

DEVELOPING A TIMETABLE

FOR UNDERGRADUATE DIETETIC PLACEMENTS

The goal of practice education is to provide students with opportunities that enable them to acquire core skills that apply across dietetics - it's not about students seeing as many areas of dietetics as possible. Timetables with less variety and more consistency yield greater benefits for early-stage learning.

Basic structural elements

1. Length of day	7h excl. lunch
2. Lunch	30-60 min per day
3. Time for getting organised	15 min at the start and end of each day
4. White (self-directed) time	2-3h per week or fortnight
5. Case presentations (PPC only)	Refer to <i>Case Presentation Guidelines</i> under the PPC assessment tab

Key considerations

Aim to timetable no more than 3 different Practice Educators (PEs) per week, where possible

Limiting the number of PEs per week:

- Reduces time spent by staff on documentation
- Provides consistent learning opportunities for students
- Facilitates more accurate assessments of progress

Provide consistent time with PEs

Aim to provide the student consecutive periods of time with a relatively small number of PEs. For example:

- Student spends 1-3 weeks principally with one PE
- Student spends every Mon and Tue with one PE and every Wed to Fri with another PE

This approach increases consistency in learning opportunities and reduces challenges to assessment.

Avoid unhelpful duplication

If two PEs have similar caseloads, avoid assigning Student A to PE1 for a week and then assigning them Student B for a week, while PE2 takes Student B first and then Student A. This type of crossover results in each PE providing training for the same length of time, but they now have two students to separately adapt to, two students to separately orient to their area, two sets of documentation to complete, etc.

Streamline the process and simply assign one student to each PE for two weeks.

Spread project time across placement

Practice-based project work should take no more than 35h per placement, spread over a number of weeks, e.g. update diet sheets, develop ready reckoners, or create and update presentations for service users.

Limit travel during work hours

When essential, timetable travel time, especially for students on public transport.

