



Welcome Pack for Prosthetic/Orthotic Learners



Contents

Welcome from your professional body	3	Parking	17
Funding	3	Our team ethos	17
Welcome to the prosthetics/orthotics service	4	Lunch breaks	18
Department details	5	Induction	18
The prosthetics/orthotics team	6	Mandatory training	18
Pre-preceptorship	7	Research	18
Stage of Learning Model	9	Further information	19
Code of conduct	10	Record keeping	19
Mentoring	10	Prosthetics/orthotics service website	19
Learner CPD	11	Our department policies and procedures	19
Reflective practice	12	Useful contact details	19
Working hours	13	Practice Education Facilitator (PEF)	19
Regular meetings	13	Occupational Health	19
Placement learning structure	14	University contacts	19
Raising concerns	15	National specific information	20
Freedom to speak up	15	Mental health and wellbeing	21
Annual leave	15	Equality, diversity, and inclusion	23
Procedure for booking annual leave	15	Reasonable adjustments	24
Requesting leave to attend medical and dental appointments	16	Case studies	26
Procedure for reporting sickness absence	16	Aalaa Abd El Nasser Ali Mahran	26
Dress code	17	Clare Carson	28
ID badge	17	Shannon Grove	29
Accommodation	17	Alice Dudley	31
		Your professional body	32



Welcome from your professional body

Welcome to the profession!

We are thrilled that you have chosen prosthetics and orthotics as your career choice. You might be training to be a prosthetist, orthotist, prosthetic/orthotic technician, or a support worker. You might be starting to study at undergraduate or Master's level. Or you might be learning via an apprenticeship. Whichever path you have chosen, your professional body is here to support you.

You are the future of our profession. Amongst you will be our future leaders, advanced practitioners, skilled technicians, researchers, educators, and our clinical support team. Your inquisitive minds, diversity of opinions, and passion are invaluable to us. I encourage you to dive in, ask questions, seek out challenges, and make the most of every opportunity.

Throughout your learning journey your professional body is here to support you. BAPO has a range of resources and opportunities for you to get involved and help shape the future of our profession.

Best of luck with your studies, I look forward to working with you through your professional body.



Dr Nicky Eddison
Chair, BAPO

This stage of your learning journey will bring changes and challenges for you to navigate, practice-based learning enables you engage in contextualised and experiential learning by providing real life scenarios rather than theoretical case studies and service users rather than professional patients. You will need to apply theory to practice, problem solve, reflect and adapt. Changes and challenges can affect certain groups of people in unique ways. For example, moving to a new place for a placement may create unique challenges for Disabled learners or those with caring responsibilities. Remember that you are a part of the clinical team when you enter your practice-based learning, so please utilise the support systems around you, if needed, to allow yourself to be supported. See the mental health and wellbeing, EDI and mentoring sections of this learner pack for more details.

Further reading on practice based learning can also be found in the [BAPO National PO Practice Based Learning Framework](#). The PBL framework contributes towards ensuring that our learners, and all the staff that support our learners, have the resources they need to deliver high-quality, structured and relevant learning experiences.



Gemma Cassidy
EDI and MHWB lead

Funding

This work was commissioned and funded by NHS England

Published: February 2025

Proudly endorsed by



Welcome to the prosthetics/orthotics service

This welcome pack has been designed to provide you with all the information you might need during your

Within this pack you will find practical information about parking, ID badges, uniform, how to book annual leave, important contacts within the organisation and about members of our team. This pack also provides information on mental health and wellbeing support, EDI, reasonable adjustments, and raising concerns. You will also find information about your professional body and the support they can offer you.

This document has been reviewed by BAPO's Professional Affairs Committee, the National Orthotics Managers' Association Group, the Prosthetic Managers Group, the Scottish Orthotic Clinical Leads Group, The Creative Health Alliance, Salford University, Strathclyde University, Keele University, and Derby University, prosthetic and orthotic learners, prosthetic/orthotic technicians and support workers, and Prosthetists/Orthotists from all four UK nations.



Department details

ORGANISATION:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

THE PROSTHETICS/ORTHOTICS DEPARTMENT IS LOCATED AT:

The service is:

You will be working in a multidisciplinary team covering a variety of clinics including:

THE CLINICS ARE AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

Your _____ educator will inform you of which clinics you will be covering.

The prosthetics/orthotics team

The prosthetics/orthotics team is made up of the following staff:

Pre-preceptorship

WHAT DOES PRE-PRECEPTORSHIP MEAN?

Preceptorship is a period of structured support provided to healthcare professionals during key moments of career transition. You can expect to be offered the opportunity to participate in a preceptorship programme when you graduate and start your first job as an HCPC registrant. The purpose of preceptorship is to improve your confidence as you start your new role, allowing you to apply and develop your knowledge and skills to greatest effect within your scope of practice and achieve your potential. You will have a named 'preceptor' to offer you one-to-one support and be a point of contact should you have any questions, queries, or concerns.

Pre-preceptorship is a period of preparation incorporated within educational programmes and the early phase of employment as a new graduate. It involves a range of activities and experiences that support you to develop your skill, self-awareness, and confidence in preparation for employment and engaging actively with the preceptorship programme provided by your future employer. Practice-based learning that is as reflective as possible of real working life experiences is a key component of the pre-preceptorship period. Use it to not only develop your skills, but also to develop your understanding of how services and clinics operate, and the day-to-day responsibilities and challenges of practice. Consciously work on developing your communication skills. Ask questions. There are no silly questions. They demonstrate your interest and engagement with the learning opportunities you encounter; they provide insights into how your understanding and reasoning is developing and they give those you are working with an opportunity to support you to refine and consolidate your understanding. Ask for and reflect on feedback from a range of sources, not just your immediate practice-based educator. Think about asking for feedback from other members of the team, including the broader multi-disciplinary team, and from patients and their families / carers. Feedback is crucial to learning and will help you to identify your individual strengths and areas for further development. Remember, it's never too early to ask for the opportunity to shadow a more experienced colleague, to ask them about their roles, experiences, and career journeys or to start to build your professional networks.

Our team is here to support you and share their knowledge and expertise, so please don't be afraid to ask. We were all learners once and we all still seek advice and support from each other.

We encourage you to read BAPO's '[Early career guidance framework for prosthetics and orthotics](#)' which provides a guide to pre-preceptorship. You can also read '[Principles of Preceptorship](#)' published by the HCPC 2023.



YOUR

EDUCATOR WILL BE:

YOUR PLACEMENT WILL START ON

AND END ON



Stages of Learning Model

The **stages of learning model** is a psychological framework which explains how people become more competent when learning a skill. The model posits that as people learn a skill, they advance up a hierarchy of competence, which includes four main levels of competence: unconscious incompetence, conscious incompetence, conscious competence, and unconscious competence. Each of these stages of learning involves different behaviours and abilities. For example, the 'unconscious incompetence' stage usually involves making many simple mistakes without being aware of making them, the 'conscious incompetence' stage usually involves making many of the same mistakes as in the previous stage, but this time being aware that you're making them, which allows for increased accountability and the ability to learn how to make improvements in certain areas.

In the conscious competence stage, confidence in your abilities will be increasing and you will start to see the results of your actions. Seeking more opportunities to practice your skills will ensure you become fully competent. In the unconscious competence stage, you will find you are using your skills with ease, they become part of your routine. At this stage complacency can occur and mistakes can be made. Revisiting the conscious competence stage on a regular basis through CPD and reflective practice can guard against complacency.

Understanding the stages-of-learning model can be beneficial for learners. For example, understanding this model can enable a person to:

- Understand why the beginning of the learning process often feels frustrating
- Identify their position in the learning process
- Define what they should be focusing on with regards learning currently.

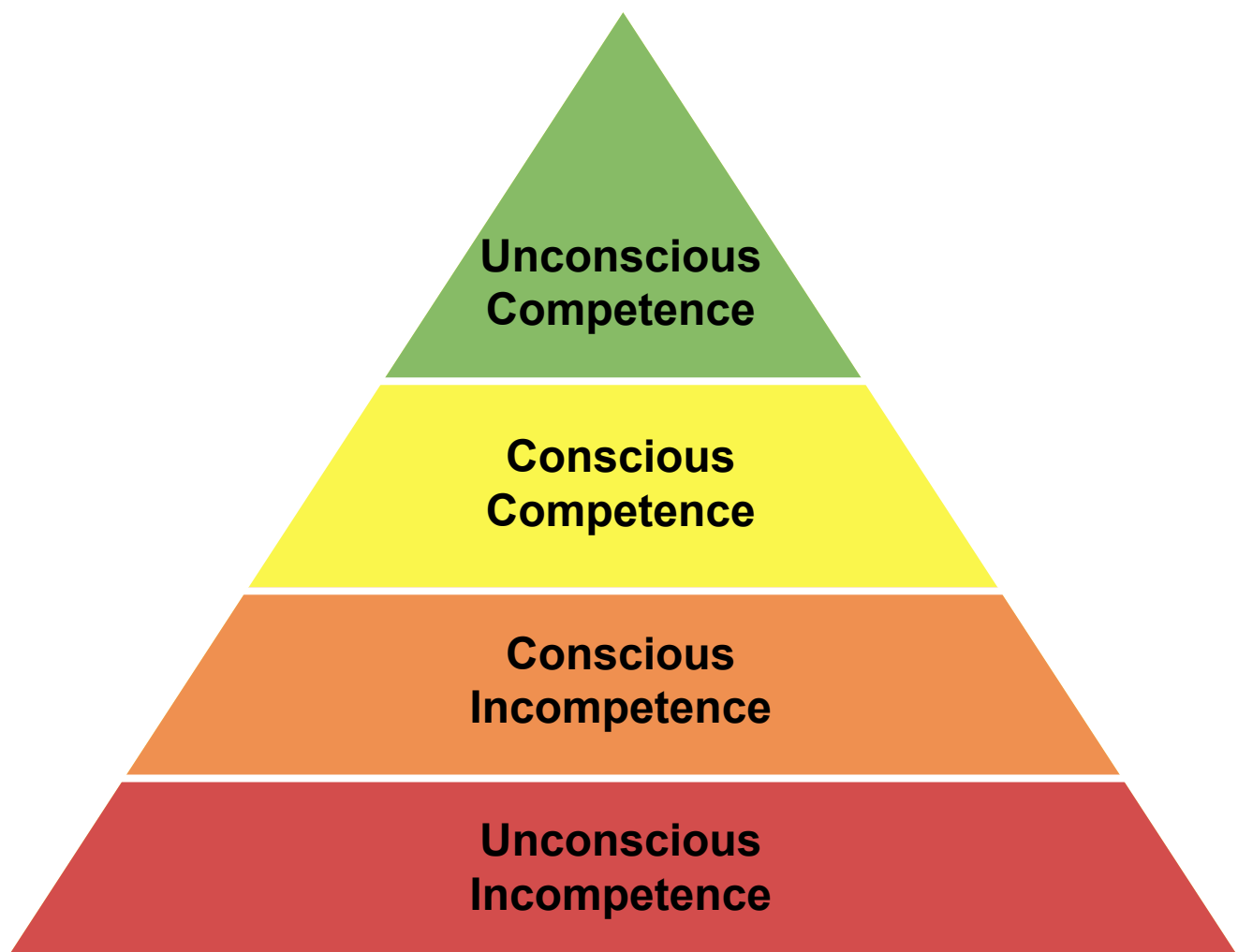


Image from: [The Stages of Learning: How You Become More Competent at Skills – Effectiviology](#)

Code of conduct

Adherence to the [Guidance on conduct and ethics for students](#) published by the HCPC is mandatory for all prosthetist/orthotist learners. The HCPC state that learners should: promote and protect the interests of service users and carers, communicate appropriately and effectively, work within the limits of their knowledge and skills, delegate appropriately, respect confidentiality, manage risk, report concerns about safety, be open when things go wrong, be honest and trustworthy, and keep records of their work with service users and carers.

The HCPC set standards of conduct, performance and ethics, which apply to the professionals they regulate and set out in broad terms how they expect registrants to behave. You will learn about these standards on your programme. The standards also apply to people who are applying to join the register. In this case the HCPC will ask you to sign a declaration to confirm that you have read, and will keep to, the standards once you are registered.

See [Standards of conduct, performance and ethics | TheHCPC](#) for more details. The standards of proficiency are the entry-level standards that set clear expectations of registrants' knowledge and abilities when they start practising. See [Prosthetists/Orthotists | The HCPC](#) for more information.

Mentoring

Mentorship is a more informal and ongoing process of personal and professional development. It may be less structured and less focused on achieving specific learning outcomes than the formal learning process, instead providing a broader range of support to help individuals develop their skills, knowledge, and confidence over time. Mentors may provide guidance on career development, offer advice on workplace challenges, and act as a sounding board for ideas and concerns.

Your professional body offers a fully-funded mentoring platform which provides access to a range of mentors across the breadth of the prosthetic and orthotic profession and wider. You are encouraged to access BAPO's mentoring platform which is exclusive to BAPO members.

There is also an opportunity to reverse mentor on this platform, whereby people with protected characteristics, intersectionality, newly qualified staff, or learners can mentor those in more senior positions. This innovative approach creates a reciprocal learning environment where knowledge flows freely in both directions, instead of top down in more traditional mentoring schemes.

Please go to <https://bapo.pldstaging.com> for more information.



Learner CPD

All registered allied health professionals are required to undertake continued professional development (CPD) as part of their registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) see [Continuing professional development \(CPD\) | The HCPC](#) for more information. As a learner you do not need to undertake additional CPD. However, getting into a habit of regularly recording CPD, learning and reflective practice is beneficial to prepare for graduation and employment.

You may participate in many CPD activities in practice based learning, examples can include:

- Case studies
- Learning by doing
- Reflective practice
- Coaching from others
- Discussions with colleagues

For more information on CPD advice please see [CPD advice for students.](#)



Reflective practice

Reflective practice is an important skill to develop as an AHP learner, particularly in practice based learning, it enables deeper learning and adapting working behaviours to improve healthcare delivery. Reflective practice is developed through self-awareness, alternative perspective taking, proactively seeking feedback, and a willingness to change behaviours. Transformative reflection is one form of reflective practice, for more information please see the [Transformative Reflection Resource Guide](#).

Many reflective models exist, and can be broken down into three sections:

- What? (Description)
- So What? (Theory and Knowledge)
- Now what? (Action)

Two prominent models are Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle and the Gibbs Reflective Model. Kolb's experiential learning cycle highlights a cyclic process of learning through experience. It begins with learners engaging in real life experiences, for example, treating a patient on placement. Following the experience, learners enter the next stage where they engage in reflective observation, which involves analysing and reflecting on the experience, for example, the learner reflects on their emotions during patient interactions and evaluates their performance. The next stage is abstract conceptualisation, where learners start to draw conclusions and develop theories about the experience, for example, the learner develops a conceptual framework for patient care based on their observations and evaluations. The final stage involves active experimentation, where learners apply their findings into future experiences, for example, applying a newly developed patient care approach in subsequent patient appointments.

Gibbs reflective model is a structured reflection framework, with six stages. These include the description stage of the experience to provide context and details. The Feelings stage is focussed on emotional responses and reflections. Following this, the evaluation stage involves both evaluating the experience and identifying strengths and weaknesses. In the Analysis stage, more in depth exploration of the experience occurs with critical thinking and consideration of and understanding of fundamental factors. The conclusion stage is where learners draw meaningful conclusions and evaluations. Finally, the action plan stage is focussed around setting specific goals and strategies for future actions based on the previous reflections.



Working hours

The prosthetics/orthotics service is open from:

Regular meetings

As it is important that you have time protected to discuss how you are settling into your placement, how you are progressing and to provide you with an opportunity to ask any questions and raise any concerns you might have.

You will have 1-1 meetings with your

These will take place

You will have 1-1 meetings with your university tutor or a designated deputy. These will take place



Placement learning structure



Raising concerns

We are committed to providing you with an environment which enables you to thrive, develop your career, and provide excellent patient-centred care. However, it is important that you feel safe and confident to speak up. If you feel you need to raise a concern you should do so as soon as you are aware of it. There are several ways to raise a concern.

Freedom to speak up

Freedom to Speak Up is for anyone who works in health, this includes learners. You can speak up about anything that gets in the way of patient care, or that affects your learning. That could be something which doesn't feel right, for example a way of working or a process which isn't being followed, or behaviours of others which you feel is having an impact on the well-being of you, the people you work with, or patients.

For more information please visit [The National Guardian's Office - Freedom to Speak Up](#). For information on local FTSP contacts please see: [Find My FTSU Guardian - National Guardian's Office](#).

Please note that if are worried about the safety or wellbeing of service users, carers or others, you should speak to an appropriate member of staff at your education provider or practice placement provider promptly. For more information see section 7 of [HCPC guidance on conduct and ethics for students](#).

Scan the QR code for information on the Safe Learning Environment Charter on raising a concern



Annual leave

If you are an apprentice your annual leave will be explained in your terms and conditions. If you are a student, your university will stipulate how many days annual leave you are entitled to if applicable.

YOUR CURRENT ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT IS:

YOUR ANNUAL LEAVE RUNS FROM:

Procedure for booking annual leave

ANNUAL LEAVE IS BOOKED VIA:

BOOKING CAN BE ACCESSED VIA:

Requesting leave to attend medical and dental appointments

We ask that you try to book routine medical/dental appointments outside of practice placement time. Where it is not possible to book such appointments outside of practice placement hours, please ensure the appointment is at the beginning or the end of your shift to minimise the disruption to the service. You may be asked to provide evidence of the appointment, the reason for the appointment can be redacted. If you have a disability and require specific considerations around any medical appointments, please discuss with your practice-based educator.

The policy for requesting leave to attend medical and dental appointments can be found at:

Procedure for reporting sickness absence

This section will provide you with guidance on the procedure you should follow if you are feeling too unwell to come to work.

Dress code

You should present yourself in a tidy and professional manner. You will be required to be bare below the elbow when you have contact with a patient.

Footwear needs to be enclosed, smart, and professional.

Accommodation

Some hospital sites have accommodation available for learners.

If you need any assistance with regards accessible accommodation, please contact:

Our team ethos

ID badge

You will be required to wear an ID badge at all times so patients, visitors, and staff are able to determine who you are and what your role is. You can obtain an ID badge at:

Parking

Lunch breaks

YOUR LUNCH BREAK IS BETWEEN:

As a team we strive to ensure lunch breaks are protected and we don't interrupt or put demands on each other during our lunch breaks (unless there is an urgent situation which needs immediate action). We ask that you do the same because taking a break is essential for our health and well-being.

Induction

The aim of the induction is to support you by welcoming you to the service, helping you to settle in and ensuring you are aware of important policies and procedures, to prepare you for your placement. Please contact your practice educator to discuss any additional requirements ahead of the induction if needed, or if you require the policies and procedures in a different format.



Scan the QR code for more information on [NHS England's placement induction poster](#)

Mandatory training

This section will provide you with details of mandatory training (if any) that will be required for you to commence your placement.

Research

Research is one of the four pillars of practice. It is also part of the HCPC's standards of proficiency. If your course leads to professional registration you will be expected to meet these standards throughout your career. We are dedicated to supporting you to engage with research during your student placement/apprenticeship.

Your professional body has a research committee which can offer you support and guidance on research. We encourage you to submit abstracts to BAPO's conferences to showcase the work you are doing as prosthetic/orthotic learner.

Further information

RECORD KEEPING

If your programme of study involves direct patient contact, you should make yourself familiar with the BAPO standards of record keeping. This document can be found on the BAPO website. Record keeping is an integral part of orthotic and prosthetic practice and writing clinical records is mandatory for all patient contacts. Notes should be written in Subjective, Objective, Assessment/ Analysis, Plan (SOAP) format or Problem Oriented Medical Records (POMR), if appropriate. All notes must be written within 24 hours of the intervention and countersigned by a registered prosthetist/orthotist.

PROSTHETICS/ORTHOTICS SERVICE WEBSITE

You can find more information about our service on our website at:

OUR DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Please make yourself familiar with these policies and refer to them when required. If you require these policies and procedures in a different format, please contact:

All the organisation's policies and procedures can be found at:

The policies specific to our service can be found at:

Useful contact details

PRACTICE EDUCATION FACILITATOR (PEF)

The _____ at the Trust/Health Board is:

The _____ is responsible for ensuring all learners have access to a network of support and all student placements and apprenticeships follow the Trust/Health Board policies and procedures for learners.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

You can contact Occupational Health at:

UNIVERSITY CONTACTS:

Keele University:

Placement co-ordinator:

f.quinn-thomas@keele.ac.uk

Student support:

n.ahmed1@keele.ac.uk

Strathclyde University:

Placement co-ordinator:

laura.murray.100@strath.ac.uk

christine.mcmonagle@strath.ac.uk

Salford University:

Placement co-ordinator:

s.l.kirkwood@salford.ac.uk

Derby University:

Relationship Co-ordinator Apprenticeships:

j.seth@derby.ac.uk

Business Relationship Manager:

b.cope@derby.ac.uk

Level 3 apprenticeship learner support:

i.adam@derby.ac.uk

Level 6 apprenticeship learner support:

j.ansell@derby.ac.uk

Nation specific information

Mental health and wellbeing

As a learner you will be building new relationships with practice-based colleagues and service users, you may even have moved to a new geographical area away from your support system. Transitioning into the practice based setting is an exciting milestone in your learning development. As with any new chapter, it can also bring a degree of stress for you to actively manage.

You will find things are different in the working environment, for example:

- The amount of feedback may be less or shared in different ways, compared to feedback shared in the higher education setting
- You will be dealing with service users, which can add an emotional load to your work, seek support from your practice educator if needed
- You will be learning new information systems and clinical practices

It is important to use the support available to you and give yourself time to settle into your new environment.

In addition to the staff at your higher education provider, your practice based educator and other staff are here to support you through this transition by offering you structure, regular one-to-one support, goal setting, shadowing, supervised support, and peer support. However, if you feel that your stress is becoming overwhelming it is important to reach out for support.

Understanding your stress signature (how you typically deal with stress) can help you to become aware of how you are feeling and to consider whether you need some time out or need some support. Mental Health First Aid England (MHFA England) has a [stress container exercise](#) that can help you to reflect on your stress levels and coping strategies.



You will not be expected to know everything on your placement, and you will experience a learning curve. Being compassionate towards yourself and being open to a growth mindset, (belief that ability and intelligence can be achieved through effort) rather than a fixed mindset (belief that ability and intelligence are fixed) during this exciting and challenging time can be helpful.

See below for more information on a growth mindset:

- [Mental Health Awareness Week – Developing a growth mindset | #TeamBartsHealth blogs - Barts Health NHS Trust](#)
- [Trainee growth vs. fixed mindset in clinical learning environments: enhancing, hindering and goldilocks factors - PubMed](#)

In addition, self-care such as breathing techniques, meditation, movement, thought reframing, and the [five steps to mental wellbeing](#) can be helpful day to day. Tools such as the [emotions wheel](#) can help you to become aware of how you are feeling. Reframing techniques such as [reframing unhelpful thoughts](#) enables you to reframe any automatic negative thoughts.

BAPO have created an [A-Z](#) of various NHS, charity, and website resources providing support and information for a variety of mental health and wellbeing experiences, issues and conditions. Looking after yourself is important, but it is also essential to support you to be a safe and effective practitioner. In line with HCPC's guidance on conduct and ethics:

- If you are experiencing any difficulties or other issues which may affect your learning or ability to successfully participate in your programme, you should tell your education provider and practice placement provider.
- You should be aware that you may put your service users or yourself at risk if your performance or judgement is affected by your physical or mental health.
- You should seek appropriate support and adapt your study or stop studying if your performance or judgement is affected by your physical or mental health and could put service users, yourself or others at risk.
- You should get advice from a doctor, or other appropriate professional, if you are worried about your physical or mental health.



Scan the QR code and click on the wellbeing poster for information on the [Safe Learning Environment Charter for Wellbeing](#)



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

The equalities act 2010 sets out a number of what are known as protected characteristics, these being: [age](#), [disability](#), [gender reassignment](#), [marriage and civil partnership](#), [pregnancy and maternity](#), [ethnicity and race](#), [religion or belief](#), [sex](#) and [sexual orientation](#). This legislation makes it illegal to discriminate against people in the workplace and in wider society.

Intersectionality is when a person belongs to two or more marginalised groups (or protected characteristics) and who may then experience discrimination differently from other people who do not have as many 'intersections.'

Certain experiences can affect people with protected characteristics in unique ways, for example, when embarking on a clinical placement, a learner with one or more protected characteristics may face some unique barriers that other learners do not experience, examples include:

- Inaccessible accommodation (creating challenges in sourcing and higher costs) for Disabled learners
- Increased mental health challenges for those with mental health conditions moving away from their local support system
- Manual handling issues for Disabled learners
- Placement software incompatibility with digital accessibility aids utilised by Disabled learners
- Impact of placement on carer responsibilities
- Financial impact of placement on learners with less privileged socioeconomic status or Disabled learners
- Microaggressions from staff or patients on placement, this could be due to ethnicity, race, LGBTQ+ status, disability, age, or sex
- Attitudes (placement staff / patients) to a protected characteristic or required reasonable adjustment due to, for example, disability or religion / belief.

If you have any concerns about how you are being treated on your placement, please discuss with your placement educator, and your education provider, if you feel unable to do this, you can contact your freedom to speak up guardian or equivalent service.

EDI AND SERVICE USERS

In addition, learners must be aware of the impacts of EDI on service users, ensuring that they treat people fairly, with an awareness of the potential impact that personal values, biases, and beliefs may have on service users and carers or colleagues:

- Action should be taken to ensure that personal values, biases, and beliefs do not lead to discrimination against service users, carers, or colleagues.
- Personal values, biases, and beliefs must not detrimentally impact the care, treatment, or other services that are provided.
- All practicable steps should be taken to meet service users' and carers' language and communication needs, proactively thinking about how to make the care offered as accessible as possible

For more information see [Guidance on conduct and ethics for students](#) and [Equality, diversity and inclusion](#).



Reasonable adjustments

If a learner discloses a disability and/or health condition, the practice placement must make reasonable adjustments, in line with the Equality Act (2010), to ensure that the Disabled learner is not disadvantaged in accessing learning and assessment.

Once a Disability is disclosed, practice educator staff should discuss this with the learner and if appropriate with educator staff to plan how the Disabled learner's specific needs can be reasonably met to facilitate learning, whilst ensuring required professional standards of proficiency are still upheld.

If you are a Disabled learner and you have a reasonable adjustment plan, this can be used as a template for any reasonable adjustments needed on placement. Please discuss these with your education provider and your placement educator.

This may result in a separate placement specific support plan; this should be created with the specific field of Prosthetics and Orthotics in mind. The support should be pre-emptive and discussed well in advance to ensure that when placement starts, support is in place to meet the needs of the learner, however a placement support / reasonable adjustment plan should be evolving and adaptable.

Diagram showing the structure of a placement support plan



Image from: [Neurodiversity and practice based learning](#)

It is important to have the correct support in place to enable you to reach your full potential during your practice-based learning. It may be worthwhile to become aware of what thoughts you have around your challenges, because internalised stigma and harmful self-beliefs can have an impact on your experience. If you have discomfort around or a reluctance about disclosing your diagnosis, for example, in case you 'inconvenience the staff' this could be linked to internalised beliefs. If you do not disclose your diagnosis and try to 'muddle through' this could put you or your service users at a disadvantage, by affecting your ability to reach your full potential and create added stress.

For more information on placement based reasonable adjustments please see [Reasonable adjustments infographic](#)

BAPO have produced a [learner placement form](#) to enable learners to share more information with their practice educators.

Different disabilities will have different challenges. For more information on neurodiversity and communication, disclosure and reasonable adjustments in practice based learning see [Neurodiversity and practice based learning](#)

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) has produced a document to provide information for disabled people joining the HCPC regulated professions, please see: [health-disability-and-becoming-a-health-and-care-professional.pdf](#)

For more information on tools to share reasonable adjustments please see [AXS Passport](#) or [NHS health passport | NHS Employers](#)



SUPPORT

- Support with sourcing or signposting to accessible learner accommodation or specific housing arrangements
- Support with disclosing Disability to others on placement when needed
- Support with stress management whilst on placement
- Support with soft skills such as communication with patients
- Support with managing the emotional load of clinical work
- Named contact to go to for support when necessary
- Clear protocol to be able to report any clinical concerns
- Wellbeing check-ins before and during placement



DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

- Specialist software available or organisations software compatible with required specialist software
- Software enabled to help with English, particularly grammar
- Placement materials accessibility checked
- If clinical duties include virtual assessments of patients, the placement needs to ensure all equipment is accessible to the individual



TRANSITION CONSIDERATIONS

- Opportunity to visit the placement ahead of time
- Considerations of any potential barriers and physical alterations required ahead of time, in terms of physical assessment of patients or manufacturing of a prosthesis or an orthosis
- Confirmation of accessible rooms, venues, and facilities
- Buddy or mentoring support during transitions as learners may move away from their support systems
- Specific accommodation requirements if moving to a new area

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR CLINICAL PLACEMENT

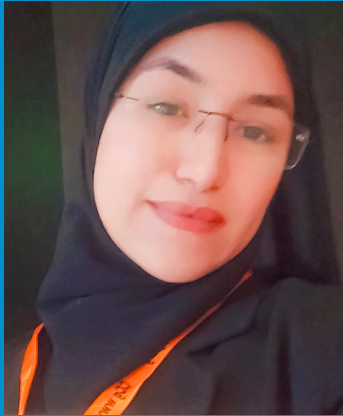


PLACEMENT INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

- Access to relevant documents in a person's preferred format. For example, evacuation and safety procedures.
- Maintenance of confidentiality about a person's condition
- Mechanism to share required reasonable adjustments or a reasonable adjustments placement plan
- Additional time to complete clinical work if necessary
- Different work areas if required
- Consideration of the impact of different sensory environments e.g workshop
- Staff, learners and patients, where appropriate having sufficient information and awareness about the adjustments you need
- Staff clearly communicating their expectations
- Flexibility in attendance and punctuality if required
- Provision of opportunity to evidence clinical learning in a variety of ways
- Learning provided by the placement in multimodal (teaching that uses different methods) ways
- Glossary of terms for prosthetic and orthotic terminology, as this may differ to the learners university terminology (this could be a learning exercise that the learner completes)

Aalaa Abd El Nasser Ali Mahran

Orthotics and Prosthetics Specialist at Delta Technological University,
and also works in private rehabilitation centre



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

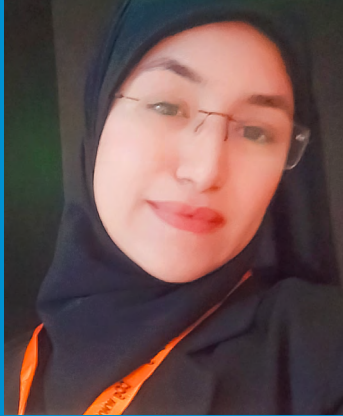
- Understand the basics
 - Review anatomy and biomechanics: ensure a solid understanding of anatomy, biomechanics, and the basic principles of P&O devices
- Study the typical journey of a P&O patient, from referral to treatment and follow-up
- Learn practical skills
 - Observation skills: practice observing gait patterns, postures, and patient behaviours
 - Documentation: familiarise yourself with clinical documentation practices including SOAP notes
 - Technical skills: revisit the practical skills learned in the lab, such as casting, modifying, and fitting devices
- Be proactive in learning
 - Seek feedback: actively ask for constructive feedback from mentors and peers
 - Set goals: identify what you hope to achieve during your placement
 - Participate actively: observe procedures, take notes, and volunteer to assist when appropriate
- Prepare logistically
 - Know the location: familiarise yourself with the clinic's layout and facilities
 - Understand the workflow: learn the typical daily schedule and processes in the clinic
 - Bring necessary tools: have your notebook, pen, and any essential equipment
- Stay ethical and respectful
 - Confidentiality: adhere to patient confidentiality and data protection regulations

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

- Approach feedback with the right mindset: be open-minded, stay positive and avoid defensiveness
- Actively listen: give your full attention, take notes, and ask for clarification if needed
- Separate the feedback from personal feelings: don't take it personally and stay calm
- Be proactive: ask for specifics and seek feedback regularly
- Reflect and act: reflect on feedback, track progress and make a plan
- Stay professional: show gratitude, respect different perspectives and follow up
- Use feedback to build confidence: balance your focus and recognise your strengths
- Develop resilience: embrace challenges and learn from your mistakes

Aalaa Abd El Nasser Ali Mahran

Orthotics and Prosthetics Specialist at Delta Technological University, and also works in private rehabilitation centre



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

- Stay adaptable: be flexible, handle pressure well and learn from your mistakes
- Reflect and follow up: seek feedback, keep in touch and show gratitude
- Pay attention to detail: document accurately, maintain quality and observe closely
- Go beyond expectations: research topics, demonstrate passion and share insights
- Build strong relationships: engage with team members
- Show a learning attitude: be receptive to feedback
- Build rapport with patients: practice empathy
- Demonstrate professionalism: punctuality

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

- Acknowledge your feelings: be mindful of perfectionist thinking and know that you won't know everything
- Prepare in advance: revise fundamentals and familiarise yourself
- Focus on small wins: set manageable goals and celebrate progress
- Build supportive relationships: connect with peers and engage with supervisors
- Practice mindfulness and stress management: take deep breaths and visualise success
- Start with observation: watch, learn and ask questions
- Remember your why, focus on impact, embrace growth
- Be kind to yourself: practice self-compassion and take breaks
- Seek feedback and reflect: welcome constructive criticism and journal your journey
- Lean on resources: utilise educational tools and access support systems

And final advice to all learners, is to believe in yourself, love your life, enable service users, engage in conferences, projects and research in P&O, to help yourself and others to progress.

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 skills 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 skills, 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 information 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.

Shannon Grove

Third year University of Salford student studying Prosthetics and Orthotics



Shannon has complex mental health issues along with physical health issues which include osteogenesis imperfecta (OI) type 1 which has caused long standing fractures in their vertebrae and feet, along with hearing loss and hyper mobility.

What attracted you to P&O?

Due to my health and the environment I grew up in, I never thought I would be able to study at university. However, I set myself the goal to use my experiences (both negative and positive) of a wide range of NHS services to do some good for the future of the management of my condition (OI). I chose to do this through P&O as it allows me to focus on the functional aspects of an individual, which are the ones which have the most significant daily impact.

Further to this, I always knew I would end up in a healthcare job just not which discipline or role. In school I developed an interest in engineering and wanted to go into product design. P&O is the perfect combination of engineering and healthcare, making a genuine difference in peoples lives while also having room for creativity and innovation – I love how this industry is not static, rather constantly changing and evolving.

What advice would you have for other Disabled learners?

Ultimately whatever information you disclose is up to you and one can go into as much or little detail as wanted.

Personally, I laid everything, regarding my health for the past couple years, out on the table as I started so that should I have a problem nothing comes as a surprise. It's much harder to explain your health situation in a flare/crisis than it is when you're at your base line.

Another aspect which encouraged me to be open with staff and students about my health issues is that I have a rare metabolic disorder and if students are familiar with it then they are in a better position, should they encounter anyone with similar issues once qualified.

I do not think disabled students are reminded enough of the impact they can have in the field. They are needed in the industry and will (or at least should) always have a place here in P&O. The experiences of our service users are crucial in improving the quality of care provided. Some of those service users will also be clinicians and that is okay. Clinicians who have the experience of being a patient have insights into what services are like, while also being in a position to change them, which is so incredibly important.

Shannon Grove

Third year University of Salford student studying Prosthetics and Orthotics



Often throughout our lives we are told by medical professionals what we should and should not be doing, what our condition(s) mean for the rest of our lives and other pieces of information which essentially control how we live. I have found that disclosing medical information to educational institutions allows the reversal of that role. You have the opportunity to tell people exactly what you can and cannot do along with any adaptations which may be required for you to carry out tasks. As daunting as this is there is so much power and strength to be found in that experience. I personally have found it to be quite healing to be able to disclose my capabilities, on my terms, to inform the thing which I want to do.

Being a student is essentially the only time you are allowed to have two addresses. Students should remind health providers in your home area of this as some may try and discharge you to services provided by the area of your university. If this is what you want that is absolutely fine however, I know I was waiting for treatment and had been for a while hence wanted to retain my place on the waiting list.

Being disabled in and of itself is a full time job and it can be very challenging to manage such a specialised degree alongside having complex health. I have sought help with finances, housing, practical adjustments, and emotional support but have only really been successful with the practical adjustments and informal emotional support from lecturers.

You will likely have to complete a manual handling course, do have a look at this prior to the session and have a think about any adaptations to be made. Any key adaptations may help to inform adjustments that might be needed on placement.

You need to push for opportunities, put your name forward for things and just see what happens. I have done a residential placement and gone to a conference only because I put my name forward. With the placement it was thought I wouldn't be up for it, so if I hadn't have voiced my interest I would have missed out on what was possibly my most valuable first year experience.

You are the only one who knows your limitations, let nobody tell you any different than what you know of yourself.

Alice Dudley

Senior Orthotist, The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, New Cross Hospital, Cannock Chase Hospital and West Park Hospital



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

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Being honest about your knowledge and skills will enhance your experience. All qualified prosthetist/orthotists were once in your position and will understand that a huge part of the learning process is finding areas of knowledge or skill that need improving.

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

Feedback can sometimes be hard to hear but you have to remember that it is constructive and will benefit you going forwards. Educators are there to help you succeed and to do that they must be transparent with areas in need of improvement. Remember that feedback goes both ways. If you feel that the educator is teaching in a way that doesn't suit you then let them know, an individual will teach how they like to learn and that might not be the best way for everyone so please be proactive in explaining what learning techniques best fit you.

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

Be proactive. Someone that is engaged in the team and utilises down time to ask questions or look into stock items etc will always be remembered.

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

Ask yourself what is the worse that can happen? Patients are just regular humans if you stumble they don't bite!

Your professional body

The British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists was established to encourage high standards of prosthetic and orthotic practice. It is committed to continued professional development and education to enhance standards of prosthetic and orthotic care.

The British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists is the only UK body that represents the interests of prosthetic and orthotic professionals and associate members to their employers, colleague Allied Health Professionals, and all groups that are involved in the field of prosthetics and orthotics. The British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists enjoys the support of a high majority of the profession as members.

The British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists undertakes the following activities on behalf of the profession:

- Lobbies to promote and maintain our members' clinical excellence, expert skills, and autonomous practice.
- Produces guidelines for best practice.
- Works to ensure that members of the profession work within an ethical code.
- Organises prosthetic and orthotic conferences.
- Manages and distributes information relating to members and our Allied Health Professional colleagues.
- Develops and runs educational courses for the prosthetic and orthotic profession.
- Actively promotes and enables Continuing Professional Development for members.
- Provides advice to members and other interested parties.
- Provides insurance for members.



For more information visit

[www bapo.com](http://www.bapo.com)

[email enquiries@bapo.com](mailto:enquiries@bapo.com)

[call 0141 561 7217](tel:01415617217)



5 Ways to Wellbeing

Connection

- To people at home and work
- To nature and animals
- To spiritual elements
- To yourself

Give

- Your time
- To others
- To yourself
- To organisations like BAPO
- Allow others to give to you

Keep learning

- New skills
- Refine current skills
- Subjects that interest you
- With BAPO e.g. research hub or mentoring

Be active

- Physical activity benefits mental and physical health
- With activities you enjoy
- Small movements during the day can aid stress reduction

Take notice

- Being aware, mindful and taking notice helps to improve mental wellbeing
- Being in the present moment takes conscious effort
- Notice surroundings, bodily sensations and breathing
- Reflect on experiences



Mental Health Matters

- Everyone has mental health and BAPO recognises the importance of looking after the mental health and wellbeing of our members.
- Working within the health care sector can bring with it an emotional load, so we encourage our members to be proactive in looking after their mental health and wellbeing.
- Good mental health and wellbeing in the workplace leads to increased productivity and performance, so this work also benefits the patients/clients/service users in our profession.
- Gemma Cassidy was appointed as Mental Health and Wellbeing lead to BAPO in 2020. For more information on this work scan the QR code or email gemma.cassidy@bapo.com for more information.



Member exclusive benefits

The benefits of being a member of BAPO

Education

- A range of courses exclusively for BAPO members.
- Fee reductions for BAPO members.
- A range of courses fully funded for BAPO members.
- BAPO online CPD portfolio.



Insurance

- Complies with HCPC requirements.
- £10M individual insurance cover.
- Including UK public, product, and medical malpractice liability.
- Members can purchase additional private practice cover at a reduced cost compared to individual premiums.



Direct communication

- A full range of information services from the Secretariat team.
- Including the latest national and international job vacancies.
- News on national guidance affecting prosthetics and orthotics.
- Exclusive use of the BAPO logo on your website. *conditions apply



BAPOConnect

- A dedicated prosthetics and orthotics professional magazine.
- Delivered to your home address (or accessed electronically if you prefer) free of charge, three times per year.



Mentoring

- An online mentoring platform exclusively for BAPO members.
- Access to a range of skilled peers within and outside the prosthetic and orthotic profession.



Research hub

- Exclusive access to BAPO and Staffordshire University's Research Hub.
- Providing you with the opportunity to get involved with research and contribute to peer-reviewed research publications.



BAPO events

- A range of member exclusive discounts to BAPO events.
- Invitation to BAPO's Annual General Meeting.
- Voting rights for proposed changes at BAPO.
- Voting rights for BAPO's individual awards.



Support

- Members have the opportunity to receive individual help, guidance, and support from BAPO, when required. Including support with HCPC.



For more information visit

www.bapo.com email enquiries@bapo.com call 0141 561 7217



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