Clare Carson

Senior Orthotist, Practice Education Co-ordinator, P&O Practice Education Lead (secondment NHS Education for Scotland)



What advice would you give to prepare pre-registration P&O learners to help them prepare for their first experience in a clinical environment?

You can get a good start by preparing your notes, beginning to think about how your classes provide you different knowledge and skill to see the whole person. Cover the basics again including anatomy, foot and ankle assessment or a range of simple prosthetic parts so your knowledge is refreshed.

What advice would you give to pre-registration P&O learners who may be feeling anxious about being in a clinical environment?

The team you are about to enter want the best for you during your placement. Try to relax so you can bring the best version of yourself. You might also find some useful information about location and transport with a short internet search. Some of your thoughts might settle by emailing ahead, asking for a visit to the department or a virtual meeting with your practice educator before your placement begins. This isn't always possible, but a simple email to link to your practice educator might turn some of those anxious feelings into excitement.

What are your top tips for pre-registration P&O learners that would help them stand out on placement?

Be prepared! That covers a manner of sins. Prepare your clinical equipment and always have a pen, a notepad, a tape measure and goniometer as a minimum. You can get involved by helping prepare clinics in the morning, answer phone calls and try to help your practice educator where you can. You are there not only to learn the clinical skill, but to get an idea of what clinical practice is like so that means every aspect of the job!

What advice could you give pre-registration P&O learners on receiving feedback?

Be open to your feedback. Your practice educator wants you to do well so this feedback is there to guide your next steps and help you develop. Think about what kind of learner you are, if you are someone who needs to digest it can be helpful for your practice educator to know this so you can revisit the feedback once you have had time to think about it. Act on your feedback, it is there for your own progress.