

FOR WITNESSES

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WITNESS INFORMATION FOR WITNESSES

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WITNESS INFORMATION

Witnesses provide support and guidance for students in the workplace. They have a unique opportunity to act as a role model and mentor. They provide feedback on trainees' performance to help them develop their skills and knowledge.

A key part of the training for students is their portfolio, called the Record or Experience (RoE). The portfolio documents their development over the course of the programme and, once completed to the NEBDN standards, enables students to sit exams for their professional qualification.

ABOUT THE WITNESS

THE ROLE OF THE WITNESS

To provide confirmation and testimony of the student's competence for various clinical procedures. The testimony must relate directly to the student's performance in the workplace and can only be signed off by the Witness who has directly observed the task.

To provide constructive feedback, both verbally to the trainee and in a written assessment.

WHO CAN BE A WITNESS?

- A GDC registrant

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- The registrant must be occupationally competent in the activity that is being assessed.

WHY DOES THE TRAINEE NEED TO BE WITNESSED?

The witness is in the unique situation of being able to observe and confirm the student's competence in all areas of the clinical activity. These areas are clearly mapped to GDC Learning Outcomes and the Safe Practitioner Framework. The Academy's tutor/assessor is only able to review the student's online work when the witness confirms that the clinical activity demonstrated competency in all of the assessment criteria.

HOW DOES A WITNESS SIGN OFF ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE?

The Witness can provide feedback on the student's activity either on a mobile device or a computer using NEBDN's educational platform, PebblePad. There is no need for the Witness to have an account directly with PebblePad; the entry will be completed via the Student's account. Ideally, the witness feedback is completed soon after the procedure, but at least within 14 days.

Any witness feedback beyond 14 days is invalid, meaning the practical will need to be repeated.

For a step-by-step guide as to how a Witness validates a procedure or activity, click:

<https://v3.pebblepad.co.uk/spa/#/public/8M5thW5wR4ffW66GkbbkZmZWqhW>

KEY ELEMENTS

Each task will be carried out, where appropriate, during the normal treatment of a patient.

For each case, the candidate's competency must be assessed in line with the GDC domains of professional practice:

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1. Clinical: The candidate demonstrated knowledge and clinical skills appropriate for the patient's condition
2. Professional: The candidate demonstrated professionalism in their duties, working effectively as part of a team towards the delivery of safe, appropriate care.
3. Communication: The candidate communicated appropriately, effectively sensitively with patients, their relatives or carers and colleagues.
4. Management and Leadership: The candidate managed themselves and the clinical environment in line with current standards and guidelines.

It is essential for Witnesses to note that assessments that demonstrate full competence will count towards the requirements of the RoE.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

- On the day, aim to give the student verbal feedback on the task that is being assessed.
- Complete the written witness assessment in the portfolio ASAP.
- The witness assessment provides tick boxes to indicate competency for set criteria. These are the areas to discuss with the student, where appropriate.
- Only tick boxes that are appropriate for that procedure.
- Tick boxes may be left blank where they are not appropriate for that task.
- Where relevant boxes are not ticked, indicate the reason in the box headed 'Not Applicable'.
- Provide written, constructive feedback in the allocated box.
- All feedback must be constructive, highlighting areas of good performance
- Refer to the relevant assessment criteria so that feedback is specific to the task in the title.
- Give specific information on good performance to build upon for future assessments.
- Give specific information for guidance to improve performance. Indicate how to overcome obstacles.

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- Raise relevant issues or ask questions to determine the trainee's knowledge and understanding.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Complete the witness assessment within 14 days, but preferably on the same day.
- All relevant tick boxes must be completed.
- Where relevant boxes are not completed, give your reasoning in the 'Not Applicable' box.
- Witness assessments cannot be accepted without written, constructive feedback
- Failure to meet these requirements means that the procedure will need to be repeated on a different patient and a new witness statement provided.

SUBMISSION OF WITNESS ASSESSMENTS

On submission of the assessment, an email is sent to the witness for confirmation. No response is required. However, if you have not made the submission, you must inform the Academy immediately.

False statements by either the witness or the student could jeopardise GDC registration or result in disciplinary action by the GDC.

TOP 5 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

1. FEEDBACK SHOULD BE EDUCATIONAL IN NATURE

Providing feedback means giving students an explanation of what they are doing well and/or how to improve. The focus should be based on what the student is doing well. It is most productive for a student's learning when they are provided with an explanation and example as to what is accurate and inaccurate about their work.

Use the concept of constructive feedback to guide you. Be specific, descriptive and helpful. Identify issues and offer corrective information. Suggest scenarios by saying 'even better if...'

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2. FEEDBACK SHOULD BE GIVEN IN A TIMELY MANNER

If we wait too long to give feedback, the moment is lost, and the student might not connect the feedback with the action.

3. BE SENSITIVE TO THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF THE STUDENT

It is vital when giving feedback that you take into consideration the individual. Some students need to be nudged to achieve an even higher level, whereas others need to be handled very gently so as not to discourage learning or damage self-esteem. A balance between not wanting to hurt a student's feelings and providing encouragement is essential.

4. ASK YOURSELF 4 QUESTIONS

Studies of effective teaching and learning have shown that learners want to know where they stand in regard to their work. Providing answers to the following four questions on a regular basis will help provide quality student feedback.

- What can the student do?
- What can't the student do?
- How does the student's work compare with that of others?
- How can the student do better?

5. INVITE STUDENTS TO GIVE YOU FEEDBACK

Working as a team to help each other has enormous benefits.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD AND BAD FEEDBACK

EXAMPLE 1

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Good Feedback: The trainee fully understood the aim of the procedure and was well prepared. They were able to demonstrate each element of the criteria within the 3 key areas of decontamination, sterilisation and professionalism. For example, the candidate wore appropriate PPE, showed a good level of understanding of the dirty and clean zones and the significance of each. The actions performed demonstrated that Standard Precautions in Infection Control were met. They maintained full awareness of their clinical environment, displayed professionalism throughout and made effective decisions. I am confident that the candidate is fully competent in this area.

Bad Feedback: Candidate carried out the procedure satisfactorily

EXAMPLE 2

Good Feedback: The trainee fully understood the aim of the procedure, and he was able to demonstrate each element of the criteria. He was well prepared, had all the appropriate equipment and material ready beforehand, including PPE for us and the patient. The nurse confirmed the procedure with me as the treating clinician, ensured medical history was updated, and that the consent form was available. The patient's needs were met, and they were treated with dignity and respect before and after the procedure. I am happy with the actions taken. We will work on how to make better contemporaneous notes.

Bad Feedback: This assessment has been signed off as satisfactory, well done

EXAMPLE 3

Good Feedback: The trainee was well prepared for digital X-ray processing. Appropriate infection control measures were followed. Equipment checks were undertaken, and X-ray safety was assured. She supported the patient well. In future, it would be better to advise the patient that we will leave the room for a few minutes when the X-ray is taken, but to remain perfectly still during the exposure. The digital film was correctly added to the patient's computer record. We were able to discuss the orientation of the film, the justification for taking the film and the

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findings on the radiograph. The student is advised in the future to ask questions about the Justification to extend her knowledge.

Bad Feedback: Student performed well

Further advice can be obtained from your trainee' s personal tutor by email, or call Sage Dental Academy at 02034688001