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# Institute of Public Care

## Care Purchasing and Brokerage

### Programme and Student Handbook

#### 2024 - 2025

HECoS code: 100476

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction and course overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Learning outcomes</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Entry requirements</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Course content</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1. Notional learning hours	6
<b>5. Course assessment</b>	<b>6</b>
5.1. The assessment task	7
5.2. Marking and moderation	8
5.3. Exceptional circumstances	9
<b>6. What we expect from you</b>	<b>10</b>
6.1. Oxford Brookes University Shared Commitments Policy	10
6.2. Academic practice	10
6.3. Artificial Intelligence and its use in this assessment	11
6.4. Confidentiality	12
<b>7. Your voice</b>	<b>12</b>
7.1. Complaints and appeals	12
<b>8. Student support</b>	<b>13</b>
8.1. IPC tutors and administrators	13
8.2. Study support	14
8.3. Learning resources	14
<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>16</b>
Student and Employing Agency Agreement	16

# 1. Introduction and course overview

Care Purchasing and Brokerage is a short course provided by the Institute of Public Care (IPC), which is part of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Oxford Brookes University.

At IPC we provide applied research and evaluation, consultancy, and training to help NHS trusts, government bodies, councils, charities and commercial organisations make a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing. If you would like to find out more about the work of IPC visit <https://ipc.brookes.ac.uk/>.

This two-day / 4 half-days short course is aimed at care placement, brokerage or purchasing officers in either adults' or children's care services. It is designed to support officers to implement the national agenda and develop good practice when making care placements. Course materials are regularly updated to take account of new developments in health, education and social care. The course is set in the context of guidance and legislation by the Department of Health and Social Care and/or Department for Education as well as the Welsh Government and Scottish Government where relevant: we bespoke the course to meet the needs of our clients.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information that underpins the design, delivery and management of your course. Please familiarise yourself with the contents and to talk to us if you have any questions. This isn't the only handbook available to you. Alongside this handbook there is also the [University Handbook](#), which gives you information about the University's policies and regulations as well as student support and wellbeing services available to you.

The course comprises online or face-to-face group learning sessions, delivered over a two to four-week period, as well as self-study. You can choose to accredit your learning from this short course and gain a formal undergraduate level accredited award – worth 10 CATS credits – to help with your Continuing Professional Development (CPD). To do this you will need to attend additional support sessions and complete an assessed piece of work-based learning. There is an additional fee for accreditation. For more information about our courses and how to apply visit <https://ipc.brookes.ac.uk/what-we-do/our-services/training-development>.

Module Title:	Care Purchasing and Brokerage
Module Number:	WFPC 5001
Higher Education Classification of Subjects:	100476
Modes of Study	Part Time
Faculty	Humanities and Social Sciences

## 2. Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course you will demonstrate the following Brookes Graduate Attributes at level five:

Learning Outcome	Graduate Attribute
Have knowledge and awareness of the national context for care purchasing and brokerage including demand for and supply of placements and appropriate statutory duties and regulatory arrangements.	Academic literacy
Demonstrate understanding of the principles and theories of brokerage and purchasing as they relate in practice to their role and responsibilities when they are making care placements.	Academic literacy
Implement good practice including negotiation skills, managing referrals and contract monitoring to ensure that placements achieve best value for money and better outcomes.	Academic literacy
Demonstrate independent learning skills, including reflection on individual learning and practice.	Critical self-awareness and personal literacy

## 3. Entry requirements

The course is aimed at placement and brokerage officers in local authorities or related agencies. You will normally be expected to:

- Be employed in a role undertaking care placement, brokerage or purchasing in a local authority or related agency.
- Have the support of your employing agency.

Your employing agency is expected to provide you with appropriate support whilst undertaking the course, particularly if you are undertaking the accredited award. Your line manager will need to support you by offering advice, support and supervision. We require candidates undertaking accreditation to complete a written agreement with their employer/manager prior to enrolling on the course to agree:

- The involvement of your line manager, or a suitable substitute, in supporting you throughout the course.
- That free time for self-study and completion of the assignment will be made available to you.
- That any specific access or communication needs you have that are relevant to the course will be notified to IPC.
- That you will attend all the taught and facilitated support days of the course.

- That you will meet the deadlines set for the submission of the assessed work.
- That you will have access to the internet, to be able to participate in all the on-line learning activities, download resources and submit the assignment.

A copy of the written agreement is shown in **appendix 1**. Work-based learning is an essential element of the course and the entry criteria therefore include the need for students to be employed. If you change employment during the course it will be important to review with your new employer, and IPC, arrangements for your continuation on the course, and for the completion of a new written agreement. Although IPC will endeavour to accommodate changed employment circumstances of students, it may not be possible for you to complete the course if you change employment during it, particularly if you leave the sector.

IPC welcome discussion as early as possible on any specific communication or access needs that students may have in relation to this course. Whether these concern the venue or coursework please contact the IPC [Course Administrator](#) to flag your needs.

## 4. Course content

The course draws on the Institute's consultancy and training and development experience in commissioning and purchasing with local authorities, NHS organisations and with a wide range of care providers. You will come away from the group learning sessions with an understanding of the IPC framework for commissioning and purchasing, and having tackled a series of realistic exercises designed to illustrate the techniques and tools available for making effective care placements. You will have opportunities to address your contribution in the context of the changing national agenda and to take stock and reflect on current practice; as well as being provided with practical tools to implement change where required.

The content will be delivered through a mix of presentations and practical sessions that explore models, guidance and principles, consider practice, and help you think about their application. The learning style will be collaborative with an emphasis on sharing approaches that work and practical experiences.

Electronic versions of the learning materials will be made available to you shortly before the start of the course for you to download and for you to print should you want hard copies of the materials. The learning sessions cover:

- Context and legislation, regulation and quality frameworks in social care
- Demand and supply in social care
- Commissioning – what is it and your role within the commissioning cycle
- Managing referrals in social care, including how to challenge them
- Purchasing and procurement
- Negotiation and accountability
- Contract management and monitoring, including the importance of collecting data

- Arrangements for transition e.g. from children's services to adult's social care or housing

#### 4.1. Notional learning hours

If undertaking accreditation, you can expect to spend the following amount of time on the course:

- Seminars and workshops - 12 hours
- Group and individual support sessions - 6 hours
- Directed independent study - 12 hours
- Supervision – 4 hours
- Work-based activities – 66 hours

As you can see in the above notional learning hours, students are expected to complete additional and independent learning and research to inform their learning, contributions to training days and the assignment. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure they complete the work and research expected between each training days and support sessions.

## 5. Course assessment

It is worth familiarising yourself with the University's [Regulations for Study](#). They provide information about the grades that apply to your assessments, time limits and how your final award classification will be calculated, as well as other important regulations and links to related procedures and guidance.

Assessment encompasses all judgements made about your work and/or your skills, abilities and progress, and the associated provision of feedback. There are different forms of assessment. Formative assessment does not contribute to your overall grade and is mainly intended to help you learn i.e. giving you feedback which you can use to improve your future performance.

A Summative assessment is marked work and counts towards your final grade if you are undertaking the accredited award. Your summative assessment is a work-based activity, which can be tailored to meet the needs of your employing agency: there are no examinations.

We use a range of formative assessment tasks, including:

- Group discussions about how to challenge and manage referrals in social care.
- An informal presentation – as part of the group support session – to discuss potential placement activity that students will use for the summative assessment.
- A formative outline for your proposed placement activity that you will use for the summative assessment.
- Feedback about the potential challenges and barriers to implementing good practice in the proposed placement.

You will have an online group briefing about the summative assessment task and two individual virtual tutorials with your [Academic Adviser](#). The aim of which is to help you to understand the summative assessment task, agree the work-based activity that you will undertake for the summative assessment, and apply effective study skills.

### 5.1. The assessment task

The summative assessment task is to:

Write a reflective commentary that describes a placement or placements you have made and how you managed the process. You should show how you applied the best practice you learnt on the course and what the challenges and barriers were.

The length of the assignment is limited by a set number of words to contribute towards the development of writing skills and to ensure all work is assessed equitably. We therefore require you to complete your assignment within the number of words specified in the assignment brief: between 1,800 and 2,200 words. There is no leeway above the maximum wordage allowed. If in doubt, you should discuss this with your Academic Adviser before submission. The final word count should be clearly indicated on your assignment Template.

The word count refers to the main body of your assignment and does not include the assignment title, reference list or any appendices. The word count does include headings and sub headings, footnotes, tables and in-text citations, but not diagrams. Appendices themselves will not be marked. However, inappropriate use of appendices will be taken into consideration when awarding the final mark.

You will be given a specific hand-in date for the assignment. An assignment template giving guidance about the assessment criteria, as well as other learning material including the current course reading list, is available for you to download from the University's Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle). The assessment criteria and their weighting are:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the national context for care purchasing and brokerage including relevant statutory duties and regulatory arrangements – 25%.
2. Demonstrate understanding of appropriate brokerage and purchasing practice – 25%.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the brokerage and purchasing activities undertaken – 25%.
4. Provide a reflective commentary that demonstrates personal development and learning – 25%.

We require you to submit your work electronically, on the assignment template, via the University's Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle). You will be provided with feedback on your assignment template, which will indicate how well you have done and summarise the strengths and weaknesses of your work.

## 5.2. Marking and moderation

The pass mark for the assignment and hence for the whole award is **40%**. **You must pass each assessment criterion to pass the assignment.** An assignment template is available for you to download from the University's Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle), which defines the required performance level for each assessment criterion.

You will receive detailed and constructive feedback based on the assessment criteria. We strive to give you this feedback within three weeks of the hand-in date. We will write comments on the assignment template explaining what you have done well and what can be improved. If you do not pass an assignment we will endeavour to explain what you need to do to be successful when you resubmit it. We encourage you to use any feedback on your work you receive as part of the process of developing your academic skills. Due to the nature of the summative assessment your assignment will not be able to be marked anonymously.

If your submission does not pass first time you will be allowed to resubmit the assignment once more. Your Academic Adviser or the IPC Course Administrator, in consultation with you, will set a new deadline for the re-submission of your assignment. Failure to resubmit the work or to pass the assessment, upon reassessment, will mean that you do not pass the course. The University policy on Resits and Retakes can be found here: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/your-studies/resits-and-retakes/>.

A sample of assessments is moderated by an internal moderator to ensure that equal standards are applied to all students. Following internal moderation, a sample of work is reviewed by our External Examiner, appointed from an outside organisation, to ensure that the standards applied are comparable to those at other institutions: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/your-study/fairness-in-assessment>.

On completion of marking, your provisional grade will be reported to you on proviso that this is subject to the approval of the Examination Committee. Initial results therefore may be subject to change.

### 5.2.1. Fairness in Assessment

University [assessment processes](#) ensure that assessment is rigorous, of an appropriate standard and fair, and a key role in this is that of the internal moderator and the External Examiner, who ensures that the standards used to assess students are comparable with other universities:

- Each assessment is written so that students can show they have achieved the learning outcomes for the module and for the whole programme, and the range, type and timing of assessment have been carefully chosen to enable students to become independent and reflective learners.
- Tasks and questions are set by the Module Leader, internally moderated (checked by another member of staff) and sent to the External Examiner to



ensure that they are appropriate for assessment of the module learning outcomes and that the instructions and marking criteria are clear.

- Student work is marked, then a sample of assessments is moderated by an internal moderator to ensure that equal standards of marking are applied to all students. Following internal moderation, a sample of work is reviewed by our External Examiner so that they can monitor standards and ensure that the marking is consistent.
- The University adopts a policy of anonymous marking where possible. However, in this course, due to the nature of the summative assessment, your assignment will not be able to be marked anonymously.
- The Examination Committee comprises the IPC Director, Module Leaders, tutors and the External Examiner. It meets regularly to approve the assignment results. It is the role of the Examination Committee to grant final approval of the individual marks on each module and to recommend the awarding of final qualifications. On completion of marking, therefore, the provisional grade for each module will be reported to you on proviso that this is subject to the approval of the Examination Committee. Initial results therefore may be subject to change.
- At the end of each academic year External Examiners submit reports to the University which are published on the Programme's Moodle Site. The name of the External Examiner and institution/organisation at which they are employed is included in the report, but this information is provided for transparency and not for the purposes of direct communication with the External Examiner.

### 5.3. Exceptional circumstances

You should submit your assignment by the deadline set. However, the University recognises that, on occasions, you may be affected by serious personal difficulties which may affect your ability to engage with your studies, and negatively impact your performance in assessments. The [exceptional circumstances process](#) aims to ensure that students are not unfairly disadvantaged in these circumstances.

Generally, IT-related problems are not considered valid grounds for exceptional circumstances. This is because students are expected to back up their work.

If you are experiencing exceptional circumstances beyond your control, which are impacting your studies and affecting your performance in assessment, you may be eligible for an allowance, such as the extension of a deadline or the opportunity to retake an assessment. Information on different [types of exceptional circumstances allowances](#) and the [procedures](#) to follow in order to make an application are available on our student web pages. Please make your application as soon as possible. Do not leave it until after the submission deadline has passed.

## 6. What we expect from you

### 6.1. Oxford Brookes University Shared Commitments Policy

#### We ask students to:

- Attend all scheduled sessions - the link between attendance and academic success is well proven.
- Engage with all activities and opportunities relating to teaching, learning and assessment.
- Take responsibility for planning your time to meet deadlines and other learning commitments.
- Attend scheduled meetings with your Academic Adviser when invited to do so.
- Find a sustainable balance between your University work and work commitments.
- Proactively engage with sources of student support, e.g. your Academic Adviser, regarding all aspects of your University life and seek advice promptly.
- Support your Student Representatives and participate in systems which will lead to improvements in the quality of learning and teaching.

#### In order to improve the learning experience for you, staff at Oxford Brookes University will:

- Publish module guides and programme handbooks on Moodle at the start of a course.
- Wherever possible, provide initial versions of reading lists for all modules to students via a link to Talis Aspire at the beginning of the course. There is no expectation that reading lists are set in stone as many module leaders update them dynamically during the module.
- Where possible make grades and feedback on assessed work available to students within fifteen working days. Where this is not possible, module leaders should communicate the expected timeline with students.
- Engage with the module information audits each semester to ensure the correct assessment information is recorded.
- Create and maintain module Moodle pages in each programme using a consistent layout with key information such as assignment briefs, Talis Aspire reading lists.
- Conduct mid-module evaluations and action the issues raised as appropriate. Feedback to students about the actions taken at the next appropriate point.
- Communicate outcomes of Student Representative contributions to subject committee meetings in an appropriate and effective way e.g. via email to the cohort, via the Programme landing page in Moodle; and ideally within two weeks of the meeting.

### 6.2. Academic practice

As a student at University we expect you to apply yourself in a professional manner with a good attitude for learning and the motivation to apply your learning independently with additional reading and activities outside of your scheduled taught

time. Your modules have been broken down into different learning hours and many hours within this module are classified as Independent Study and the completion of a work-based project. This means the responsibility lies with you to complete the work expected between taught times.

There is help and support available for you if you are struggling to manage your time. Your Academic Advisor can direct you to our Student Support team or the Centre for Academic Development. There are also online web pages available with everything you need to know through the student pages on the website.

You must demonstrate academic integrity in your studies and in the work you produce. A range of support and guidance is available to help you do this, so please ensure you are aware of the expectations before embarking on an assessment. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are taken very seriously, as this has the potential to undermine the value of the University's awards.

All allegations of cheating will therefore be investigated by the Student Investigation and Resolution Team, through the [Academic Conduct procedures](#). A range of penalties may be imposed for those found to have breached the regulations, including expulsion or the removal of an academic award for the most serious cases.

If you are not too confident in the accuracy of your written English, you may want to ask someone to help you by checking your work. However, it is important that this is not done in such a way that you are committing academic misconduct, which could result in disciplinary action. University [guidance about proofreading](#) is available. In addition, if a checking or proofreading service is used, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences requires you to declare this at the front of your work, giving the name of the person who did this for you.

### **6.3. Artificial Intelligence and its use in this assessment**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been in the news a great deal recently, particularly Chat GPT. Whilst the link below provides some basic information, all students are recommended to complete the 'Use of Artificial Intelligence' course available on Moodle.

This link will take you to further guidance on the [use of AI tools at Brookes](#). This link will take you to the Moodle course [Use of Artificial Intelligence](#).

If you use any AI tools for your assessment, you need to state your use in a declaration form in Moodle when you submit your work. This is similar to referencing your sources in your reference list. In the declaration, you need to specify which tools you have used and how you have used them in your assignment (for example, what you asked the tool to do). You should also check with your Module Leader to see if and how AI tools can be used for your assessment as there are appropriate and inappropriate uses of AI for this assignment. Undeclared, deceptive use of AI tools is not allowed, and may lead to an academic conduct investigation.

## 6.4. Confidentiality

IPC may be required to report on students' attendance on the course, progress in submitting the assessment, and results to their employing agency. However, the content of assessed work will only be accessed by Oxford Brookes University staff or our External Examiner and will not be made available for others to read outside this community without your permission.

## 7. Your voice

Detailed evaluation of student experience is an important and continuing element of the course. Therefore, the course will be regularly monitored to record your views. A formal evaluation form will be used after the taught sessions and at the end of the course as well as on-going informal interviews to discuss course content, materials, exercises, administration, venue or any other issues. You will also be sent an additional evaluation form following completion of the Accreditation in order to understand how well the support sessions met your expectations and needs for completing the assignment. Course evaluation is an opportunity for you to comment on the positive and negative aspects of the course, the performance of the teaching staff and the design of the course content. Evaluation helps us to check the teaching and learning experience and to improve the quality of the course.

The management of the course will be the responsibility of the course management team, which is led by the IPC Course Director. The team will hold regular internal meetings to discuss any urgent changes and the management of the course, and an Examination Committee is responsible for maintaining the academic standard of the course. We receive an annual report from our External Examiner who samples students' work and attends our Examination Committee meetings. A yearly Annual Review meeting is held, chaired by the IPC Course Director, bringing together these meetings and other evaluation materials. Minutes from this meeting are forwarded to the Faculty Quality and Learning Infrastructure Committee. As well as the Annual Review process of the Faculty, the programme will also undergo quinquennial revalidation by the University to assess the effectiveness of the programme in enabling students to achieve the intended learning.

### 7.1. Complaints and appeals

We hope that your time with us is a happy one, and your programme of study lives up to your expectations, but we understand that things sometimes go wrong, and we welcome the opportunity to put them right. If an aspect of our provision falls below expectations, please bring it to the attention of a member of IPC staff. If they cannot resolve the problem through these local procedures, there is a formal University [complaints process](#) through which your complaint will be investigated by the Student Investigation and Resolution Team.

An [academic appeal](#) is an appeal against the decision of an examination committee, and may be made on limited grounds (excluding academic judgement). If you believe

that an assessment was not conducted in accordance with the regulations governing the programme and have evidence that one of those grounds applies, you may make an appeal through the procedure which you can find on the [Student Investigation and Resolution](#) webpages. The [Brookes Union Advice Service](#) provides independent advice on many aspects of your student experience, including how to make a complaint or academic appeal.

## 8. Student support

### 8.1. IPC tutors and administrators

#### 8.1.1. IPC Director

Management of the overall IPC course programme, including concerns and complaints, is the responsibility of the IPC Course Director - Fiona Richardson can be contacted on 01865 790312 and by email at [frichardson@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:frichardson@brookes.ac.uk).

#### 8.1.2. Module Lead

The Lead for this module is Senior Consultant and tutor Amy Harmsworth. Amy is responsible for the overall co-ordination and delivery of this module, and can be contacted on 01865 790312 and by email at [aharmsworth@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:aharmsworth@brookes.ac.uk).

#### 8.1.3. IPC programme administrators

The administration of all IPC courses is dealt with by the programme administrators - Sasha Carter and Lynne Bennett can be contacted on 01865 534093 and by email at [ipc\\_courses@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:ipc_courses@brookes.ac.uk).

#### 8.1.4. Lead Tutor

Each course will have a named course leader who will be responsible for the delivery of the 4 training sessions and should be your first point of contact for questions relating to the taught content.

#### 8.1.5. Academic Adviser

If undertaking the optional accreditation, you will be allocated an [Academic Adviser](#) at the start of your course. Your Academic Adviser is a key source of academic advice and guidance throughout your course. Ask your Academic Adviser if you are unsure about any of the requirements of this programme or if situations arise which affect your ability to study or to undertake work for assessment. You will have two virtual tutorials with your Academic Adviser, although you can also ask for additional support if necessary.

## 8.2. Study support

As well as the team in IPC, we have a range of professional services teams, who are committed to helping our students to make the most of their University experience and achieve their best possible results.

The [Student Central Advice Team](#) can help with all sorts of queries; and information about processes and procedures relating to your course, such as what to do if you need to take time out.

The [Centre for Academic Development](#) can provide advice and guidance to enable you to study effectively and do your best in assessment. They offer one to one tutorials and online resources and workshops on a range of academic study skills which will help you express your own ideas and reach your full academic potential. It's worth having a browse on the [Centre for Academic Development home page](#) to get an idea of what they have to offer. The Centre also offers an online Moodle course on [academic integrity](#) so that you can learn about good academic practice and avoid making common mistakes which could lead to allegations of plagiarism.

If you have a disability or a specific learning difficulty which means you may be entitled to reasonable adjustments to enable you to complete your assessments fairly, please contact the [Inclusive Support Service](#) for an assessment of your needs.

Be proactive, and please do take advantage of the advice and guidance on offer – don't wait until you feel that you are struggling to keep up with your studies. We have an extensive support network for students at Brookes - find out more about the support available on the [Student Support page](#).

## 8.3. Learning resources

### 8.3.1. The Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) and Email

At Oxford Brookes University we use a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is powered by Moodle, to allow you to engage in learning in locations, times and at a pace that suits you. Moodle has been designed to complement your face to face seminars, it is the medium through which you will:

- Access your course learning materials
- Find help
- Use on-line discussion forums
- Submit your work to be assessed, including project plans and assignments
- Receive feedback on your assignment(s)

There are a series of videos and documents to help you use Brookes Virtual that can be found at [Getting Started with Moodle](#).

When you enrol with Oxford Brookes University you automatically get assigned a Brookes email account hosted by Gmail. This means that you will have an @Brookes.ac.uk email address and can access the suite of Google Apps such as the Google Calendar.

Your user name will be your Brookes student number and your password will be sent to you. You will receive feedback on your work via Moodle and you will be alerted to this this by an automated email to your Brookes email account You will need to either look at your Brookes email account or automatically forward on emails to it to another email address that you do use. For help visit: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/it/>.

### 8.3.2. Library

You will have the use of all onsite as well as online Oxford Brookes University Library facilities. The onsite libraries have an extensive range of health, welfare, and social care texts and journals. The library also provides access to a wide range of online resources, including databases and thousands of full-text electronic journal titles, many of which you can access from home or work: access is via the [Library home page](#). Library staff are always happy to help you with queries about finding information. The Subject Librarians for Health and Social Care can be contacted on [healthcarelibrarians@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:healthcarelibrarians@brookes.ac.uk).

# Appendix 1

## Student and Employing Agency Agreement



1. This agreement sets out the commitments of ....., the employing agency, and ....., the participant to the Oxford Brookes University course Care Purchasing and Brokerage. It is designed to ensure that both parties are clear about the requirements of the course and needs to be completed and signed when booking on the course.
  
2. The employing agency will:
  - a) Pay the course fees set by Oxford Brookes University.
  - b) Ensure the participant has access to the internet and is able to participate in all the on-line learning activities.
  - c) Support the participant with any specific access or communication needs they may have.
  - d) Make available sufficient learning time to help the participant to complete the assignment to the deadline.
  - e) Support the participant throughout the course.
  
3. The course participant will:
  - a) Access the internet to participate in all the on-line learning activities, download resources and submit the assignment.
  - b) Notify IPC of any relevant access or communication needs they may have in relation to this course.
  - c) Undertake the background reading and self-study necessary to meet the requirements of the course.
  - d) Meet the deadline for submission of the assignment.

Signed: .....Participant

.....On behalf of employing agency

.....Date



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institute of  
public care

## Trusted partner in public care

The Institute of Public Care is part of Oxford Brookes University. We provide applied research and evaluation, consultancy, and training to help NHS trusts, government bodies, councils, charities and commercial organisations make a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.

## For more information

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