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (SSSA) which states:

**Approved Education Institutions (HEI), together with practice learning partners, must ensure that academic assessors:**

- 10.1 are working towards or hold relevant qualifications as required by their academic institution and local and national policies. This demonstrates that the AA holds knowledge and skills to promote student learning and achievement both in the Higher Education Institution and relevant work-related learning opportunities
- 10.2 demonstrate that they have achieved the following minimum outcomes:
  - 10.2.1 interpersonal communication skills, relevant to student learning and assessment
  - 10.2.2 conducting objective, evidence-based assessments of students
  - 10.2.3 providing constructive feedback to facilitate professional development in others
  - 10.2.4 knowledge of the assessment process and their role within it

- 10.3 receive ongoing support and training to reflect and develop in their role
- 10.4 continue to proactively develop their professional practice and knowledge in order to fulfil their role.
- 10.5 understand the proficiencies and programme outcomes that the student they confirm is aiming to achieve.

### **PREPARATION FOR THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC ASSESSOR**

This is mandatory for those staff undertaking the role of Academic Assessor. The content for preparation is aligned to Health Education England (HEE) (2019) Supporting Learners in Practice: Preparing Practice Supervisors, Practice Assessors and Academic Assessors in Health Education England South Area (pages 9-11) This preparation meets the NMC (SSSA 2018) requirements for Registered Nurses, to become Academic Assessors. The preparation will be delivered by the Placement Learning Lead for Nursing or nominated other.

The School provides training that includes the following key elements:

- Understanding the NMC Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (SSSA 2018)
- Interpersonal communication skills relevant to student learning and assessment
- Establishing learning needs and reasonable adjustments
- Facilitating learning including independent learning, coaching models, and inter-professional learning
- Conducting objective evidence-based assessments of students in practice and giving constructive feedback
- Documenting evidence of achievement
- Raising concerns and public protection

#### **Learning Outcomes for AA Preparation (Taken from HEE 2019 document):**

The Participant will be able to:

- 1) Discuss and identify how to create a culture of learning in practice, including different models of supervision and utilising the framework of coaching.
- 2) Understand how the roles differ between the requirements of the 2008 and the 2018 Standards.
- 3) Define and explain the Practice Supervisor, Practice Assessor and Academic Assessor role and responsibilities (including use of the electronic Practice Assessment Document)
- 4) Identify learning opportunities, across professions and with other practice colleagues that is relevant to the e-PAD and the student's placement experience(s)
- 5) Is able to discuss with the student, their learning experience including reasonable adjustments or equality and diversity considerations that may need to be met
- 6) Describe how you make decisions in assessment (including confidence to fail and confirmation of achievement of proficiency)
- 7) Review and assess evidence from a range of sources including from Practice Supervisors and others
- 8) Illustrate how you could develop efficient systems of feedback to the Practice Supervisor and Academic Assessor.
- 9) Explain the process of appropriately raising and responding to student conduct and proficiency concerns using the Fitness to Practice procedures and guidelines to report care concerns and describe how to gain support in doing so.
- 10) Illustrate ways in which the role can be used for Continuous Professional Development/revalidation

The training may be delivered via e-learning or in person and is normally 1 day in length for AAs with no previous PA training or 0.5 days for AAs with previous PA training. Assessment of learning is via self-assessment. Confirmation of successful completion of the training is recorded in the Academic Assessor database by the Practice Learning Lead.

### **ALLOCATION OF ACADEMIC ASSESSORS**

All NMC registrant within the School of Nursing and Allied Health will act as Academic Assessor, providing they are prepared and understand the proficiencies and programme outcomes that the student they are confirming is aiming to achieve.

The Placement Lead in conjunction with Head of School will allocate AA and have overview to ensure an AA never acts as an AA for a student in consecutive parts of the programme. All academic staff members are aware that they are not able to be the AA for a student in consecutive parts of the programme, and for Lecturer Practitioners they must not act as a Practice Assessor and Academic Assessor concurrently for the same student.

### **THE ROLE OF THE ACADEMIC ASSESSOR**

The NMC (2018) Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (SSSA) highlight the following responsibilities for the Academic Assessor:

#### **Approved Education Institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:**

- 9.1 academic assessors collate and confirm student achievement of proficiencies and programme outcomes in the academic environment for each part of the programme
- 9.2 academic assessors make and record objective, evidence-based decisions on conduct, proficiency and achievement, and recommendations for progression, drawing on student records and other resources
- 9.3 academic assessors maintain current knowledge and expertise relevant for the proficiencies and programme outcomes they are assessing and confirming
- 9.4 the nominated academic assessor works in partnership with a nominated practice assessor to evaluate and recommend the student for progression for each part of the programme, in line with programme standards and local and national policies
- 9.5 academic assessors have an understanding the student's learning and achievement in practice
- 9.6 communication and collaboration between academic and practice assessors is scheduled for relevant points in programme structure and student progression, and
- 9.7 academic assessors are not simultaneously the practice supervisor and practice assessor for the same student.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND WORKFLOW FOR AA'S

There are a number of clearly defined episodes for when an Academic Assessor needs to respond within the BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing programme. The following information will highlight the workflow and responsibilities of this role

### PRE-PLACEMENT ACTIVITY

This should occur prior to each placement.

#### Notification of Student Allocation

- The Placement Lead will notify the individual AA of their allocated students (no later than 4 weeks prior to start of placement)
- Normally the students will know both placements for the relevant Part

#### Making Contact

- The AA makes contact with the students and arranges an initial meeting
- This can be done as a group meeting either face:face or via Teams

#### Aims for the Initial Meeting

- Ensure MyPAD record for AA is completed (NMC requirement)
- Explore with students their placements and potential learning opportunities against their MyPAD requirements
- Remind them of their Formative and Summative submission dates (as appropriate) and the requirements for both
- Refresh understanding on how the AA role works in supporting them in practice and what other support is available

## DURING PLACEMENT ACTIVITY

To ensure communication channels are fostered with the student in placement plus their practice assessor/supervisors, the following communication strategy is recommended as a minimum whilst a student is in placement.

**1**

- Within the first 2 weeks of starting a placement the AA must contact the student.
- This is to ensure that the student is settling in and any early concerns are addressed
- MyPAD will indicate whether Placement Orientation and Initial Interview have been achieved

**2**

- Mid point of placement - which is highlighted in the students MyPAD
- Review learning objectives with student and PS/PA and address concerns
- Support for e-PAD completion of mid-point processes

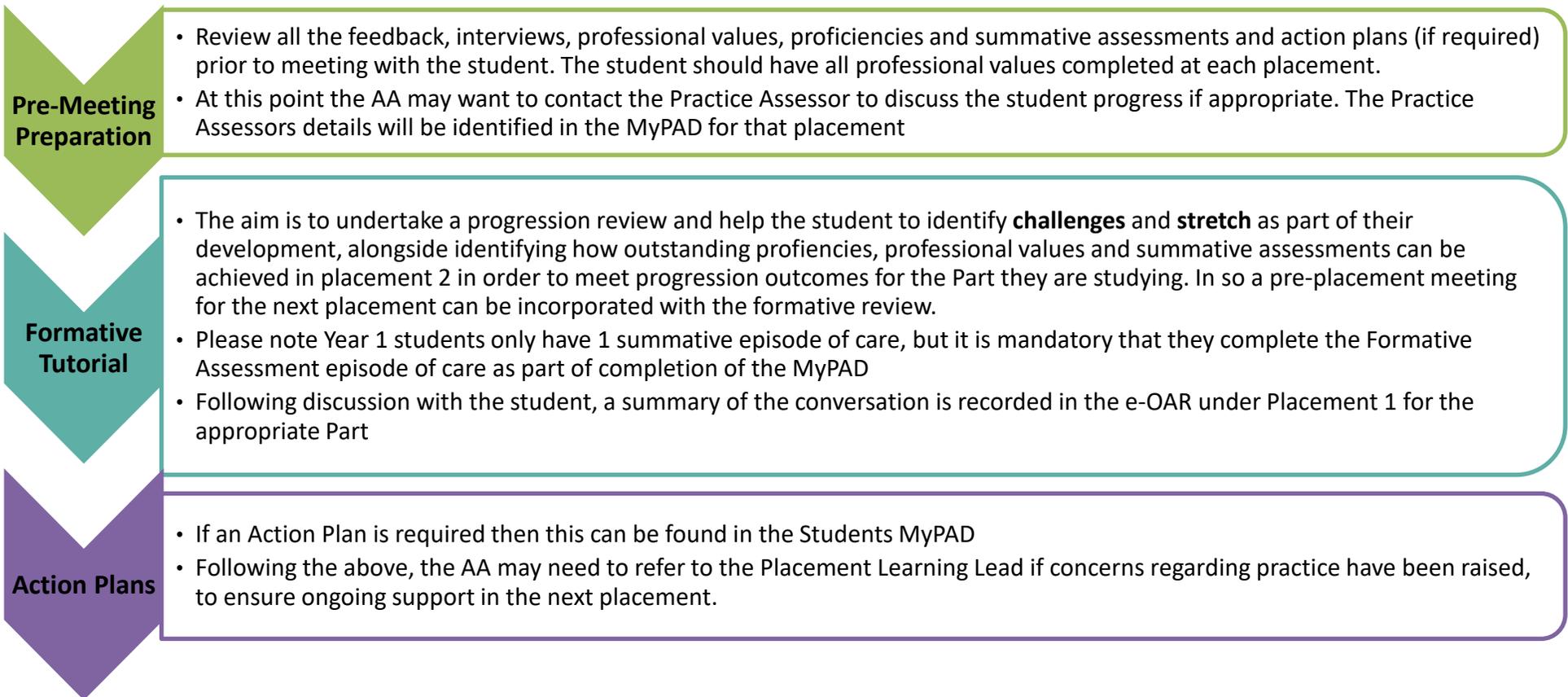
**3**

- Last week of placement - which is highlighted in the students MyPAD
- Review learning objectives and achievements with student and PS/PA
- Support for e-PAD completion with formative and summative requirements of the MyPAD

## FORMATIVE SUBMISSION POINT

At this point the aim is for the AA to meet up with their allocated students on an individual basis. The suggested timings are 30-minute tutorials. This can be done as either face to face or via MS Teams

Formative Submission dates are agreed annually and displayed in the MyPAD. The Placement Learning Lead will communicate with the AA the workflow for each academic year in regard to submission dates. Normally they will be the first Wednesday of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester for that year. Formative tutorials should ideally be completed within the first 4 weeks of the students return to academic learning. The AA will complete the electronic Ongoing Achievement Record (OAR) with feed-forward feedback and, if required complete action plans to support the students learning/progression.

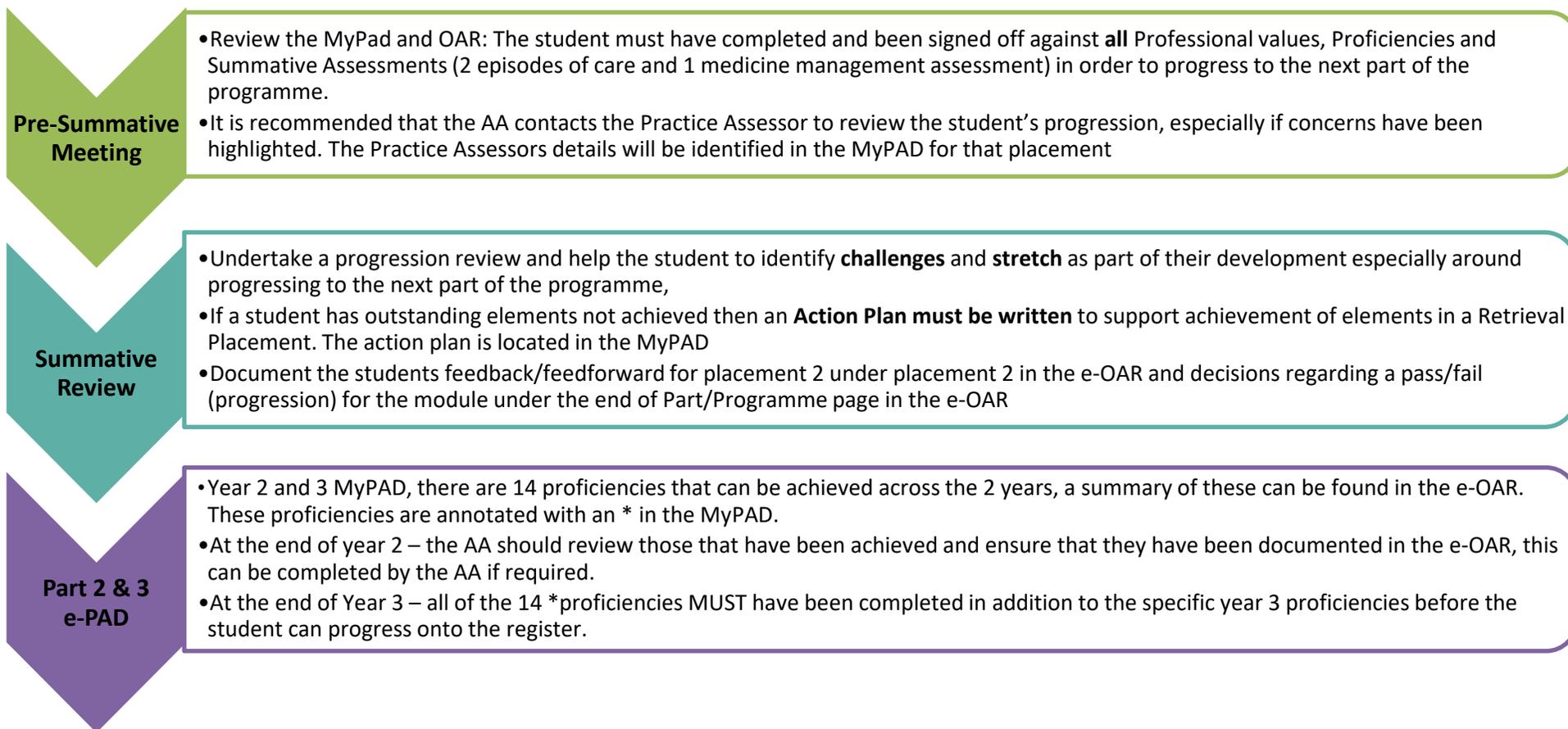


## SUMMATIVE SUBMISSION POINT

Summative submission dates are displayed in the student's MyPAD. The Placement Learning Lead will communicate with the AA the workflow for each academic year in regard to submission dates and completion of interviews to meet exam boards. The assessment schedule and exam board dates are available on the BSc (Hons) Nursing Programme Moodle Site.

Academic assessors will need to arrange individual summative review meetings with the students to review the MyPAD and completion of all mandatory fields. These should be no longer than 30 minutes in length and can be face to face or via MS Teams

Individual AA's will need to inform the Module Co-ordinator of the student's outcomes by a pre-agreed date (Based on the Exam Board Date) so that reporting of attainment via Chi View can be completed by the Module Co-ordinator.



## CHECKLIST OF MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS NEEDED TO PASS THE PAD AT SUMMATIVE SUBMISSION POINT

Please note the different variables across the Parts

<b>Completion of declaration of Good Health and Good Character</b>	
<b>Completion of Mandatory Training</b> Part 1 Basic Life Support, Manual Handling and HEE Common Skills Training Framework Part 2 Basic Life Support Part 3 Basic Life Support and Manual Handling	
<b>Attainment of Safe Medicate Grade:</b> Part 1 – 80% Part 2 – 90% Part 3 – 100%	
<b>Professional values achieved</b> and signed off by Practice Assessor at final interview in final placement for that Part	
<b>All proficiencies successfully completed</b> and signed off (please refer to information for part 2 and part 3 * proficiencies above)	
<b>2 episodes of care</b> successfully completed	
<b>1 medicine management</b> successfully completed	

**In addition** please feedback to Placement Learning Lead any examples of good practice or concerns around completion of the e-PAD, especially in relation to feedback and completion of interviews

### ACADEMIC ASSESSOR HANDOVER

It is an NMC requirement that Academic Assessors provide a formal handover to the students next Academic Assessor

The NMC do not specify how the ‘handover’ must take place, only that it must ensure all relevant information is recorded and made available to the next assessor.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> placement academic assessment feedback point in the OAR can be utilised for this. The AA may also want to provide additional handover to the next AA, it is important that any additional information is documented.

### WHAT TO DO IF A STUDENT HAS A RETRIEVAL PLACEMENT?

The Academic Assessor for that Part should meet with the student prior to the retrieval placement to review, plan and discuss the requirements for achievement for progression in the programme. This can be part of the summative meeting as discussed above

An action plan should be formulated in agreement with the student and documented

The MyPAD has a retrieval placement section, and the Practice Assessor will complete the paperwork as per a normal placement. Assessments are not over-ridden, previous attempts are available for viewing. The Placement Learning Lead must be informed to ensure placement support is available for the student.

## ACADEMIC ASSESSORS MAINTAINING COMPETENCE

To maintain the role of the Academic Assessor the NMC state that an AA must

10.4 continue to proactively develop their professional practice and knowledge in order to fulfil their role, and

10.5 understand the proficiencies and programme outcomes that the student they confirm is aiming to achieve

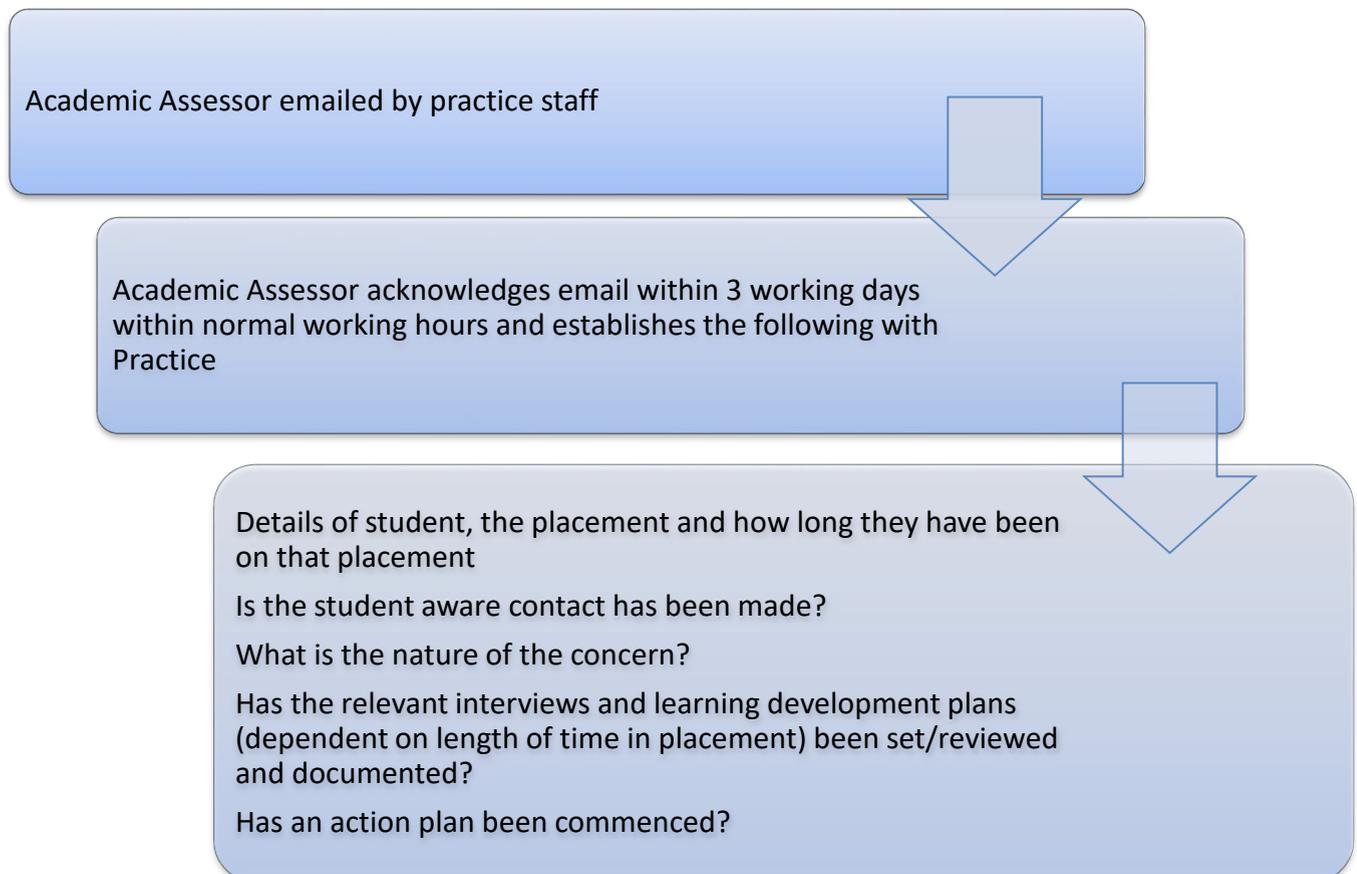
All Academic Assessors are assigned to a practice learning module and may supplement their knowledge and expertise through teaching and can contribute to formative assessment associated with the practice learning module, thus retaining currency of clinical skills which will be useful when required at re-validation; this may include engagement with simulation or formative/summative assessment of skills via skills workshops.

In addition Academic Assessors are required to attend the annual **Practice Learning Review Meeting** with Practice Partners. This is organised by the Placement Learning Lead for Nursing. This is to ensure currency regarding the programme is maintained and quality assurance is achieved.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF A PRACTICE SUPERVISOR OR ASSESSOR CONTACTS AN ACADEMIC ASSESSOR?

It is expected that Practice Supervisors and Practice Assessors will discuss, plan and action each students practice learning requirements. However there may be occasions when additional support is required and contact with the Academic Assessor is made. The following steps provide guidance on what to do next.

### Step 1



**Step 2 – involves 3 options – Please also see the Operational Guidelines on Supporting Students in**

Placement for further support. This can be located on the Practice Learning Moodle site page

## Option 1

- If the action is quick to resolve then do it now!
- Complete the action by communicating via email/MyPAD to all involved

## Option 2

- If the action requires Pastoral Support, then refer the matter (via email) to the students Personal Tutor.

## Option 3

- If the action requires Placement Support i.e. attending Placement, helping with Action Plans contact the Placement Learning Lead or Programme Lead for support and advice.

**When the AA is not available, please ensure that the out of office states who to contact, i.e. The Programme/Placement Lead or alternative AA**

It is the responsibility of the Placement Learning Lead/Programme Leader/Module Co-ordinator or Personal Tutor to feedback to the Academic Assessor actions and outcomes from any referral. This should be done by email so that a paper trail is available and documented in the MyPAD where appropriate.

If the personal tutor and academic assessor are the same person, and it is believed by either the student or the AA that a conflict of interest may arise, this must be discussed as a matter of urgency with either the Placement Learning Lead or Programme Lead and a decision agreed. A conflict of interest could be if information about a student's personal circumstances may impact upon an objective and fair assessment decision.

