



Observers in the UCO Clinic Policy



Core Documentation Cover Page

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Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	Sep 2011 SMT	To set out the process for dealing with requests from those external to the UCO to observe the educational and clinical process within the UCO Clinic.	Head of Clinical Practice	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Sep 2012
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V3.0	PRAG Chair Feb 2017	General review. Administrative Amendment to reflect current practice and course titles.	Head of Clinical Practice	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Feb 2019
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Equality Impact

Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)

Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)

X

Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this policy, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

OBSERVERS IN THE UCO CLINIC POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) has a large osteopathic clinic that is centred on the process of clinical education for osteopaths and providing osteopathic care for the community in which it serves. In satisfying its role as a site for clinical education it is expected that a range of different groups of people will from time to time visit the clinic and have an opportunity to observe the educational and care process. Commonly this will involve students from different courses that the UCO offers who will observe patients receiving osteopathic consultations and treatment. However, there may also be a need for observers from the UCO, including clinical and non-clinical staff and observers from outside of the UCO, as well as guests from outside the UCO who wish to observe the educational and clinical process.
- 1.2 Central to the clinical relationship between the practitioner and patient is the maintenance of confidentiality and the valuing of consent. It is important that anyone who is involved in the clinical process is aware of this, and abides by the same standards as any qualified practitioner.
- 1.3 This document sets out to identify who would or potentially would not be appropriate as observers in the UCO clinic, and to clarify the process for dealing with such requests from people external to the UCO.
- 1.4 The UCO's policy on observers is to ensure:
 - a) That patient safety, confidentiality and consent is maintained at all times;
 - b) That the educational process is allowed to continue and develop;
 - c) That the observer is fully aware of their role and responsibilities;
 - d) That the intellectual property of the UCO is protected where appropriate;
 - e) That the UCO is able to appropriately make use of the clinic to promote osteopathy within the community and encourage and support potential new students of osteopathy in their choice of career.

2. THE ROLE OF OBSERVERS AT THE UCO

- 2.1 Normally observers will not be involved in the process other than to observe. There are exceptions to this, especially with regards to undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at the UCO, who might be expected to engage in different stages of the consultation process as part of their experiential learning. In all circumstances any such interaction would be made with the consent of the patient, the student with whom the patient has an appointment and, if appropriate, the clinic tutor.
- 2.2 Under normal circumstances:
 - a) observers will not be left alone with a patient in a treatment room;
 - b) observers will not contribute to the patient care process at any stage other than observing;
- 2.3 If a clinic tutor, student or a patient at any stage, has grounds for concern with regard to the individual observing, they have the right to ask the individual to leave the consultation.

- 2.4 Any specific concerns from staff, students or patients regarding any observing individuals should be referred to the Head of Clinical Practice.

3. THE UCO'S EXPECTATIONS OF OBSERVERS

3.1 Observers are expected:

- a) To comply with the UCO's policies and procedures, including appropriate dress and conduct whilst in the clinic; observers are expected to dress smartly and professionally;
- b) To act in a respectful and professional manner whilst at the UCO clinic and to adhere to the UCO's policies regarding equality and diversity;
- c) To be familiar with the issues surrounding confidentiality and to regard all information shared by patients as confidential;
- d) To respect the wishes of the patients at all times; patients will be asked for their consent for each observer interaction and have a right to decline with no detriment to their current or future care;
- e) To comply with the wishes and requests of the attending student or clinic tutor supervising the care of the patient at all times;
- f) To be clearly identifiable and as such will be provided with appropriate ID.

4. OBSERVERS

4.1 Student observers within the clinic should be expected from the following areas of the UCO:

- a) Yr1 and Yr2 Full Time (FT) students;
- b) Yr3 and Yr4 FT students who may be observing;
- c) Yr1, 2 and 3 Part Time (PT) students;
- d) Yr 4 and Yr 5 PT students who may be observing;
- e) Students currently enrolled on any other UCO course such as the Access course, MSc (Pre-Registration) and PGCert SPOP course.

4.2 Student observers from outside of the UCO may also be expected and may include;

- a) Students from other osteopathic institutions, including those from abroad;
- b) Students from other health disciplines e.g. students of medicine, physiotherapy, chiropractic, nursing, acupuncture etc;
- c) Work experience students;
- d) Students involved in research (this may be pre or post graduate and may be on a wide range of subject matter).

4.3 Osteopathic clinicians as observers may include:

- a) Osteopaths from other institutions.

- 4.4 Non-Osteopathic clinicians as observers may include:
- a) Qualified medical practitioners such as GP's, Consultants;
 - b) Other health practitioners such as physiotherapists, chiropractors, midwives;
 - c) Non clinical researchers (e.g. psychologists)
 - d) Non-clinical staff members at the UCO who are not qualified practitioners e.g.:
 - e) Educational support team members;
 - f) Research staff involved in research;
 - g) Others that may be deemed appropriate.

5. PROCESS FOR OBSERVATION UNDERTAKEN BY STUDENTS FROM WITHIN THE UCO

- 5.1 All students who have enrolled on a pre-registration course at the UCO will have undergone a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check in line with the UCO's DBS Policy & Procedure for UCO Applicants & Students which can be found here:
http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/
- 5.2 All students attending observation sessions at the UCO clinic will receive a briefing explaining the issues of professionalism, confidentiality, consent and conduct in the clinic.
- 5.3 All students attending the clinic will be expected to adhere to the dress code for students in clinic. This is set out in the Student Clinic Handbook which can be found at:
http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/guidelines_and_handbooks/staff_and_students
- 5.4 On attendance at the clinic all observers will be reminded of their position and the issues relating to patient privacy, consent and confidentiality and are required to sign a confidentiality form.
- 5.5 Prior to the start of any observed session, each patient will be asked if they would consent to an observer being present during their appointment. If consent is refused then no further request should be made. It should be made clear to the patient that whether they decide to consent or not to the presence of an observer, there will be no effect on their treatment. It should also be made clear that they may withdraw their consent at any stage without penalty or detriment to their treatment.
- 5.6 If the patient is unsure then they should be given adequate opportunity to reach a decision. If they are unable to decide then no observation should take place.
- 5.7 Verbal consent must be given by the patient and should be recorded in the notes by the student with whom they have an appointment.
- 5.8 The names of all observers present during the appointment must be recorded on the case notes.

- 5.9 Process for application of clinically qualified observers or students studying on osteopathic or other clinical medical courses, external to the UCO.
- 5.10 The applicant should provide a written request to the Head of Clinical Practice, stating their reasons for wishing to attend and any relevant supporting documentation.
- 5.11 Verifiable evidence should be provided by the applicant to demonstrate their clinical status (e.g. registration entry) and the individual may be required to produce references where appropriate. All such evidence will be reviewed by the Head of Clinical Practice.
- 5.12 Written authorisation will be provided from the UCO with the duration and timetable of attendance being negotiated. This will include a named contact for the attendee who can be contacted at all times, depending on the areas the observer may be involved with.
- 5.13 The contact will be available to help guide the observer or answer any questions they may have to ensure that their experience at the UCO is a rewarding one.
- 5.14 If approval is given for the observation session the relevant Team Leaders and other staff as necessary would be informed of the date and time of the attendees visit, and the purpose of their observational role.
- 5.15 All clinical observers will be expected to present at the clinic appropriately dressed (see notes on dress code at the end of this document). They will be asked to sign a confidentiality statement recognising that they understand the UCO's policy on patient confidentiality and are aware of related issues that exist.
- 5.16 Consent to observe patient appointments will be verbally obtained from the patient prior to treatment. All decisions made by the patient will be respected and will in no way affect their level of care. If a patient is unsure then the observer should not be allowed to attend the appointment.
- 5.17 A record of the presence of the observer will be made in the patient's notes and will be signed by the observer and the principle student providing care for the patient. This will also be countersigned by the supervising clinic tutor.

6. OBSERVATION BY NON-CLINICAL STAFF FROM WITHIN THE UCO

- 6.1 In some instances there may be a legitimate need for a non-clinical staff member to attend and observe in clinic (e.g. on the request of a student in need of teaching support). In such instances individual cases would need to be considered on their merits before any such observation could take place. All staff are bound by the UCO's policies and procedures regarding their conduct and are expected to be aware of the penalties that exist if they do not abide by them.
- 6.2 Individuals requesting to observe in clinic would need to contact the Head of Clinical Practice with their request, specifying the date and session they wish to attend, along with the purpose of their visit.
- 6.3 Each application will be reviewed and approved if deemed to be appropriate.
- 6.4 If approval is given for the observation session, the relevant Team Leaders and any other staff as appropriate would be informed of the date and time of the attendees visit, and the purpose of their observational role.

- 6.5 On attendance at the clinic the observer will be required to sign a confidentiality statement recognising that they understand the UCOs policy on patient confidentiality and are aware of related issues that exist.
- 6.6 Prior to the start of any observed session, each patient will be asked if they would consent to an observer being present during their appointment. If consent is refused then no further request should be made. It should be made clear to the patient that whether they decide to consent or not to the presence of an observer, there will be no effect on their treatment. It should also be made clear that they may withdraw their consent at any stage without penalty or detriment to their treatment.
- 6.7 If the patient is unsure then they should be given adequate opportunity to reach a decision. If they are unable to decide then no observation should take place.
- 6.8 Verbal consent must be given by the patient and should be recorded in the notes by the student with whom they have an appointment.
- 6.9 On attendance of the appointment a record of the observer and their position in the UCO will be recorded on the notes. This will be signed by the observer and countersigned by the principle student and clinic tutor supervising the session.

7. OBSERVATION UNDERTAKEN BY WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS

- 7.1 From time to time the UCO is approached by careers advisors and teachers from schools and colleges regarding opportunities for students interested in studying osteopathy to attend the UCO for work experience and to develop a better understanding of what a career in osteopathy might be like. Each enquiry is evaluated and considered based on its merits. Typically potential individuals are either GCSE or A level students with an interest in osteopathy who are looking to obtain a clearer idea as to their career choices.
- 7.2 Inclusion criteria for observation in the clinic:
 - a) Typically the individual is aged 16 or over at the time of their visit;
 - b) They have expressed an interest in osteopathy as a career;
 - c) They have satisfied all the UCO's requirements for work experience students prior to attending the UCO;
 - d) They have been recommended by their UCO directly.
 - e) They (or their parent/guardian on their behalf if under 18 years of age) have read, understood and signed the terms and conditions acceptance form provided by HR.
- 7.3 All potential work experience applications will be received by admissions/HR.
- 7.4 The individuals request is individually evaluated and agreed with the Head of Clinical Practice.
- 7.5 The student is invited to attend the UCO for work experience at a date and time agreed with HR/admissions.

- 7.6 A work experience agreement (detailing the specific issues of clinic attendance, behaviour and confidentiality) is forwarded to the student and their parent or guardian for them to read and to sign indicating that they are aware of their responsibilities and the UCO's working practices while on placement at the UCO.
- 7.7 HR/admissions will agree a timetable of events for the student to undertake. Specific clinic times will be liaised with the Head of Clinical Practice and this schedule will be forwarded to the relevant members of clinic staff including Team Leaders, Reception Manager and any other members of staff who may be involved.
- 7.8 On attendance at the UCO a health and safety risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that the student is fully informed of the UCO's policies, procedures and safety issues.
- 7.9 Once in the clinic the individual will receive a further briefing as to the clinics operating procedures and the importance of consent and confidentiality. The role of the observer will be detailed and the student will be given support and advice so that they are able to obtain as much from their visit as possible.
- 7.10 Once briefed, all individuals will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement relating to all patient information shared with them during their work experience programme. Any individual who is under 18 years of age will also need their parent/guardian to sign the confidentiality form. If the individual does not understand their position or, is not willing to agree to the agreement, they will not be able to work within the clinic.
- 7.11 If the work experience student observes a clinical encounter whilst at the UCO clinic, then their name and position must be recorded by the principle carer attending the patient, and countersigned by the supervising tutor.
- 7.12 At no time should work experience students be involved in the evaluation, treatment and management of a patient in anything other than an observational role.

APPENDIX 1: OBSERVERS IN THE UCO CLINIC POLICY CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FORM

NB: This form is to be completed by any external visitor to the UCO wishing to observe in clinic.

Name:	
Date of attending the UCO Clinic (if known):	
Current Studies/Employment:	
How did you hear about the UCO:	
<p>As condition of observing at the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) Clinic I agree that any matters of a confidential nature, in particular information relating to the diagnosis and treatment of patients, individual staff and/or patients records, and details of business information must under no circumstances be divulged or passed on to any other unauthorised person or persons.</p> <p>I understand that violating this agreement may result in ineligibility for admission to the UCO in the future and possible legal action.</p>	
Signed:	
Date:	
<p>I acknowledge that I am unaware of any physical or mental health impairments that may either directly or indirectly place myself, patients I may observe or the staff or students at the UCO at risk from harm during my observation time at the UCO clinic.</p>	
Signed:	
Date:	

APPENDIX 2: OBSERVERS IN THE UCO CLINIC POLICY WORK EXPERIENCE CONTRACT

Dear xxxx,

I have pleasure in confirming our offer of an honorary contract/work experience placement within the University College of Osteopathy (UCO).

Please read the terms and conditions carefully and sign both copies of this letter, returning one copy to the HR department at 275 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JE.

This placement is for the period from xxxxxx to xxxxx in a range of UCO departments

The hours of your work experience will be from 9am to 5pm. Please report to the HR Assistant who will be responsible for your supervision throughout this placement.

Sick leave arrangements: If you are unable to attend because of sickness you should inform the HR Assistant as soon as possible (0207 089 5308) and keep the HR team informed as to the likely date of return.

Security badges: It is a requirement that every person should display an identification badge when working on any site associated with the UCO. This will be issued to you, on arrival, by the person responsible for your supervision.

Uniform: Please dress smartly at all times, bearing in mind the expectations of the people you are likely to meet in your working day. Please see below regarding specific uniform for the UCO Clinic.

Clinic: If your placement involves time within our teaching clinic, you will only be able to observe a patient consultation with the consent of the patient and osteopathic practitioners. Where this is granted, you should treat all information that you become aware of with regards to the patient, osteopath, other staff or students as confidential. Consent for you to observe in clinic may be withdrawn at any time by the patient or practitioner, and you may choose to withdraw at any time.

Confidentiality: Any matters of a confidential nature, in particular information relating to the diagnosis and treatment of patients, individual staff and/or patients records, and details of business information must under no circumstances be divulged or passed on to any other unauthorised person or persons. The placement may be terminated if confidentiality is breached.

Termination of work experience placement: Any act of misconduct (e.g. theft) or breach of confidentiality is likely to result in the termination of your placement. Discussions will be held with your school/college before the placement is terminated. A formal record of the misconduct or breach will be forwarded to the school/college.

Health and Safety at Work Act: You are reminded that in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, you have a duty to take reasonable care to avoid injury to yourself and to others by your work activities, and are required to comply with the trust policies in meeting these statutory requirements. A copy of the Health and Safety policy is available for inspection.

Equal opportunities: You must be aware of and abide by the UCO's Equal Opportunities policy in all aspects of your experience at the UCO. A copy of the Equality & Diversity Policy is available for inspection.

Loss/damage of personal effects: No liability can be accepted for loss or damage to personal property on the UCO premises by burglary, fire, theft, or otherwise. You are advised accordingly to provide your own insurance cover.

During the period of your placement you will not, at any time, except where the law requires, be regarded as an employee of the UCO, and will not be eligible for remuneration in respect of your work placement with the UCO.

Yours sincerely,

HR Manager

Form of acceptance

I accept this placement on the terms and conditions outlined and have retained a copy.

Signed:	
Print Name:	
Date:	
Parent/guardian's signature if under 18:	
Print Name:	
Date:	

APPENDIX 3: NOTES ON CLINIC ATTIRE (EXCERPT FROM THE STUDENT CLINIC HANDBOOK)

Clinic Attire

Below are details of acceptable clinic wear. This style of dress promotes a Professional rather than fashionable appearance. This not only maintains the public image of the clinic, but provides some protection for students.

White Coats

All students will be required to wear the same style of clinic coat which is a white tunic. These must be clean and ironed. Heavily contrasting and therefore visible underwear or T-shirts (or those with offensive logos) should not be worn underneath your clinic coats.

Work experience students should dress smartly and professionally, in keeping with clinic attire.

Trousers and Skirts

Trousers and skirts must be smart, dark, small patterned or preferably plain. White trousers as part of a clinic 'suit' are acceptable and lighter colours may be practical in summer. All trousers must be pressed with a central vertical crease. Denims, corduroys and jeans may be uncomfortable to patients so are therefore unacceptable. Leggings, though comfortable, are not sensible in a clinical environment. Skirts should be knee-length and with clean-finished hems. Tight or very flared skirts are impractical for treating so are therefore unacceptable in the clinic. Dark, plain, 'tailored' knee length culottes are acceptable.

Footwear

Smart, low heeled, dark or white shoes, clean and polished/brushed should be worn. Trainers or heavy boots are not acceptable.

Make-up and Jewellery

Only minimal make-up is acceptable and the use of strong perfume or aftershave is discouraged for the comfort of others in a close environment. Jewellery other than wedding/signet rings and simple hoop or stud earrings should not be worn.

Any member of clinic faculty has the right to request a student to leave the Clinic if they feel the student is improperly dressed or un-presentable.

It should be emphasised that these guidelines are for the comfort and safety of practitioners and patient's alike and of a standard no more stringent than apply in any professional health-care establishment.

Personal Hygiene

Hands must be clean at all times and washed pre and post seeing patients. Cover all wounds on hands and forearms with waterproof dressing. Nails must be short and clean. Appropriate deodorants or antiperspirants should be used at all times. Alcohol, tobacco or other strong odours on the breath are totally unacceptable - the use of breath fresheners may be advisable. Hair must be tidy and clean. Long hair should be tied back with a simple band. Beards are acceptable, 'designer stubble' is not.

Further information can be found in the Infection Control Policy which can be found at:

http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/