

# UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS

*Facilitator's Guide*

**PLPLG**

*Developing London's Future Nurses Together*

## Understanding Students Module

This training session is one of the PLPLG SSSA development modules for Practice Supervisors and Practice Assessors which are intended for use as short training workshops or as part of a team meeting. Altogether, with activities, it will take around half an hour.

This facilitator guide provides a lesson plan with approximate timings, content and activity which accompany the PowerPoint presentation. Each slide has additional notes to assist the trainer, where required. These are provided in this guide.

It would be helpful to have copies of the PLPAD for delegates to look through for documentation purposes

### Lesson Plan

Timings	Slide	Activity or Topic	Trainer Notes
1 mins	2	Aims and Learning Outcomes	Introduce the workshop Go through objectives
7 mins	3-4	Different learners	Activity in pairs or small groups to identify different learners in the setting and how to differentiate their needs and support required
5 mins	5-7	How learners feel and what they want	Ask group how students feel – go through the two slides (one is positive and the other negative). Look at what they want to get out of their placement
5 mins	8-9	Creating a learning environment	Ask group, then go through slides
10 mins	10-11	Skills to support students	Small group activity to assess skills required to support students and other learners in practice. List skills on flipchart and then go through slide
2 mins		Review and close	

## Notes for slides:

Slide	Trainer notes
3	Ask delegates to work in small groups to consider different types of learners and their different needs
4	<p>Pre-registration students – students from HEIs including universities who will have a range of experience depending on their level of study, their age and any previous working / life experience</p> <p>Nursing associates – the new role of a band 4 nurse into which some HCAs are progressing.</p> <p>HCAs / support workers. In line with the Francis report recommendation, the HCA workforce is growing to provide more 'care' in the clinical setting. This means that there are 'learning' HCAs at bands 2 and 3</p> <p>Nurse apprentices – a new role which will begin in some organisations in September 2018 which provides learners with learning in the clinical setting and one day (typically) per week at university.</p>
5	In 2018 a survey was carried out involving 2nd year and 3rd year nursing and midwifery students across all fields. Results showed that whilst the majority of students felt well supported on placement, there were still feelings of anxiety and apprehension. The comments on this slide and the next are some of those made by students in different fields.
7	Although some of these things are in the PAD, they don't always happen, ie orientation and introduction. This has a double impact as students feel out-of-place and under-valued; they also cannot be as efficient and effective when they don't know their way around
8	<p>Showing respect for each other and recognising people as individuals regardless of their band, role or culture. Understanding people have different values and beliefs.</p> <p>Acting as a role model to others whether these are learners or other staff. Remembering that behaviour breeds behaviour and demonstrating professional behaviour will encourage others to do so too.</p> <p>Ensuring the environment is safe and caring, that mistakes are seen as learning opportunities and learners do not feel that they cannot admit to mistakes for fear of reprimand.</p> <p>Encouraging learners to achieve a little more by setting slightly stretching objectives and challenge.</p> <p>Giving regular feedback to help learners to develop without appearing to be judgemental or critical. Always consider ways for them to develop and improve</p> <p>Recognise learners have different styles and it helps to have different learning opportunities available.</p>

	Using coaching skills to develop learners through careful questioning to encourage them to come up with their own responses
9	Build a solid relationship with learners that encourage them to ask questions, to be open and honest with you Encourage learners to ask questions Facilitate their development by signposting opportunities, introducing them to people and involving them as much as possible Remember they may be feeling worried or vulnerable
10-11	<p><b>The following guidance has been put together to help you, as a supervisor, to recognise specific problems and to support a student:</b></p> <p><b>Difficulty remembering and following verbal instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give instructions one at a time.</li> <li>• Communicate instructions slowly and clearly in a quiet location.</li> <li>• Write down important information.</li> <li>• Demonstrate and supervise tasks and projects.</li> <li>• Encourage the person to take notes and then check them.</li> <li>• Ask instructions to be repeated back, to confirm that the instruction has been understood correctly.</li> <li>• Write a memo outlining a plan of action.</li> <li>• Use a digital recorder to record important instructions.</li> <li>• Back up multiple instructions in writing or with diagrams.</li> <li>• Difficulty with hidden meanings in conversation.</li> <li>• Give clear concise and direct instructions; do not hint or make assumptions that you have been understood.</li> </ul> <p><b>Short term memory problems especially names, numbers and lists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use mnemonic devices and acronyms.</li> <li>• Organise details on paper so that they can be referred to easily using diagrams and flowcharts.</li> <li>• Check back understanding.</li> <li>• Use multi-sensory learning techniques such as reading material onto a tape machine and then playing it back whilst re-reading.</li> <li>• Use computer software; sometimes well developed program menus and help features are useful.</li> <li>• Use a calculator.</li> </ul> <p><b>Typical symptoms of dyscalculia/mathematical learning difficulties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has difficulty when counting backwards.</li> <li>• Has a poor sense of number and estimation.</li> <li>• Has difficulty in remembering 'basic' facts, despite many hours of practice/rote learning.</li> <li>• Has no strategies to compensate for lack of recall, other than to use counting.</li> <li>• Has difficulty in understanding place value and the role of zero in the Arabic/Hindu number system.</li> <li>• Has no sense of whether any answers that are obtained are right or nearly right.</li> <li>• Tends to be slower to perform calculations. (Therefore give less examples, rather than more time).</li> </ul>

- Forgets mathematical procedures, especially as they become more complex, for example 'long' division.
- Addition is often the default operation. The other operations are usually very poorly executed (or avoided altogether).
- Avoids tasks that are perceived as difficult and likely to result in a wrong answer.
- Weak mental arithmetic skills.
- High levels of mathematics anxiety.
- Because mathematics is very developmental, any insecurity or uncertainty in early topics will impact on later topics, hence to need to take intervention back to basics.

### **Writing notes**

- Allow colleagues enough time to write up their notes.
- Try not to disturb colleagues who you know need to really concentrate on their documentation.
- In the case of junior student nurses allow them to write a rough draft on scrap paper which you can check before they write it into the notes (remind them to destroy this carefully afterwards).
- Help students to devise a checklist of key areas to include in certain types of documentation.
- Consider devising a 'sample' or 'model' for different types of documentation, particularly for students or new staff, to show them the level and content expected.
- Allow colleagues to word process reports etc where possible – use bullet points in preference to sentences where possible – use simple words/avoid overuse of jargon or uncommon words – do not justify the right hand margin – this makes the spaces between words uneven and harder to read if you are dyslexic – space the information so it is not cramped, use short paragraphs to break up dense text – where possible print documents on off white/cream pap

### **Spelling**

- Provide a list of common terminology in your area for new staff and students.
- Help colleagues to feel able to ask if there is a word they are uncertain about the spelling of.

### **Remembering things**

- Help a student/colleague to invent and use mnemonics.
- Encourage the individual to use 'to do' lists rather than trying to remember.
- Don't give too many instructions at once.
- Prepare printed 'handover sheets' covering core information – the individual can add to these but it will reduce the amount they need to write down and avoids things being missed.
- Make sure that there is always something to write on (and a pen) near the phone.
- Help a colleague to draw up a plan highlighting important tasks/ deadlines.
- Set clear, measurable targets.
- Allow enough time for the person to grasp key information, try not to rush them.

- In the case of procedures allow the person a chance to practice (ideally as close as possible to when you explained it or demonstrated it).
  - Explain things more than once if required.
  - Where possible give instructions in written and verbal form (you could consider using a digital voice recorder to record sets of instructions).
- Coping with distractions**
- Allow colleagues quiet time where possible to complete tasks such as paperwork.
  - Avoid interrupting a colleague if it is at all possible.
- Time Management**
- Help colleagues to build up a list of how long things take to do.
  - For students/new staff set achievable time related tasks, for example don't expect them to plan a whole day at first, start with a few hours/morning and build up.
  - With students ask them to tell you what the key activities are at the beginning of the shift – remind them of things they have forgotten.
- Demonstrating manual dexterity**
- Provide opportunities for practice.
  - Explore availability of specialist/alternative equipment which might be easier to use (providing this could constitute a 'reasonable adjustment'.
- Sequencing of tasks**
- Present information more than once and ideally in different formats
  - Provide frequent opportunities for practice
  - Help a student or colleague to invent and use mnemonics
  - Encourage use of reflection to help individuals to transfer previous learning.
  - Allow enough time for the person to grasp key information, try not to rush them.
  - Create flow charts/protocols to help colleagues to learn procedures.
- Reading drug charts**
- Strategies to help colleagues
  - Provide students/new staff with a list of commonly used drugs for your area.
  - If you use drugs with similar names in your area consider creating a visual aid to show the different drug names.
  - Ensure that a BNF or alternative is available.
  - Record drug names on a digital recorder (most students with dyslexia are supplied with one of these to use in lectures) to help the student learn how to pronounce them.
  - In hospital settings – allow students to accompany you on a drug round and actually dispense the drugs according to their level of training (if you are concerned that this will take too long let them to do one patient's drugs to start with and build up until they can do a whole bay as they get quicker).
  - Create a specimen drug chart that relates to your area for students to practice reading/interpreting – ideally give examples of stat, prn and regular drugs.

	<p><b>Calculating drug doses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies to help colleagues</li> <li>• Allow the individual time to work it out at their own pace, don't rush them.</li> <li>• Provide relevant clinical examples for practice, colleagues may struggle with abstract calculations.</li> <li>• Help colleagues to feel open about asking for help/someone to check a complex calculation – it might take a little bit longer but it is better to be safe.</li> <li>• Encourage a student or colleague to look at one of the many books available on nursing calculations – then if possible help guide them through structured teaching in small progressive steps.</li> <li>• Teach rules and give concrete examples – it is much harder to grasp abstract concepts.</li> <li>• If your employer allows the use of calculators encourage colleagues to use one to check their answer (see note below).</li> <li>• In emergency situations where calculations need to be performed quickly and with lots of potential distractions allow a colleague to ask someone else to do it.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussing clinical issues</b></p> <p>In terms of discussing clinical issues individuals may have difficulties in organising thoughts coherently, pronouncing medical terminology and understanding abbreviations.</p> <p>Strategies to help colleagues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to create an environment which helps colleagues to feel comfortable – anxiety will only make problems worse.</li> <li>• Don't let people draw attention to mispronounced words, even inadvertently.</li> <li>• Try not to use abbreviations as some people find them difficult to interpret and they may mean different things to different people.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Aloud</b></p> <p>Do not ask someone with dyslexia to read aloud unless you have given them the material well in advance.</p> <p><b>Writing in front of others</b></p> <p>Do not put others on the spot. If someone appears reluctant to act as scribe or note taker, don't push them into it.</p>
12	<p>Involving students, talking to them, involving them as much as possible</p> <p>Listening to what they say and encouraging them to questions.</p> <p>Consider how we listen, are we active listeners? What do we listen with? Ears, eyes, heart</p> <p>Being friendly and getting to know them as individuals</p> <p>Provide constructive and positive feedback</p> <p>Use coaching skills to encourage them to take responsibility for their learning and development</p> <p>Provide a non-threatening environment</p> <p>Encouraging learners to take ownership of their own learning</p>