

# ESB: Our Response and Guidance for Covid-19 (coronavirus)

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**As a response to the ongoing developments for HEIs in readiness and response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) preparations, the following guidelines are being applied by ESB:**

The potential consequences of COVID-19 (including the temporary closure of settings) are that some students may be prevented from completing the required assessed professional practice as part of their ESB endorsed programme. This ESB guidance is intended to assist with managing and minimising disruption to students and HEIs while seeking to ensure that the quality of degree programmes is not compromised.

The assumption in the guidance is that programme design will not change as a result of an outbreak of Covid-19 but that HEIs will use flexibility in how practice is embedded in the curriculum over the duration of a programme. In all situations, we are keen to work alongside HEIs to ensure that no students are at risk of not achieving the standards because insufficient time had been afforded to practice, whilst ensuring care to trainees' wellbeing and safety.

## **Guidance for Non-Final Year Students:**

For students at levels 4 and 5 of their programme whose practice is disrupted, we suggest that universities progress them to the next year/level without having completed all the required fieldwork, on condition that they undertake additional supervised fieldwork to make up the hours, and the learning outcomes associated with them, at a later stage in their programme. Individual universities should work with placements and the student to best identify when this could be possible – including the use of time outside typical University teaching terms/semesters.

## **Guidance for Final Year Students and Postgraduate Students:**

Final-year (Level 6) students are more likely to have completed most of their practice hours but will also face difficulty in meeting ESBs requirement for demonstrating competence in the 6 standards in Key Area 1 of CD NOS. ESB recommends that a process of Recognition of student practice is implemented. This can be achieved by using the existing ESB template for Recognition which requires students to state what they have done to achieve this standard (from work, volunteering, planning for placement, what knowledge and skills they have used) and then to reflect on this. This small practice portfolio would be verified by the tutor and would replace the final placement report. ESB would organise a process of sampling to assist quality assurance.

For postgraduate students, a disruption of 2-3 months could risk non-completion of the programme. However, there is potentially less flexibility to gather evidence of activity as part of the process. Universities in this case may need to consider extending the programme and review the graduation date to ensure students have time to complete assessed professional practice. Alternatively, as with final year students, the ESB process of recognition of student practice could be implemented.

ESB can provide guidance via phone and email to enable programmes to quickly set up this recognition process for final year or post graduate students. See [esbendorsement.org.uk](http://esbendorsement.org.uk) for documents to complete and process to adopt to use this reflection process. Please contact [esb@esbendorsement.org.uk](mailto:esb@esbendorsement.org.uk) so that our sampling support for the quality process can be planned for timescales. Alternatively, if you are intending to put other systems into place, please contact us to ensure they will meet our requirements.

**This guidance is intended to run between March 2020 and July 2020 and ESB will revise it in due course.**

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