

Radiotherapy and Oncology Student Working Hours in Practice Guidance

The following guide has been produced for Students, Academics, Placement Learning Tutors, Practice Educators and Mentors to enable all parties to work closely together to ensure that the same information is given to students and placement partners.

Principles of The European Working Time Directive [EWTD] (1998) - please refer to the Working Time Directive (WTD) - Advice to health and social care students in the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing

Student Working Hours in Practice

- Students may undertake a range of shifts from the outset of their programme if the placement area is also working shifts.
- **The shifts that students work will be identified by the practice area** and will be influenced by: the normal shift patterns worked on the area they are allocated to, the working pattern of their mentor and the numbers of students requiring supervision.
- There may be an opportunity for a student to negotiate to work long days (**maximum 11 hours per day**). Students should not expect to always work this type of shift, as it may not be appropriate and long days can only be worked with the agreement of the mentor and the Placement Learning Tutor (PLT).
- Students should normally work a minimum of **30 hours per week in practice**.
- The hours worked [excluding breaks] must be recorded in the student's attendance record and signed by the mentor supervising the student.

Students' working hours and breaks

In order to provide clarity on breaks:

- **During a long day (more than 11 hours) an adequate rest period of at least 60 minutes** (may be split into two 30 minute breaks) should normally be taken. These breaks should not be claimed for in the hours documented in their attendance record. So, if a student works 11 hours, with a one hour rest period, they will record 10 hours worked in their attendance record. In addition a concessionary 15 minutes break during the shift may be taken which can be included in the hours worked. Breaks should not be used to finish early or start later. **NB in exceptional cases, shorter breaks may be taken based on student need. However this should not become routine practice, nor should students routinely use this to shorten their working shift. This should be agreed with by the PLT and the mentor.**

- **During an 8 hour day or more, a rest period of at least 30 minutes should be taken.** Again, the time allocated for this break should not be claimed for in the hours worked. So, if a student works 8 hours, with a 30 minute break, they will record 7.5 hours worked in their attendance record. In addition, a concessionary 15 minutes break during the shift may be taken which can be included in the hours worked. Breaks should not be added onto either end of the day to shorten the shift. **NB in exceptional cases, shorter breaks may be taken based on student need. However this should not become routine practice, nor should students routinely use this to shorten their working shift. This should be agreed with by the PLT and the mentor.**
- Flexibility about when breaks are taken must be negotiated within the placement area. In certain circumstances (e.g. attending an unwell patient) timing of breaks may be delayed. However, it is important that students recognise the effects of fatigue on performance and concentration. If a student expresses personal problems the mentor should encourage the student to contact their PLT/ Student Support Officer/ Course team.

Study Days

All RONC students receive one self-managed time day per week. These are set days as follows;

- Year 1 BSc- Wednesday
- Year 2 BSc- Thursday
- Year 3 BSc- Friday
- Year 1 MSc- Monday
- Year 2 MSc- Friday

Any issues with these study days should be discussed with the PLT. Should days need to be changed then evidence should be provided to the PLT.

Bank Holidays

- Whilst on placement, **student** Therapeutic Radiographers are not expected to work Bank Holidays and should take these in addition to their self-managed time day in the week in which the Bank Holiday occurs. If the student needs to attend placement to gain competency in an area they are working in they may work their self-managed time day. This cannot be carried over.
- These specific days off are recorded in the attendance record as a Bank Holiday [BH] by practice staff and/or student and **these hours are NOT included** in the weekly total.
- It is important to note that 7.5 hours are allowed for each Bank Holiday [even when the student has been working long shifts]. So, if there is one BH during a week, the student

will be required to work 22.5 hours during that week and if there are two BHs during a week, then the student will be required to work 15 hours that week.

Student Therapeutic Radiographers on Placement are eligible for the statutory bank holidays listed below:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- 3 Bank Holidays in May (1 early and 2 late)
- 2 Bank Holidays in August Bank Holiday
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

Sickness and Absence

- 100% attendance is expected in both academic and clinical placement.
- **All sickness, special leave, compassionate leave and absences must** be recorded on the student's attendance record and **all absence** is subject to 'make up time'.
- If a student does not attend the required number of hours to achieve competence, then this time may be required to be made up.

Attendance Monitoring

- The ideal is that students completing the programme attend for 100% of both the academic and practice requirements of the programme.
- However, it is recognised that students may face a number of challenges during the programme which require a period of sickness or special/compassionate leave.
- It is important for the student to recognise they should keep sickness and absence to a minimum, as future employers are often interested in the number of days and the number occasions when sickness and/or absences have occurred.
- The University will monitor closely sickness and absence for references.

Reporting Sickness and Special/Compassionate Leave whilst on Placement

- It is the **responsibility of the student** to notify their Placement if they are not able to attend.
- Students must ensure that they formally notify the placement area, **using the correct local procedures**, if they unable to attend placement for any reason.
- Good practice is to call before the placement area is due to start and students should ensure that a clear message is left and that a record is kept of the name of the person spoken with and the date/time of the phone call.
- Students must call on each day they are not attending placement, unless they have a medical certificate which indicates they will be off sick for a period of time.

Reporting Sickness and Special/Compassionate Leave whilst on Placement

- Please note that students should report both '**Practice Placement Absence**' and **Taught Session Absence**' by completing the [Student Absence Form](#). If not currently logged in to Google Drive, clicking on the link will require the student to log in using their email address as per the below example (**username@my.shu.ac.uk**). This will then take the student to the Sheffield Hallam University login page where they would login using their single sign on Sheffield Hallam University login details. The HWB Student Absence Google Form for will then open for completion.
- New Google Form [Student Absence Form](#)
- Example Email Login `username@my.shu.ac.uk`

The image shows a composite of two login screens. On the left is the Google 'Sign in' page with the email field containing 'b2058763@my.shu.ac.uk' circled in red. On the right is the Sheffield Hallam University login page with the 'Username' field containing 'b2058763' circled in red. The 'Password' field is masked with dots. A 'NEXT' button is located between the two screens, and a 'Logon' button is at the bottom right.

- **Students should also contact the clinical department and email the PLT.**
- If the student has been sick and this has been reported correctly, according to local and SHU policies, then this should be recorded as 'sick' [S] in the attendance record and verified by the mentor.

- If the student does not follow the correct procedures for reporting sickness to the placement, then this must be documented as 'Absent' [A] in their attendance record and verified by the mentor.
- If sickness exceeds 5 days, the student is required to submit a medical certificate to the Student Support Officer/ PLT.
- **Any unauthorised absence** should be documented as a cause for concern by the mentor in the Student's Assessment documents and the PLT notified.
- **Special Leave/Compassionate Leave** can only be agreed by the PLT. Students should report their absence to the placement area as described above and on the first day of absence, contact the PLT to discuss their needs.
- **If a student is referred to the Occupational Health Department or A&E whilst on duty, please inform the Course leader;**

Year 1 BSc Joanna McNamara joanna.mcnamara@shu.ac.uk

Year 2 and 3 BSc Alex Robinson alex.robinson@shu.ac.uk

Consistently poor attendance

- Poor attendance may impact upon achievement of competence.
- Students with poor attendance on placement will go through the stages identified in the SHU **Process for dealing with Absence from placement**, which is as follows:

Stage 1: Conducted by the PLT:

Stage 2: Cause for concern form completed and action plan set

Stage 3: Referral to the course leader

- The aim of this process is to ensure that the student receives the support they require as well as to ensure that they understand the long term implications of consistently poor attendance.
- It is important to note that if attendance continues to be poor, the student may need to temporarily withdraw from the programme and join a later cohort.
- Or, recommendations can be made that the student can be removed the course.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What happens if I am ill or need to be absent from my placement?

A: It is the responsibility of the student to report your first day of sickness, special/compassionate leave by contacting the Placement Area and completing the University's online [Student Absence form](#).

Q: What happens if I don't hand in my on-line attendance form to the Placement Team?

A: Hours cannot be credited without this information. Therefore the online form must be completed and handed to your Placement Learning Tutor (PLT) to be signed. This is then submitted to the placement team.

Q: When filling in the attendance record and electronic time sheet for when I am on placement, should I include my breaks on shift?

A: No, please do NOT include your breaks.

Q: Am I entitled to Bank holidays while on Placement ?

A: **RONC students YES.** When on placement, RONC students are not expected to work Statutory Bank Holidays (see list above) and should take these in addition to their days off for the week in which the Bank Holiday occurs. NB: 7.5 hours allowed for each BH

Q: Does making up practice hours 'wipe out' the sickness, special/compassionate leave and absence?

A: No. This will always be maintained in the student's personal record. However, there will be on the record a note of any practice make up time which has been completed.

Q: Can I schedule personal holidays whilst on placement?

A: Students may negotiate a change in holidays with the PLT ASAP. These changes should always be to the benefit of the rota

Q: Can I negotiate to change holidays or request additional days with practice staff?

A: No.

Q: Can I arrange extensions or changes of my placement block directly with my mentor?

A: No.

Q: Do I have to work early shifts, long shifts, etc. on placement?

A: Students are encouraged to work the same pattern as their mentor. If they cannot work the shift the student works the normal day.

Q: Do I get extra time for EID?

A: We allocate one additional day, and this should be taken with your study day over EID should you celebrate this religious festival.