

A transformative approach: how Sheffield Hallam is changing the face of practice-based learning. Introducing research, education and leadership placements for Diagnostic Radiography students: a four pillar practice-based learning approach.

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Title

Introducing research, education and leadership placements for BSc Diagnostic Radiography students: a 4-pillar practice-based learning approach.

Introduction

Sheffield Hallam University has implemented a transformative approach to practice-based learning (PBL) for its BSc Diagnostic Radiography students. PBL has traditionally focused on the clinical pillar but national strategies advocate for integration of the 4 pillars of practice including research, education and leadership (HEE 2020, HEE 2022, NHS England 2022). The Society of Radiographers has endorsed recently published PBL guidelines which include PBL across all pillars at all levels (CSP & RCOT 2023). Despite this call for change, embedding all 4 pillars within PBL in pre-registration curricula remains a challenge.

Sheffield Hallam has introduced a 4-week PBL experience in research, education, or leadership for their final year BSc Radiography cohort. This innovative model not only enhances students' skills but also delivers impactful projects for service delivery. With support from practice partners, including senior leaders and researchers, students have embraced diverse opportunities, recognising the value of the development of a range of skills applicable to their future clinical practice and employability. This approach means Diagnostic Radiography graduates will have the knowledge, skills and resilience to deliver best practice, apply research to practice, lead and manage change, educate the future workforce and champion the ongoing progression of our profession.

Research Placements

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust



Nicola Wilkinson: Research Education lead, DBTH

Sara Elliott: Head of Medical Imaging, DBTH

The introduction of a new Research Education Lead at Doncaster and Bassetlaw NHS Trust has facilitated development of research placements. Students collaborate within the clinical area and the research department, engaging in clinical radiography projects such as developing new processes or policies. They complete training on Good Clinical Practice and Informed Consent, accredited by the NIHR. They work alongside the clinical research delivery team to gain understanding in all areas of clinical research trials. Students become fully trained in clinical research delivery; they can then support, deliver and go on to develop their own research ideas. Quality improvement, audit and library services training allows students to actively implement their skills across all elements of

research. A recent student group conducted a service improvement project to update the Diagnostic Imaging Department's Majax policy, aligning it with current literature, providing recommendations for future staff training and writing a revision of the policy. The students had a significant impact with the implementation of this new policy within the clinical area. These placements result in efficient use of clinical time, leading to improved services and better outcomes for patients. Students receive unique opportunities and training ensuring they will be involved in research once they graduate, improving practice for future generations.

Sheffield Hallam University Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre

Cath Holborn: Training & Education Lead Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre (AWRC)
Senior Lecturer in Radiotherapy & Oncology

The mission of the Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre (AWRC) at Sheffield Hallam University is to transform lives through innovations that help people move. One of its core pillars is dedicated to training & education aiming to deliver a transformative programme of education that 'inspires the next generation', 'transforms practice' and 'builds capacity in research & innovation'. Research placements contribute to this, enabling students to build their knowledge and skills in research, increase their understanding of the benefits of physical activity for peoples' health and wellbeing, and be inspired to take this forward into their future practice. Diagnostic Radiography students have participated on a project using 3D surface imaging to determine an alternative measure to BMI, for chemotherapy dosing as well as exploring the use of ultrasound for imaging leg muscle composition. They have contributed to a scoping literature review, developing their skills in search strategy design, the use of multiple databases, literature screening, and the use of software such as Covidence and Refworks. Some students contributed to the design of an evaluation questionnaire for an upcoming study day; others contributed to the recruitment of participants to the chemotherapy dosing project. Students work collaboratively and independently, present their work to a professional audience, developing their skills in leadership and education. This holistic approach ensures that students gain valuable research experience and develop a well-rounded skill set that enhances their future career.

Education Placements

Sheffield Hallam University Diagnostic Radiography Department

Liz Shute: Senior Lecturer, Course Leader.

Education placements for Diagnostic Radiography students have taken place within the Diagnostic Radiography Department at Sheffield Hallam University. Students have been embraced within the teaching team as 'student lecturers'. They completed an online learning package giving them the underlying knowledge and understanding of adult learning theories and teaching principles and shadowed staff in teaching sessions giving them insight into the role of an educator. They attended team meetings and contributed to course discussions, providing valuable insights and ideas. They actively participated in and delivered teaching sessions both online and face to face; created resources for students; contributed to the design of new modules; designed simulated placement

scenarios and contributed to the delivery of simulated clinical activities. They presented their work and reflections to the team each week enhancing their presentation skills. Despite initial scepticism regarding the value of education placements, students recognised the value of the skills they developed for their future practice, particularly for enhancing their skills as practice educators in the workplace. Student feedback has been positive with students acknowledging the skills they have developed across all 4 pillars of practice and the impact of these on their future practice and employability.

Leadership Placements

South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw ICS



Dr Trudy Severns, Lead Radiographer
South Yorkshire Acute Federation
South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System

South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw (SY&B) was one of the first areas to be designated as an Integrated Care System (ICS), shaping how health and care services are delivered for whole populations. Central to this is working with multiple partners and enabling organisations to lead, transform and deliver together, sharing resources as a coherent system. The more recent formalisation of the SY&B Imaging Network builds on these key priorities with national agendas recognising they offer a range of benefits for multiple stakeholders (NHS England, 2021). Supporting student radiographer placements within the SY&B Imaging Network provides our future workforce with unique opportunities to raise awareness and demonstrate the transformative strength of collaborative whole system working.

As part of the leadership placement students were involved in system and wider regional meetings and events and undertook a project. The first cohort's project played a vital role in the collation of data to inform our future workforce strategy and projected growth. The focus was on CT services capacity and demand, including workforce and capital assets and will inform equipment replacement programmes, education and training requirements and funding bids.

Our second cohort undertook a scoping exercise of the implementation and employment of the new career level of Enhanced Clinical Practitioner in SY&B imaging departments. This included associated opportunities and challenges to inform future support and planning.

Student feedback revealed they were apprehensive at the start as this was a completely new concept. However, by the end they were very positive about how much they had learnt and developed as leaders. Whilst this was a leadership placement, they had opportunities to develop their skills across all four pillars of practice.

Helen McAlinney
SY ICB AHP Workforce and Faculty Lead

Allied Health Professions (AHP) Faculties are a cost-effective means of coordinating AHP workforce development activities. They provide an infrastructure to articulate what is required across systems, and contribute to improving patient care across many organisations. The South Yorkshire AHP Faculty works closely with the South Yorkshire AHP Council and has delegated responsibility for the workforce priorities of the Council, enabling AHP workforce supply, development, and leadership to thrive and grow.

The South Yorkshire AHP Faculty has welcomed three cohorts of Diagnostic Radiography students. Aligned with the operational delivery mode of the AHP Faculty the placements were planned to allow students to undertake a system wide AHP project incorporating, but not solely focusing on, Diagnostic Radiographers. The project brief for all three cohorts was the Greener AHP agenda and was informed by the NHS commitment to reaching carbon net zero, the AHP Strategy for England, and South Yorkshire AHP intelligence.

Each cohort made a discrete contribution and cumulatively they established a system wide understanding of South Yorkshire Greener AHP activity. The project outputs enhanced understanding of the depth and spread of Greener AHP activity, the range of AHP profession specific activity, and the extent of communication channels between AHPs and sustainability leads in South Yorkshire. This tangible progression of knowledge base on the agenda in South Yorkshire can be directly attributed to the project.

The students used mixed methodologies for data collection linking with AHPs through interviews and surveys. With networking and communication a focus, they explored multiple social media and communication channels, specifically looking at how social media usage could be grown to enhance communication. They launched the AHP Faculty Instagram and TikTok accounts to facilitate this. Findings were disseminated locally, regionally, and nationally to include an invitation to share at the second national Greener AHP week.

Students enhanced their understanding of the importance of leadership, the development of themselves as leaders, and increased their awareness of the breadth of leadership roles in healthcare.

Student Feedback

'This research placement was a fantastic experience and fully exceeded my expectations. This was my first experience of revising a departmental policy and It really helped me to understand how to connect current practice with the latest research. By immersing myself with the topic I became more engaged with it and found it very rewarding.' Rory Morrisroe

'The skills I have learnt and developed over the past four weeks are skills that I can take into clinical practice and use once qualified. I have thoroughly enjoyed my placement in the South Yorkshire AHP Faculty and would definitely do it again!' Grace Slicker

'I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have embarked on this placement. Throughout this journey, I've obtained invaluable insights and skills that I know will serve me well in my future endeavours as an Allied Health Professional in the workforce' Aleeha Ashraf

'I have learnt the importance of being a good leader and how to adapt my skills to successfully lead different people. I also discovered what good leadership means to me. This opportunity has helped me to appreciate and understand the wider perspective of healthcare' Izzy Addy

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