



**Standards for Supporting Pre-Registration Operating
Department Practitioner Education in Practice
Placements**

December 2021

Membership of the Standards Review Working Party

Mike Donnellon	CODP Education and Standards Committee
Joanne Finney	Advanced Clinical Practitioner Project Lead, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
Helen Lowes	Learning and Development Manager, Rivermead Training Centre, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Mark Owen	Senior Lecturer Birmingham City University
Daniel Rodger	Senior Lecturer Perioperative Practice, London South Bank University
Sandra Ward	Lecturer Paramedical, Perioperative and Advance Practice University of Hull

Contents

Membership of the Standards Review Working Party.....	1
Foreword.....	3
Roles and Qualification Framework.....	5
Practice Educator Preparation Programme.....	10
Placement Educator Updates.....	11
Interprofessional Supervision of Learners.....	12
Practice Placement Preparation.....	13
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).....	14
Glossary.....	17
References.....	20

Foreword

The purpose of this document is to define the College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP) standards for supporting those learners in practice placements, who are undertaking a pre-registration programme that permits eligibility to apply for statutory registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as an Operating Department Practitioner (ODP). The document aims to provide a framework to aid practice placement staff in supporting learners effectively and outline the professional development requirements to ensure and enhance quality learning in practice placements. Even prior to the impact of COVID-19, there continues to be many challenges in the recruitment and retention of Operating Department Practitioner learners, consequently there is a need to ensure that these learners have a positive experience and are effectively supported in their practice placement.

The CODP position of the preferred qualification for those staff undertaking the assessment of learners in practice placement remains unchanged (mentorship / practice education qualification at level 6 or above, credit or non-credit bearing), however CODP recognises that access to these courses is limited and therefore suitable alternative qualifications are identified within the Roles and Qualification Section of this document. As recognised in the CODP (2018) *BSc(Hons) in Operating Department Practice Curriculum*, Operating Department Practitioner learners are spending an increasing amount of time in non-traditional clinical areas (preoperative assessment clinics, interventional radiology departments, critical care units, emergency departments and medical imaging departments), therefore this document offers guidance on the interprofessional supervision of Operating Department Practitioners learners resulting from such placements.

In 2016, the Health and Care Professions Education Leads (HCPEL) Group in collaboration with the National Association of Educators in Practice (NAEP) and the Council of Deans of Health (CoDH) developed guidance on practice education (British Dietetic Association 2016). The HCPEL identify that the term 'Practice Educator' is applied in varying ways by each health and care profession however they categorise this practitioner as a registered professional who supports learners in the workplace. Practice Educators facilitate practice education alongside clinical and academic colleagues and in addition, the Practice Educator is likely to hold responsibility for signing off competency and assessment criteria, based upon the standards produced by the education provider and relevant professional body.

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2017) also refer to the term Practice Educator within the Standards of Education and Training guidance document and define a Practice Educator as a person who is responsible for a learner's education during their

practice-based learning. The HCPC Standards of Education and Training (2017) 5.7 stipulates that Practice Educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learner's needs and delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme. Clark and Keenan (2020) describe a Practice Educator as undertaking a multi-faceted role including being a Role Model, Leader, Teacher, Coach, Assessor and Mentor.

Within these revised standards, the College has adopted the term 'Practice Educator' to replace the term previously used of 'Mentor' as the practitioner who supports the Operating Department Practitioner learner in practice placement and is responsible for signing off summative competency and assessment documentation. The College recognises that at a local level, placement areas may use alternative titles for the practitioner who undertakes the summative assessment of learners however, the College believes that given Operating Department Practitioners came under the remit of the Chief Allied Health Professions Office in England in 2017, terminology used within these standards should reflect the vocabulary of the Allied Health Professions, the professional group to which Operating Department Practitioners are aligned.

Roles and Qualification Framework

Title	Role	Qualification / Requirements
Practice Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supports learners in practice placement ● Serves as a role model for safe and effective practice working within the remit of their standard / code of conduct ● Must demonstrate proficiency within their scope of practice ● Provides formative feedback ● Completes formative assessment documentation ● Implements local hospital policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Registered practitioner who has successfully completed preceptorship programme ● Have an understanding of the proficiencies and learning outcomes of the programme ● Attendance at local preparation / update sessions ● Can provide evidence of CPD
Practice Educator	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performs summative assessment ● Must implement HEI assessment regulations ● Supervises two ODP learners within a two-year time period to remain on the 'live— register' 	<p><i>In addition to the above, holds or is working towards at least one of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mentorship qualification at level 6 or above (credit or non-credit bearing) ● Post Graduate Certificate in Education ● Completed the Scottish National Approach to Mentor Preparation ● Completed a HEI Practice Educator preparation / training programme AND has completed level 6 modules
Lead Practice Educator	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has overall responsibility for learners in placements ● Manages learner's placement allocation and Practice Educator allocation ● Monitors learner's attendance and reports this to the HEI ● Apprises HEI staff of the progress of learners in practice placement ● Organise placement teaching sessions ● Holds current Practice Educator data (e.g. attendance at update sessions) and upkeeps the register of 'live' Practice Educators ● Attends ODP education meetings 	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has a minimum of three years post-registration experience ● Possess or is working towards a relevant first degree

The Practice Supervisor

The Practice Supervisor role is suitable for any registered healthcare practitioner. As a minimum, newly qualified registered practitioners should only undertake this role once they have successfully completed their own preceptorship programme.

The Practice Supervisor supports learners in the clinical environment and provides the learner with formative feedback regarding their performance. The Practice Supervisor and Practice Educator will discuss the learner's performance and progress, identifying any areas of concern in relation to skills development or professional related issues. While the Practice Supervisor will participate in the formative assessment / learner development process, they are unable to perform the final summative assessment(s).

It is important that the Practice Supervisor is prepared for their role and therefore must attend a local preparation and update sessions. To ensure learners have a meaningful learning experience, the Practice Supervisor must implement evidence base practice and continue to develop their own knowledge and skills through Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The Practice Educator

The Practice Educator must only summatively assess learners in clinical specialties / roles which are within their scope of practice. This is to ensure validity of proficiency assessment.

The Practice Educator must understand and implement the course assessment regulations throughout the assessment process and it is the joint responsibility of the Practice Educator and the HEI to ensure individual Practice Educators understand these regulations and their implementation. Practice Educators must also ensure they understand the assessment outcomes as defined in the HEI practice assessment documentation. This is to ensure an equitable assessment for all learners as Practice Educators are responsible for making an assessment decision, by determining whether evidence provided by the learner meets the identified outcomes. In the application of assessment processes, Practice Educators are accountable for their judgments and are responsible for completing required documentation in a timely manner and ensuring these assessment records are accurate, factual and complete.

Practice Educators must ensure they implement local hospital policies at all times, which will include both operating department specific policies (e.g. health and safety) and generic human resources policies (e.g. bullying and harassment, unconscious bias training).

Lead Practice Educator

A key named person (or persons) who is clinically based in the operating department and takes responsibility for the implementation of the programme in the clinical area for quality assurance. It is recognised that this role may vary between HEIs and individual practice placement sites. However, it is vital that the dimension of this role is fulfilled. This person(s) has overall responsibility for learners in practice placement and will therefore organise learner placements, allocation of Practice Educators and workplace teaching. Hence, this role involves acting as a link between the clinical area and the HEI, as well as acting to support both Practice Educators and learners. Essential elements of the role are detailed below, however this list is not exhaustive and it is recognised that there may be some local variations:

1. **The upkeep of a register of 'live' Practice Educators** – The Lead Practice Educator in conjunction with the Practice Educator Facilitator(s) is responsible for maintaining the register of Practice Educators and providing the HEI with an annual report.
2. **Allocation of an appropriately experienced Practice Educator to support learner development** – It is essential that the Practice Educator allocated is able to effectively support the learners in achieving their identified placement outcomes. The allocation of a Practice Educator should be communicated to both the learner and Practice Educator prior to commencement of the placement to allow the learner and Practice Educator to make any necessary arrangements. It is important that the allocated Practice Educator is able to work with the learner for at least 40% of the assessment period and therefore the Lead Practice Educator needs to consider the Practice Educators additional commitments during the placement period.
3. **Participation in managing learners who are experiencing difficulties in clinical practice** – When a Practice Educator identifies that a learner is underperforming, the Practice Educator will alert the Lead Practice Educator who will support both the Practice Educator and learner throughout the process. This may include attending progress meetings or working with the learner and Practice Educator. The Lead Practice Educator will liaise with the HEI Programme Leader and Link Lecturer as required, to ensure the learner has access to appropriate support/action plans.
4. **Ensuring that learners have access to all areas of assessment required to meet professional body requirements of the programme** – The Lead Practice Educator will arrange a placement rotation, which allows learners to gain experience in the range of specialities required to meet the programme requirements. When learners or

Practice Educators identify clinical areas where additional placement time is required, the Lead Practice Educator will make appropriate arrangements to ensure learners have access to the required experience.

5. **Participation in completion of annual placement self-evaluation / audit as part of the on-going quality management and enhancement of the provision** – this will be completed in conjunction with the HEI.

6. **The Lead Practice Educator role requires a current knowledge of Operating Department Practitioner educational issues and therefore attendance at local, regional and national meetings pertaining to Operating Department Practitioner education is paramount** – The Lead Practice Educator should attend local HEI Operating Department Practitioner education meetings and any regional meetings amongst HEIs that deliver Operating Department Practitioner pre-registration programmes. Attendance at CODP Clinical and Educational (CUE) Forums is expected especially when these are hosted at a HEI in the local geographical area.

Practice Educator Preparation Programme

This programme will be designed and delivered by the local HEI with the aim of introducing attendees to the concept of learner centred education and to prepare attendees with the knowledge and skills required to assess learners in the practice placement setting. Given changes in delivery methods made by HEI's due to COVID-19, it is expected that the programme will be delivered virtually via a number of approaches.

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of the programme the attendee will be able to:

- Describe the role and attributes of a learner centred placement educator
- Apply learning theories for adult learners in the placement setting
- Plan and facilitate learning in the placement setting
- Apply sound principles and judgement in assessing the learner's performance in the placement setting
- Evaluate the learning experience and formulate an action plan for future placements

Content of the programme will be:

- Roles and responsibilities of a Practice Educator
- Exploration of learning styles, social styles, learning cycles
- Strategies for managing the learning environment
- Supporting the learner with additional needs
- Models of supervision
- Approaches to assessment and feedback
- Managing underperformance
- Course curriculum and assessment documentation
- HEI policies, processes and procedures
- Local and national updates on ODP education and training

Assessment

The Practice Educator Preparation Programme learning outcomes will be achieved by the successful completion of an assessment chosen by the HEI which is aligned to the learning outcomes. Assessment methods could include an on-line assessment (minimum pass mark determined by the HEI) or reflective account.

Placement Educator Updates

Placement Educators (Practice Supervisors, Practice Educators and Lead Practice Educators) are required to attend updates in order to ensure that they remain 'current' with any changes or practices in relation to the delivery of the pre-registration Operating Department Practitioner programme. The updates could be delivered through online study on designated web resources provided by HEIs or alternatively, they could be delivered in practice placement whether formally or informally.

Updates may also take place through discussion with the Link Lecturer / Liaison Tutor who will take time to discuss and explain learner's level of study, changes in the curricula and how to 'manage' learner learning in the placement setting. It is recognised that it is valuable for professions to learn together and some workshops will lend themselves readily to this way of learning and networking.

Records should be kept of the updates by the Lead Practice Educator and Placement Educators should document and reflect on their learning at the update event. This is a valuable resource for supervision, annual appraisals and renewal of registration with HCPC (when included as part of a portfolio with appropriate accompanying reflection).

Topic areas for Placement Educator Updates:

- Assessment requirements and how to assess learners and complete the documentation
- Processes to follow when a learner is failing to progress and how a learner can be supported through this experience
- Supporting learners with additional needs
- How to escalate concerns about a learner
- Facilitating the learning of 'high achieving' learners
- Revisiting roles and responsibilities of Placement Educators
- Location of HEI placement information website
- Communication processes between HEIs and the clinical placement environments

Interprofessional Supervision of Learners

CODP recognises and welcomes the positive contribution that practitioners from a range of professions can make to ODP education through developing learners' appreciation of the wider clinical environment. Interprofessional supervision of learners can foster clear partnership and a stronger ethos of team working.

Registered health professionals, other than Operating Department Practitioners, may supervise and assess the Operating Department Practitioners learner in accordance with the criteria in Roles and Qualification Framework and in accordance with their scope of practice. Registered health professionals who do not fulfil the criteria within the Roles and Qualification Framework may support learners within the clinical area and can contribute to the assessment process for example, by providing formative feedback. However, they are not able to undertake summative assessment.

Practice Placement Preparation

Practice placement areas must be fully prepared to accept learners, and new practice placement areas will require a placement audit prior to receiving learners. The host HEI will utilise its mechanisms for determining the suitability of practice placement areas. Once approved, the practice placement area must have access to the following as a minimum:

- Course specific documentation (for example, programme specification, course handbooks)
- Practice assessment documentation
- HEI policies and regulations regarding assessment in practice placements
- A link lecturer (or equivalent)

The practice placement area must have at least one Lead Practice Educator who will be based in the theatre suite, will coordinate learner placements and will ensure that a suitable number of Practice Supervisors and Practice Educators are in place to provide learner support. Essential aspects of this role are:

- The upkeep of a register of live Practice Educators
- Determining arrangements for Placement Educators briefing / updating
- Allocation of an appropriately experienced Practice Supervisors and Practice Educators to support learner development
- Participation in managing learners who are experiencing difficulties in clinical practice
- Ensuring that learners have access to all areas of assessment required to meet professional body requirements of the programme
- Participation in completion of annual placement audit as part of the on-going quality management and enhancement of provision

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Who can be a Practice Educator?

The Practice Educator can be an Operating Department Practitioner or Registered Nurse (or other registered professional for proficiencies related to their scope of practice) however they must hold the qualifications as identified in the Roles and Qualification Framework as listed on page 5.

I am Operating Department Practitioner with nine months post qualifying experience and have completed my Preceptorship programme. Until I am able to access a Practice Educator Preparation Programme, what role can I play in supporting learners?

Your role will be a Practice Supervisor. If you have attended a Placement Educator Update session, you will be able to support and supervise learners and complete their formative assessment documentation.

My local HEI no longer delivers a Level 6 Mentorship Module however I would like to complete one of these modules for my own professional development. Is there a way of being able to do this?

Yes. A number of HEIs are still delivering Level 6 Mentorship Modules by distance learning. Search the internet for 'mentorship modules' or 'multiprofessional support of learning and assessing practice modules'.

I am an Operating Department Practitioner and have successfully undertaken a Level 6 or Level 7 Mentorship qualification, do I also need to attend a Practice Educator Preparation Programme?

Given that you hold a Level 6 or Level 7 Mentorship qualification, you do not need to attend a Practice Educator Preparation Programme. You do however need to attend a Placement Educator Update session prior to completing summative assessment of learners.

I am a Registered Nurse working in the perioperative environment and have undertaken a Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor Workshop (Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards) at my local HEI, do I also need to attend a Practice Educator Preparation Programme?

If the Workshop Content, Learning Outcomes and Assessment are similar to those of the Practice Educator Preparation Programme, you will not need to attend a Practice Educator Preparation Programme. However, you will require to attend a Placement Educator Update session which will also need to include information relating to your local HEI's ODP course

curriculum and assessment documentation, HEI policies, processes and procedures and local / national updates on ODP education and training.

I am a Registered Nurse working in Critical Care. Occasionally I am asked to supervise ODP learners whilst on their Critical Care placement. Can I sign-off the ODP learner's competencies when they are on this placement?

If you have attended a Practice Supervisor Workshop (Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards), you can sign-off the ODP learner's competencies within your scope of practice.

Can non-registered staff support ODP learners in practice placements?

Non-registered staff can make valuable contributions in supporting learners in practice placements as they bring many years of clinical and life experiences and have knowledge of local systems and processes. For example, an Assistant Theatre Practitioner is able to demonstrate the fundamental surgical skills to an ODP learner and provide testimonial evidence where appropriate. A Perioperative Healthcare Assistant may demonstrate aspects of preparing the operating theatre prior to the commencement of the operating list. However, non-registered staff are unable to complete the learner's formative or summative assessment documentation.

I am employed within my NHS Trust as a Lead Practice Educator however I do not have a degree, does this mean I can no longer do this role?

Within these Standards it is identified that as a Lead Practice Educator, you should either hold a first degree or be enrolled and working towards a relevant first degree. However, the College fully realises that when your post was advertised by your employer, a requirement to hold a degree may not have been an essential aspect within the Person Specification. If this is the case, priority is with your employer's terms rather than within these Standards. We would encourage you however to discuss this with your employer and seek to undertake further study to gain your first degree.

Given that Registered Nurses also undertake the role of summatively assessing ODP learners, why not use the role terminology of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) in order to avoid confusion?

The College believes that given Operating Department Practitioners came under the remit of the Chief Allied Health Professions Office in England in 2017, terminology used within these standards should reflect the vocabulary of the Allied Health Professions, the professional group to which Operating Department Practitioners are aligned. This terminology also reflects

that used by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) within the Standards of Education and Training (2017).

Differing terminology has been used in the past. For example, during the period of the NVQ ODP III, Work Based Assessor was the term used for those assessing ODP students, however this was not a term used for those assessing Nursing students. In many Theatre Departments, Operating Department Practitioners now make up the majority of the registered workforce, it would be appropriate therefore to use the terminology associated with the Allied Health Professions.

Glossary

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning

(APEL) – A general term used for the award of credit on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred at some time in the past.

Allied Health Professionals (AHP) – A collective group of health care professions distinct from medics, nurses and midwives. Operating Department Practitioners are one of the 14 professions within the group.

Blended Learning – A method of educating that uses e-learning techniques, such as online delivery through the web, discussion boards and email, combined with traditional face to face lectures, seminars, and tutorials.

College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP) – The professional body for Operating Department Practitioners. Responsible for leading and representing the profession, curriculum development, standard setting and scope of practice.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – A range of learning activities through which health and care professionals maintain and develop throughout their career to ensure that they retain their capacity to practice safely and effectively within their evolving scope of practice.

CUE Forum – Clinical and Universities Educators Forum.

Formative Assessment – Assessment that is part of the learning process that provides constructive feedback to the learner; which allows students to improve their quality of work.

Graduate – Someone who has attained a bachelors or higher degree.

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) – The Regulator set up to protect the public. Maintains a register of health and care professionals who meet the HCPC standards for training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

Higher Education Institutes (HEI) – A United Kingdom university or higher education corporation.

Honours Degree – A bachelors degree with honours, covering greater depth than a general or ordinary BA or BSc degree.

Interprofessional Education/Learning (IPE/L) – Interprofessional education occurs when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other, in order to improve collaboration and the quality of practice.

Lifelong Learning (LLL) – is the continuous process of learning and development, incorporating CPD, that must be followed throughout professional careers.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) – An independent body set up to safeguard and enhance the quality of provision and standard of awards in UK Higher Education Institutes. It reviews the quality of academic standards and of teaching and learning in each subject area, in both academic and clinical settings.

Reflective Practice – The process of analysing and evaluating perceptions, understanding and assumptions to develop new learning and understand its application to practice.

Service User – Anyone who uses or is affected by the services of a practitioner, for example patients or clients.

Scope of Practice – A description of the areas in which a practitioner has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to practise safely and effectively. Defines what a practitioner can do and also the boundaries of what they cannot do.

Simulation Based Learning (SBE) – Simulation based medical education is defined as any educational activity that utilizes simulation aides to replicate clinical scenarios.

Standard of Conduct, Performance and Ethics – This is a statement of standards which HCPC registrants must read and agree to abide by in order to remain on the register.

Standards of Education and Training – The Standards of Education and Training (SETs) are the standards against which the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) will assess whether a graduate from an educational programme will meet the HCPC Standards of Proficiency.

Standards of Proficiency (SoP) – The HCPC Standards of Proficiency are the standards which every registrant must meet in order to become registered, and must continue to meet in order to maintain their registration.

Student Centred Learning – Learning design that places an important emphasis on students taking responsibility for their own learning and being an active participant in those processes. Student attitudes and positive behaviours encourage mutual respect for others as partners in learning. There is diversity of approaches to facilitate student support and progression.

Summative Assessment – The process of evaluating learning at the conclusion of a module or programme of study. Summative assessments include standardised tests delivered by examination.

Surgical Patient – Patient needing surgical intervention, including all those needing local, regional or general anaesthesia.

References

Clarke, V., Keenan, C. (2020) *A Handbook for Practice Educators and Facilitators*. Bridgwater: College of Paramedics.

College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP) (2011) *Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Operating Department Practice*. London: CODP

College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP) (2018) *Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Operating Department Practice*. London: CODP

College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP) (2009) *Standards, recommendations and guidance for mentors and practice placements: Supporting pre-registration education in Operating Department Practice provision*. London: CODP

Health and Care Professions (H&CP) (2016) *Practice Education Guidance*. Birmingham: British Dietetic Association

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2017) *Standards of Education and Training*. London: HCPC

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2014) *Standards of Proficiency Operating Department Practice*. London: HCPC

