



# Guide to preparing for work placement

Health and Social Care

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Course:</b>	
<b>Level:</b>	

Please complete the following before you enrol on your course:	
DBS ID document checks (to be brought into college on enrolment day)	Tick when completed
Potential placements (see pages 10 and 11)	Tick when completed

**Please read this Guide and put in a ring binder folder where all your placement work will be kept.**

## Welcome to Preparing for Work Placement.

This Guide is designed to help you get ready for your health and social care work experience so you can soon settle in and enjoy the experience.

### The Guide is broken down into topics:

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To give you an idea of what placement is like from the student's viewpoint we have two characters, Hanna and Jackson, who will pop up throughout the Guide. They will share the experiences of real-life students who have already completed their work placement.



Going into a placement is a great opportunity for you. You will spend time in a work environment and be able to put into practice many things you are learning at the College.

A little preparation will make you feel more confident and help you to get the most out of the experience. This Guide will show you what to expect and ways you can get ready.

## Topic 1: How do I feel about starting placement?



*"The first few days in any setting can be challenging. I remember that I felt awkward and a bit like a spare part. Everything was new, I didn't know where anything was kept and I wasn't always sure what I should be doing. However, people were approachable - especially my placement supervisor who gave me some great advice. Remember you are new so it's important to take some time to settle in and get to know the team, their roles and how you fit in."*



*"Please don't think that you should know everything straight away, it is OK to ask questions. You will soon get to know everyone, their different roles and the responsibilities they hold. It will help you to find out about the placement before you start."*



*"Hi, my name is Maggie and I'm a manager at a residential care home. The most important thing for us is that people who come in for work experience know something about our organisation and what we are passionate about. It's a good idea to have a look through our website and some of our published policies. It will make you feel much better if, before you start with us, you get a feeling for what we do and the needs of the individuals we support. You probably won't know anyone and maybe people won't be coming up to you asking for your life story! But it doesn't mean you're not wanted there. A lot of the time people are busy so don't mistake this for rudeness. Don't get upset if they forget your name."*

What are your thoughts about starting work placement?

## Topic 2: How to get the most from your placement

Let's think about your placement in a bit more detail and look at how you can get as much as possible out of your time there.

- Your placement will provide an opportunity to experience work-based learning and develop practical skills
- The experience gained will develop your knowledge and understanding of the care and support needs of individuals using the setting
- The placement will give you the opportunity to work collaboratively with individuals, their families, carers, colleagues and other professionals supporting people
- Your time at placement will help build your confidence
- You will have the opportunity to apply the knowledge you have acquired during your course to solve problems in a variety of contexts
- Working with your supervisor you will be able to reflect on what you have learnt and review its impact on your work practices



*"As the employer offering you placement experience, I would like you to be willing and ready to get involved as soon as you start with us, but I understand we will need to show you what to do and how. As your placement progresses, I hope that in time you will take on more responsibility, use your own initiative and, importantly, act in accordance with our policies and procedures."*

### The placement will expect you to:

- Treat the needs and welfare of individuals as your first priority
- Be polite, organised and punctual
- Be honest, trustworthy and maintain confidentiality
- Follow dress code requirements
- Be respectful of your colleagues, individuals, their families and carers
- Should absence be unavoidable, inform your placement and your College Work Placement Officer **before** the start of the working day



*"Although you will be attending placement you are still 'on course', which means Nescot will also have expectations of you. These include:*

- Good attendance
- Carrying out the duties assigned to the best of your ability and completing your placement assignments
- Learning and demonstrating reflective qualities
- Meeting regularly with Nescot staff to review progress and plan for your own development
- It is really important that you keep the College's Work Placement Officer Nickie Roberts up-to-date and informed of what is happening at your placement. Make sure you know her work mobile telephone number: 📞 **07970 747773** and email ✉️ **nroberts@nescot.ac.uk**"



*“So now you know what is expected of you... but what can you expect of the employer and Nescot whilst you are on placement?”*



“When we take you on placement we will provide opportunities for practical experience and give you access to a supervisor to guide and support you. We will give you a warm welcome and help you to quickly settle in as part of the team. You will be given an induction; this will introduce you to our policies, procedures and general guidelines.

- We will allocate one of our members of staff to be your supervisor
- We will monitor progress, help you formulate your plans and give you feedback
- We will offer you appropriate opportunities and experiences to enhance your training
- We have a duty of care to you to provide a safe and secure environment to work in
- As part of our duty of care we will communicate any cause for concern to your Work Placement Officer at Nescot.”

You are still a Nescot student even though you are on placement and you should contact the College’s Work Placement Officer if you are worried about how your placement is going.

#### **You can expect your Work Placement Officer to:**

- Be available to provide guidance, advice and support to both you and your placement supervisor
- Visit you at least once during each placement to discuss progress.
- Respond to any concerns raised by the staff in the setting and provide you with feedback if appropriate
- Support you with your work placement folder assignments

So remember, although the placement employer has a shared responsibility for your development and wellbeing, whilst on placement you remain a student and will have the support of Nescot’s Work Placement Officer and Tutors.



### **Topic 3: Qualities of a health and social care practitioner**

Please watch this short video on the values of working in the NHS. It gives a good overview of the different work roles in the health and social care sector.

[www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/your-nhs-career](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/your-nhs-career)

Throughout your course you will learn about the role of a health and social care practitioner and important personal skills. Active listening is a vital part of caring for anyone. Non-verbal communication will also give clues about how an individual may be feeling. How do people communicate non-verbally?

Examples:

- You also need to think about the needs of others. Being sensitive to an individual’s needs means you acknowledge and understand their feelings. Consider how someone may feel when admitted to hospital, or the emotions someone may experience following a significant life event or transition.
- You will need to be patient and tolerant. Taking time to support an individual and encourage independence, even when you need to hurry, is an example of being patient.
- Interpersonal skills: these include showing warmth and friendliness to help create a positive atmosphere and help to overcome any barriers encouraging trust and co-operation.

What examples of interpersonal skills can you think of?

- You need to respect a person’s personal rights, dignity and privacy. Remember every individual is unique.
- You need to be determined and resilient when working in a health and social care setting.
- Can you judge how your behaviour may impact other people? Are you willing to adapt and be flexible? When you are working as part of a team you need to be aware of how others see you and be prepared to change your behaviour to help the team function well. This makes for a better working environment for you. Most importantly, it means you and the team provide the best possible care for the individuals you are supporting.

## Topic 4: Professional practice

Punctual attendance is about personal discipline and planning. It demonstrates qualities such as trust and reliability.



*“One thing I soon found out was that being in the right place at the right time was very important. Sounds simple but I had to get used to having start times and make sure that I knew the bus timetable so I was there in plenty of time.”*

*Planning is an essential part of ensuring you’re on time and keep to time throughout your day. When I was preparing for my placement I checked my journey time, so be sure to include any walking time and also a little bit of contingency in case things are delayed. Make sure you have a record of the setting’s telephone number as well as the College’s Work Placement Officer’s contact details. If illness or emergency stops you from attending your placement, you must remember to telephone the placement and the Work Placement Officer to explain before the working day begins.”*

**You need to plan your placement day which might look like this (complete your own table to fit your day):**

Time	Activity
	Get up/breakfast
	Leave home
	Get transport to my setting
	Start my placement day
	The start and end times, location of sessions you are supporting
	Break time
	Meet with my supervisor
	Lunchtime
	Team meeting
	End of placement day
	Transport home
	Note any local events that might impact travel the following day, eg, road works, public events, etc.
	Preparation for the next day, eg, clothes, food, placement folder



*“I found out that it is the little things that catch you out. It seems silly now but I went without a drink the first day as I was too shy to ask about making a cup of tea. Which cup could I use? Could I use the milk? I know it sounds odd, but I didn’t like to ask. Oh... and by the way, make sure you find out about the arrangements for meal breaks, where you will eat, how long you have, if you are to bring food, if there is a shop nearby.”*

## Topic 5: What to wear or what not to wear

We all like to dress up and wear our favourite clothes and jewellery, but in a health and social care setting this is not appropriate.

Unless the setting has a specific uniform, you should wear the Nescot t-shirt on placement days, and this can be ordered on enrolment day.



*“Your clothes should be clean and wear appropriate shoes at all times, no heels or sandals and definitely no sling backs or open toed shoes as these are dangerous in the setting. Do not wear excessive make up or a strong scent as you may be working in close proximity to individuals and some people may find strong smells difficult to be around.”*

*It is not good practice to have long nails. This is for hygiene reasons as well as for safety. Some health and social care settings will have procedures in place around nails, but as a general rule long nails and supporting individuals do not mix well! Remember also that you will be undertaking routine procedures that involve cleaning duties and preparation of resources.*

*If you have long hair tie this back; this looks smart and will also contribute to good hygiene practice. Do not wear jewellery as it can become entangled, broken or lost or even cause an individual to be scratched”*



*“It’s the same for me too. I wear sensible shoes at all times, so no flip-flops as these are dangerous in the setting. Some settings may not approve of jeans; it is always best to check out the dress code policy.”*

*Some settings may disapprove of tattoos and/or piercings and will ask you to cover or remove these.*

*If you are asked to wear a visitor or name badge or a lanyard make sure you do, this is an important security procedure and means of identification.”*

What should you consider when dressing for work?

- Wear the Nescot t-shirt (unless the setting has its own uniform)
- Wear sensible shoes
- Do not wear excessive make up, a strong scent or aftershave
- Do not wear jewellery that dangles (earrings, necklaces, etc)
- Only wear jeans if the setting dress code allows them
- If necessary cover tattoos and/or piercings or remove piercings



## Topic 6: Potential placements

It's really important to find placements that you can get to – sounds obvious but remember you will be going to work placement settings once a day during term-time for the two-years of your course. The quicker a suitable placement is found, the sooner you can get started and put into action the things you are learning at the College - work placement can really help to make sense of some of the things you cover on your course. You will work in at least two settings over the two years of your course, which gives you a great opportunity to try different health and social care environments and could also help you decide on your future career path.

So, before you start your course do a little fact-finding in your local area to see what potential health and social care placements there are that you can get to.

**Please find potential placements and make notes in the table. You must also add in details of your primary/junior school. Please note: This information will be collected the week you start at the College, so please make sure it has been done.**

Make sure you check out how you will get there – walk, car, bus, train? Remember too that you will be going to placement during the darker months of the year so keep that in mind when checking out your journey.

Placement type	Placement name, address and website	Contact name, telephone and email details	Your journey: time it will take, time you will catch the bus/train
Your primary/junior school			
Residential care home for the elderly			
Community drop-in day centre			
Specialist centre/ school (can include primary schools with SEND)			
Your paid work			

## Notes

**Health and Social Care Work Placement Officer:  
Nickie Roberts**

 nroberts@nescot.ac.uk

 07970 747773

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 Main Switchboard: 020 8394 1731

 Advice & Guidance: 020 8394 3038

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