

# Academic Policies and Procedures

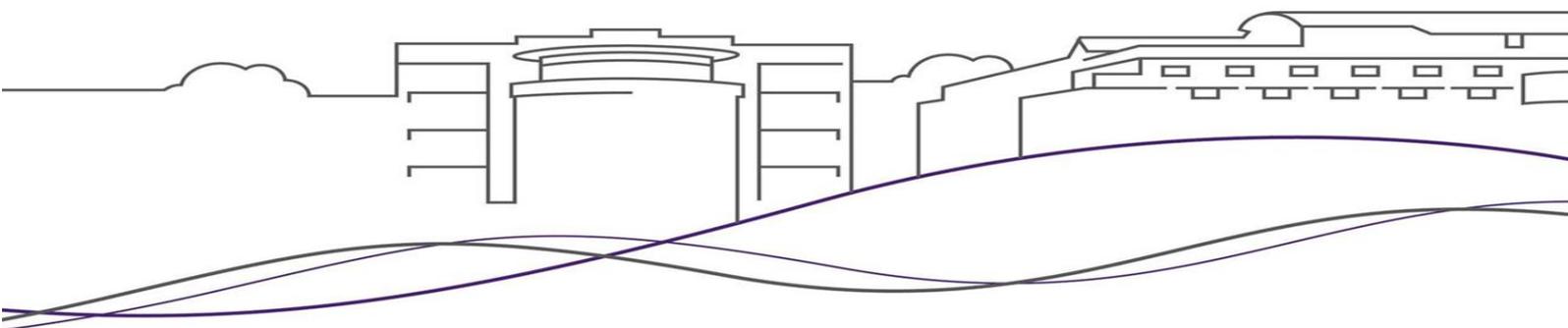


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**University Centre South Devon  
Clinical Education**

**Consent for Peer Physical Examination (PPEX) in  
Clinical Teaching and Learning Activities Procedure**



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## Peer Physical Examination in Clinical Teaching and Learning Activities

The clinical education programmes focus on developing students' skills in history taking and examination under the guidance of experienced clinicians. Students will also learn about specific procedural skills, oral and written communication in a medical and clinical context and begin to develop professional behaviours.

Clinical Skills is delivered in small groups of up to ten students facilitated by a clinical educator. The clinical education programmes use a variety of teaching modalities including e-resources, standardised patients, mannequins, anatomical models and Peer Physical Examination (PPEX).

Peer physical examination is a method of teaching and learning clinical skills where students act as model patients for one another to allow practice of clinical examination techniques. Peer physical examination is a widely adopted and an integral component of the curriculum for many medical and clinical education schools and health professional programmes.

In the clinical education programmes, peer physical examination is only approved for non-intimate body region examination. Clinical Education programmes cover examination of the cardiovascular, respiratory, gastrointestinal, and musculoskeletal and nervous systems.

Genital, groin, breast or rectal examinations **are not** undertaken as peer physical examination. All examination sessions will have a clinical facilitator present to facilitate and support student learning.

The advantages of peer physical examination include:

- ✓ Appreciation of normal anatomy and function
- ✓ Help in the development of compassion and empathy
- ✓ Gaining insight into what it feels like to be examined from a patient's perspective
- ✓ Improvement of communication skills in a supervised and safe environment
- ✓ Correcting errors in technique easily and without causing distress or alarm to patients
- ✓ Protecting patients from repeated, often uncomfortable examinations by beginners
- ✓ Obtaining constructive feedback from tutors and peers.

Perceived disadvantages could include

- Embarrassment
- Anxiety
- Discomfort
- Lack of privacy
- Unable to nominate who will be members of one's group
- Unexpected findings of abnormal physical signs in students

Peer physical examination is undertaken in a respectful and professional manner.

PPEX forms part of all the clinical education programmes and as such all students are expected to participate in this learning activity. We appreciate that students' culture, religion, gender, background, upbringing and prior experience may influence their willingness to participate in peer physical examination. This needs to be tempered by the needs of all University Centre South Devon trained health professionals to examine all patients. Our expectation is that every student should be willing to contribute to each tutorial in a way that is acceptable to them. Students who do not wish to participate as PPEX subjects must discuss this with the programme co-ordinator. All discussions will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

The UCSD Student Code of Practice Policy applies at all times. In particular, inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the cause for Concern and Fitness to Practise Policy.

As part of clinical skills learning students will have opportunities to practise examination on each other – peer physical examination. Participation in these tutorials in the examining role is mandatory. Participation as a subject of peers' examinations is encouraged, but students who do not wish to participate as subjects should consult the programme co-ordinator.

Participation does require that students adhere to agreed policy and guidance on appropriate behaviour and have signed the Peer Physical Examination Consent and Confidentiality form. A clinical facilitator will be present at these tutorials to support student learning. Staff and students must treat each other in a professional manner and with respect and courtesy at all times. All participants need to be mindful of the range of personal, social and cultural responses to the body and to touch.

For the tutorials students are asked to dress appropriately for peer examination e.g. sportswear. Changing facilities are available at all sites. All personal and health information revealed or discovered as a result of participation in these tutorials should ordinarily remain confidential to the participants.

If during a clinical skills tutorial, a clinical finding is identified, then the Incidental Clinical Findings Form needs to be completed by the clinical facilitator, and where an incidental health-related finding requires further action the clinical facilitator who is responsible for determining the appropriate action to be taken and should do this in conjunction with the affected student.

Any student concerns about participating in peer physical examination should be raised with the programme co-ordinator during the programme induction, which commences prior to the first week or block of study for each individual programme within clinical education.

Any student concerns that may arise during the course about participating in these tutorials or about a particular tutorial should be raised directly with their Clinical Facilitator in the first instance and then the programme co-ordinator.



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## **Peer Physical Examination Student Consent and Confidentiality Form**

(Indicate by placing a tick as appropriate below)

- I consent to take part in peer physical examination sessions, including as a subject.
- I consent to take part in peer physical examination sessions, but not as a subject. I have discussed my preference not to participate as a subject with the programme coordinator.

I have read the policy guidance above and agree to comply with this and the Commitment to Professionalism in the clinical education program.

I will treat my fellow students professionally and with respect and sensitivity at all time.

I will keep confidential any information revealed or discovered during these sessions.

If a concern is raised about my own health or well-being as a result of a finding during one of these tutorials I will be guided by the clinical facilitators as to the appropriate action to be taken and complete the *Significant Clinical Findings Form*.

Signed

Date

Name



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## Incidental Clinical Findings Form

As part of a clinical skills tutorial, the following clinical finding has been identified.

***Clinical Finding (brief general description, avoiding specifics)***

- I have discussed with the student the presence of a potentially significant clinical finding as above.
- I have confirmed that this issue will remain confidential within this group.
- I have given the student an opportunity to ask questions and answered them to the best of my ability and experience.

I have recommended the following action, in discussion with the student: (tick one)

- See GP routinely
- See GP urgently
- Referred to Emergency Department today
- Advised student to see their specialist for further management of their known health problem.
- Self-medication/self –care
- No action required at this time.

Name of Tutor

Name of student

Signature

Signature

Date

Date