

Guidance for Supervisors about Observation week.

First year trainees on the Southampton Doctoral Programme in Clinical Psychology have an Observation week allocated to visit their first placement approximately a month before it starts. The Observation week serves a number of important functions for the Programme and its trainees. Training in Southampton begins with almost two months of academic teaching and whilst this is designed to provide the essentials trainees will need on placement it can seem overwhelming. The observation week provides a time to consolidate learning and fosters theory practice links; the experience gives trainees the opportunity to see what they have been learning about in practice and they are encouraged to draw on their experiences in subsequent teaching. We also know that there is potential for trainees to become increasingly anxious about their placements until they get the opportunity to spend time on the placement and meet their supervisor; the observation week means that this happens earlier in training than would otherwise be the case.

Observation week also offers the opportunity for Supervisors and Trainees to establish the foundations for a successful placement. A checklist of possible tasks is presented below.

- Trainee should meet their supervisor(s). Outline the nature of the work available; what you anticipate the trainee will be doing on placement. If co supervising consider how the two aspects of the placement will work together.
- Show the trainee key locations, and where they will be based (where should they sit, keep their notes etc)
- Introduce the trainee to key people they will need to know; team managers; who deal with room bookings, takes messages; collects tea money etc!)
- Begin to consider the Placement Contract and make your expectations of the trainee clear (dress code, hours, contact etc). Plan supervision times and possible dates for the Contract Setting meeting with their Clinical Tutor.
- Ensure that the trainee has access to local policies and procedures.
- Ensure the trainee has computer access
- Advise the trainee about any local parking arrangements (applying for permits etc)
- Arrange opportunities for the trainee to observe your work and that of your service. This might include observing you in clinical settings; attending team meetings and shadowing other professionals.

- Provide your trainee with a list of other induction experiences and how to organise them to continue once on placement
- Advise your trainee of any key reading and any preparation you would like them to do before starting the placement.

The observation week is unique to the first placement; on subsequent placements trainees will usually have an induction period at the start of placement. However the Clinical Tutor only visits later placements when the Supervisor is new to supervision or the Southampton Programme.

23.2.2010