Maintaining Mentor Competence

N.B. Standards that you need to know: Standards to Support Learning and Assessing in Practice (SLAiP) (NMC, 2008a) http://www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/NMC-Publications/NMC-Standards-to-support-learning-assessment.pdf

Triennial Review

Mentors must demonstrate knowledge, skills and competence on an on-going basis. They must be reviewed every three years (Triennial Review) to ensure that they have met the following requirements to remain on the local register as a mentor, sign-off mentor or practice teacher:

- Mentored at least two students over the previous three year period
- Participated in annual updating, including an opportunity to discuss assessment and supervision issues with other mentors
- Explored the validity and reliability of judgements made when assessing practice in challenging circumstances
- Mapped on-going development of the role against the current NMC SLAiP standards (2008a).

Mentors are required to keep records of achieving the above requirements but should not keep copies of individual student records. For example, a record of the dates that a student was mentored, the course that the student was on and the year of the programme would be appropriate. It would also be useful to keep a record of how decisions were made in relation to challenging circumstances, e.g. consultation with other staff members, consultation with Practice Team/Link Tutor, etc. Many Trusts/Organisations have developed their own documentation for recording triennial review; please check your Trust/Organisation's requirements for this. For independent placement areas, not supported by a NHS practice manager, the University will provide the relevant documentation.

The Local Mentor Register

The 'local mentor register' is an up-to-date list of current mentors and practice teachers, held and maintained by the Placement Provider (Trust/Organisation). For independent sector placements the register may be held by a local Trust or by the University (if you are unsure this can be confirmed by the Practice Learning Unit within the University). The local mentor register is used by the University to confirm that there are sufficient mentors/practice teachers, who meet the NMC SLAiP (2008a) requirements, to support the number of students allocated to the placement area. The local mentor register provides evidence of annual updating, triennial review and sign-off mentor status.

Annual Mentor Updates

These can be achieved in a variety of ways:

- As a face-to –face update in the form of either:
  - A classroom session facilitated by a lecturer/practice person
  - A placement visit by a lecturer/practice person to discuss a student assessment and documentation

- o Discussion of mentorship issues with a group of mentors
- As an online update followed by discussion with other mentors. An online update can only be undertaken **once every three years**. Face-to-face updates must occur each year in between.

Test your knowledge and understanding of this section by answering the following questions:

1. How often does a mentor have to complete triennial review to meet the NMC standards?
   a. Once only
   b. Every year
   c. Every two years
   d. Every three years

2. For triennial review purposes, how many students does a mentor have to have mentored over the previous three year period?
   a. 4 students
   b. 3 students
   c. 2 students
   d. 1 student

3. How often do mentors have to complete a mentor update?
   a. Once only
   b. Every year
   c. Every two years
   d. Every three years

4. How often can a mentor undertake an online mentor update?
   a. Every year
   b. Every two years
   c. Every three years
   d. Every four years

The answer sheets are listed on the mentor update page.