

Liaison Psychiatry

Royal College of Psychiatrists Higher Specialty Curriculum (Sub-Specialty Endorsement)

Version 1.0

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Purpose Statement

Liaison Psychiatry is the sub-speciality of psychiatry concerned with clinical practice, teaching and research in medical settings; the liaison referred to is therefore between psychiatry and other clinical disciplines.¹ Specialists in Liaison Psychiatry assess, manage and treat people with co-morbid physical and mental health problems across the age range. They have expertise in the relationship between physical illness, psychological distress and social adversities.

Liaison Psychiatry services have been rapidly expanding across the country following an economic evaluation demonstrating the cost effectiveness of mental health care in physical health settings. Evidence shows a list of benefits including reduction in psychological distress, improved service user experience, improved dementia care, decreased length of stay and enhanced knowledge and skill of general hospital clinicians.²³ Liaison Psychiatry services can improve the care of patients with medically unexplained symptoms and long term physical conditions in both acute hospital and primary care settings.⁴⁵

The NHS Five Year Forward View plan for England is on track to implement the ambition of providing all acute hospitals with age appropriate mental health liaison teams, of which at least 50% will meet the 'Core 24' service standard as a minimum.⁶ The NHS Long Term Plan for England has pledged to maintain this commitment that all general hospitals will have mental health liaison services, with 70% of these hospitals meeting the 'core 24' standard for adults and older adults by 2023/24.⁷

The Welsh Government's ten-year strategy to improve mental health and well-being has determined a range of areas that require attention.⁸ This includes providing better perinatal mental health care; ensuring each health board has crisis services available seven days a week; the establishment of effective mental health psychiatric liaison capacity for district general hospitals; and addressing mental health/substance misuse needs of frequent attenders of emergency departments.

- ⁴ <u>Liaison Psychiatry For Every Acute Hospital, Integrated Mental and physical healthcare</u>. *Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2013.*
- ⁵ Parsonage M, Hard E and Rock B. Managing Patients with Complex Needs: Evaluation of the City and Hackney Primary Care Psychotherapy Consultation Service. Centre for Mental Health, 2014.
- ⁶ <u>The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health</u>. *NHS England*, 2016 (p30).
- ⁷ The NHS Long Term Plan. NHS, 2019.
- ⁸ <u>Together for Mental Health</u>. Welsh Government, 2012.

¹ Organisation and Delivery of Liaison Psychiatry Services in General Hospitals in England, Walker et Al, 2018.

² <u>Parsonage M and Fossey M. Economic evaluation of a liaison psychiatry service.</u> Centre for Mental Health, 2011.

³ <u>An Evidence Base for Liaison Psychiatry – Guidance</u> Strategic Clinical Network for Mental Health, Dementia and Neurological Conditions South West, 2014.

The Scottish Mental Health Strategy has identified the need to shift the balance of care towards mental health.⁹ The Strategy highlights the crucial need to fund Liaison services and work in partnership with the NHS to increase the provision of specialist Liaison Psychiatry services available for acute patients.

Northern Ireland has higher levels of mental ill health than any other region in the UK.¹⁰ It has been emphasised that building up the range of specialist mental health services is required to meet need;¹¹ policy details that a focus on the interface between mental and physical health is required to see drastic improvement in treatment and the economic effectiveness of acute hospital care.

Given the status of Liaison Psychiatry across the United Kingdom, there is hence a clear need to train more consultant psychiatrists with specialist knowledge and skills in Liaison Psychiatry to meet patient and service need.¹²

An endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry will be awarded alongside successful completion of a CCT in either General Psychiatry or Old Age Psychiatry. This can include dual training programmes with either General or Old Age components. It is recommended that the training is undertaken over 12 months (Whole Time Equivalent), in order to achieve the required capabilities and gain the necessary experience.

The purpose of this training curriculum is to enable the Consultant Liaison Psychiatrist to specialise in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, management and prevention of mental disorders in adults/older adults in non-psychiatric environments. This includes evidence-based psychological, biomedical and social interventions in a wide range of physical health care settings.

The curriculum builds on the clinical capabilities attained in Core and Higher Psychiatry training such as advanced communication and interpersonal skills, examination skills, diagnosis and treatment to a mastery level. It also involves the further development of capabilities such as leadership and management, teaching, research and quality improvement. This curriculum provides a framework for training and enables the achievement of essential subspecialty-specific clinical and generic professional capabilities.

This is acquired through the development of the professional values, behaviours, knowledge and skills to provide high-quality, evidence-based patient care in physical health care settings.

Trainees will be expected to work in an approved Liaison Psychiatry post to ensure experience and capabilities in a variety of physical health care clinical settings such as the acute hospital, primary care and specialist medical and surgical inpatient and outpatient environments.

⁹ <u>Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027</u>. Scottish Government, 2017.

¹⁰ <u>Making Life Better</u>. Northern Ireland Assembly, 2014.

¹¹ <u>Ouality 2020; A 10-Year strategy to protect and improve quality in health and social care in</u> <u>Northern Ireland.</u> Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2011.

¹² The NHS Long Term Plan. NHS, 2019.

A Consultant Liaison Psychiatrist will be able to work with the whole range of acute and long-term mental health conditions for the whole range of adult/older adult patients in these settings.

Further curricula are available for the following other established psychiatry specialties:

- Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
- Forensic Psychiatry
- Learning Disability Psychiatry
- Medical Psychotherapy
- Old Age Psychiatry

The Liaison Psychiatry Curriculum has widespread interdependencies which include the General and Old Age Psychiatry curricula and builds on the capabilities outlined in Core Psychiatry. During training in Liaison Psychiatry, a trainee develops the knowledge and skills needed to have overall responsibility, lead a team, understand governance and overall structures. In addition to this, a trainee learns how to use the knowledge and capabilities gained through previous training to function within physical health settings, such as a general hospital, taking into account the complexities of the system and the needs of their staff. An in-depth understanding of the physical health care environment is essential for safe delivery of care. Due to this unique position, experience in service development and an understanding of the working of the wider health economy is an important aspect of training.

The training will provide appropriate development of transferable skills and experience (e.g. advanced leadership, emergency psychiatry and complex decision making), as well as specialised skills and experience in Liaison Psychiatry, such as assessment and management of medically unexplained symptoms and mental health problems in patients with long term conditions.

The Liaison Psychiatry learning outcomes are mapped to the Generic Professional Capabilities Framework (GPCs) ensuring ease of transfer between medical specialties. Through the attainment of the High-Level Learning Outcomes (HLOs), this curriculum enables trainees to lead and work in multidisciplinary and multi-professional teams, provide leadership, and participate in research, teaching and training at the interface of physical and mental health. It will also enable trainees gain experience in formulating integrated psychological, bio-medical and social, person-centred management plans for a range of mental health presentations within physical health care settings.

This purpose statement has been endorsed by the GMC's Curriculum Oversight Group and confirmed as meeting the needs of the health services of the countries of the UK.

The below tables outline the High Level Outcomes (HLOs) and Key Capabilities (KCs) to be achieved under 16 key themes.

High Level Outcome 1 (GPC 1)	Demonstrate the professional values and behaviours required of a Consultant Psychiatrist with reference to Good Medical Practice, <u>Core Values for Psychiatrists (CR204)</u> and other relevant faculty guidance.
Themes	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
1.1 Professional Relationships	Work collaboratively with patients, families, carers of all ages and colleagues respecting their autonomy, diversity and valuing their contribution.
	Recognise, validate and actively address systemic and structural inequalities, intersectionality, and their impact on clinical outcomes for patients and their carers of all ages and on working relationships with colleagues.
	Consistently demonstrate a holistic ¹³ and person-centred ¹⁴ clinical approach to adult patients that is honest, empathic, compassionate, and respects their dignity while maintaining therapeutic optimism and boundaries.
	Demonstrate flexibility, leadership, use of initiative, prioritisation, and adaptability, effectively managing your time and resources and using new technologies as appropriate.
1.2 Professional Standards	Understand the impact of workload, patient and organisational dynamics on your own well-being.
	Use supervision and reflection effectively recognising your skills, limitations and your duty of candour.
	Apply strategies to take care of your wellbeing, seeking timely support and guidance, including acknowledging if you have a protected characteristic which might impact on your training, or if you are having difficulties adapting to working in the UK.
	Use the method of receiving, reflecting, and responding to understand the emotional impact of work on the individual and team, including the impact of suicide, trauma, and homicide.
	Consistently demonstrate a positive and conscientious approach to the completion of your work.

The reference in brackets below each HLO is to the GMC Generic Professional Capabilities. HLOs are mapped to the nine GPCs.

¹³ Holistic model / approach – understanding and applying the psychological, biological, social, cultural and spiritual context in the delivery of person-centred mental healthcare.

¹⁴ Person-centred – focuses on the patient as a person, with 'personhood' being its superordinate principle. Takes into account all protected characteristics in doing this.

	Make clear, accurate and contemporaneous records.
	Promote the specialism of Liaison Psychiatry, including acting as an advocate for your patients and their carers.
	Maintain the appropriate professional standards while working clinically, as a leader within healthcare organisations.
	Work with increasing autonomy within a framework of supervision.
	Act as an ambassador to promote mental health in physical health care settings including acting as an advocate for your patients and their carers.
	Develop safe, confidential settings as a secure base for clinical work in physical healthcare settings.
	Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of sustainability and how they underpin sustainable psychiatric practice.
High Level Outcome 2.1 (GPC 2)	Demonstrate advanced communication and interpersonal skills when engaging with patients, their families, carers of all ages, their wider community, colleagues and other professionals.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
Theme 2.1 Communication	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:Demonstrate advanced communication and interpersonal skills when engaging with patients in physical healthcare settings, their families, carers of all ages and healthcare professionals.
	Demonstrate advanced communication and interpersonal skills when engaging with patients in physical
	Demonstrate advanced communication and interpersonal skills when engaging with patients in physical healthcare settings, their families, carers of all ages and healthcare professionals. Consistently demonstrate effective communication approaches with patients and relevant others, including those with neurodevelopmental disorders making reasonable adjustments and adaptations where
	 Demonstrate advanced communication and interpersonal skills when engaging with patients in physical healthcare settings, their families, carers of all ages and healthcare professionals. Consistently demonstrate effective communication approaches with patients and relevant others, including those with neurodevelopmental disorders making reasonable adjustments and adaptations where appropriate, including the use of new technologies. Reflect your understanding of how patient values and perspectives may differ in a physical health setting and the influence this may have on engagement, assessment, treatment and management, ensuring a

	Demonstrate skills in supporting those in whom English is not their first language, including the use of interpreters, and providing information in other languages.
	Communicate risk assessments effectively and succinctly to other healthcare professionals.
	Reflect on the different communication needs of patients, families, carers of all ages, primary and secondary care professionals, mental health teams and social services, and tailor your communication accordingly.
	Demonstrate proficiency in communicating potentially distressing diagnostic and prognostic information associated with the overlap with physical and mental health, with patients, families, carers of all ages, and clinicians.
High Level Outcome 2.2 (GPC 2)	Demonstrate advanced skills in the psychiatric assessment, formulation, diagnosis and person- centred holistic* management of an appropriate range of presentations in a variety of clinical and non-clinical settings within Liaison Psychiatry.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
2.2 Clinical Skills	Demonstrate an appropriate understanding of learning and behavioural stages of human development through the lifespan including awareness of normative as well as variations in presentations, for example with neurodevelopmental conditions and across cultures.
	Demonstrate proficiency in the use of relevant questionnaires and screening tools in the liaison psychiatry setting and their limitations.
	Demonstrate advanced skills in person-centred holistic assessment, investigation, formulation and diagnosis of mental disorders in physical health care settings.
	Demonstrate detailed knowledge of epidemiology and common presentations of psychiatric and psychological problems in physical health care settings.
	Identify and diagnose mental disorders in physical healthcare settings.
	Use physical healthcare records to develop a systematic chronology of a patient's history to aid assessment.
	Perform a detailed assessment of cognitive function taking in to account the limitations of the setting and physical health of the patient.
	Assess patients on busy wards and in the emergency department (ED) respecting patient dignity and confidentiality.

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Demonstrate a flexible approach in assessment, taking into account the patient's current physical health status.
Conduct relevant physical examinations, investigations and follow them up appropriately including further referrals e.g., to specialist teams where necessary.
Assess the general health of your patients, taking into account the impact of their physical health on their mental health needs and vice versa, correctly interpreting the results. This assessment should include consideration of nutritional, metabolic, endocrine and reproductive factors and disorders, and the physical and mental impact of substance use and addiction on clinical presentation.
Assess patients from a range of different cultural, spiritual, and religious backgrounds, including asylum seekers and refugees, and demonstrate and understanding of how protected characteristics may impact on clinical presentation.
Integrate information from multiple sources to develop a formulation.
Be familiar with and adept with terminology used in physical healthcare settings.
Use a detailed knowledge of contemporary classification systems to understand presentations in physical healthcare settings, including functional symptoms and long-term physical health conditions.
Liaise and discuss additional investigations with colleagues in the multi-professional team in order to utilise investigations appropriately.
Carry out a comprehensive assessment of risk including self-harm, suicide; violence; exploitation; neglect; environmental risk; unintentional physical harm, elder abuse.
Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based psychological treatments and use these skills in the assessment and management of patients in a liaison psychiatry setting.
Apply contemporary knowledge and principles of psychological therapies where appropriate and recommending psychotherapeutic /psychological treatment, using an appropriate psychotherapy modality, drawn from the liaison psychiatry setting.
Demonstrate up to date knowledge of the risk and benefits of psychotropic medication and safely prescribe it in patients with physical health challenges.
Work collaboratively to develop and deliver integrated person-centred holistic management plans (inclusive of risk) for patients with functional symptoms and long-term physical conditions with the

	individual and their healthcare team, sustaining a therapeutic relationship over a period of time to enable its implementation.
	Understand the changes related to ageing, or of a compromised brain and body, and adapt treatment strategies accordingly.
	Arrange appropriate follow up when required to provide continuity of care.
	Manage psychiatric emergencies in the physical health care setting including emergency use of medication, rapid tranquilisation, use of restraint and post event management aspects.
	Demonstrate an understanding of how physical treatments can be used for the treatment of mental disorders and apply this under supervision.
	Manage at least one supervised psychotherapy case, using an appropriate psychotherapy modality, drawn from the liaison psychiatry setting.
	Demonstrate proficiency in initiating, changing, discontinuing psychotropic medication, including advising colleagues who don't have a mental health care background, and be aware of limitations and interactions.
	Work across interfaces, between psychiatric, and other medical and non-medical specialties and services, demonstrating appropriate liaison and collaboration.
	Offer psychiatric expertise and guidance to other practitioners (e.g., through consultation or clinical supervision) to provide alternative perspectives for understanding and treatment.
	Demonstrate involvement and contribution to multi-professional management of patients' needs and risks.
High Level Outcome 2.3 (GPC 2)	Apply advanced management skills within Liaison Psychiatry in situations of uncertainty, conflict and complexity across a wide range of clinical and non-clinical contexts.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
2.3 Complexity & Uncertainty	Demonstrate an understanding of unconscious processes, including transference, countertransference, projection and splitting and the impact of these on yourself and others.
	Identify, understand, and negotiate complexity and uncertainty in a wide range of clinical and non-clinical contexts.

Demonstrate proficiency in managing conflict involving patients, professionals, teams and systems, and
utilise psychotherapeutic skills in assisting staff groups in other disciplines to manage complex situations.
Recognise and manage clinical uncertainty, ambiguity, complex co-morbidities of mental and physical illness, including risks associated with various presentations.
Deviate from care pathways/guidelines when clinically indicated.
Understand the limits of your clinical capabilities, seeking timely support and consultation when appropriate.
Manage divergent views about patient care or intervention and deliver appropriate interventions.
Prioritise information in situations of urgency and demonstrate expertise in applying the principles of crisis intervention in emergency situations. Be able to make urgent care plans and maintain professionalism.
Observe, absorb, contain, and reflect on complex clinical/non-clinical situations in liaison psychiatry, develop a balanced response, and support colleagues to do likewise.
Review treatment and management plans of patients when the outcome is not as expected or hoped for.

High Level Outcome 3.1 (GPC 3)	Apply advanced knowledge of relevant legislative frameworks across the UK to safeguard patients and safely manage risk within Liaison Psychiatry.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
3.1 Knowledge of legal and organisational frameworks in your UK jurisdiction	Demonstrate understanding of and apply the current legislation governing the care and treatment of people with mental disorder in physical healthcare settings, including emergency powers and compulsory treatment.
	Balance the duty of care to the patient and the protection of others with the restriction of human rights when considering the use of legal powers.
	Demonstrate advanced practical knowledge and application of the relevant mental capacity legislation, in physical healthcare settings.
	Demonstrate understanding of the current national standards, policies and guidelines in relation to the mental health and social care needs of patients in physical health care settings.

	Understand models of consultation within liaison psychiatry and emergency working sufficiently to explain and negotiate with physical and mental health care colleagues and managers.
	Meet the requirements to apply for relevant statutory approval where appropriate.
High Level Outcome 3.2 (GPC 3)	Work effectively within the structure and organisation of the NHS, and the wider health and social care landscape.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
3.2 Working within NHS and organisational structures	Demonstrate working knowledge of local health and social care services through your interactions with them.
	Demonstrate awareness and understanding of clinical governance structures in physical health care settings.
	Awareness of interfaces between Liaison Psychiatry and other psychiatric specialties, other branches of medicine and other service providers, including social services.
High Level Outcome 4 (GPC 4)	Demonstrate leadership and advocacy in mental and physical health promotion and illness prevention for patients within Liaison Psychiatry and the wider community.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
4.1 Health promotion and illness prevention in community settings	Apply an understanding of the factors contributing to health inequalities, and the social, cultural, religious and spiritual determinants of adult mental health.
	Promote mental well-being and prevention of Mental Disorders within the context of societal change and social technology, identifying and challenging stigma and discrimination against people with mental disorders.
	Demonstrate understanding of public health issues related to mental and physical health; work collaboratively with colleagues within physical health disciplines, and other agencies to promote mental well-being and quality of life.
	Demonstrate proficiency in working collaboratively across agencies to promote mental well-being and quality of life, including in unforeseen circumstances.
	Ensure that appropriate physical health treatments, including optimal nutrition, lifestyle interventions and social prescribing are appropriately used for improving the outcome of treatment of mental disorders.

Participate in the design and delivery of services, working with patients, families and carers of all ages and the wider community, taking into account local and national health promotion and illness prevention strategies.
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High Level Outcome 5 (GPC 5)	Demonstrate effective team working and leadership skills to work constructively and collaboratively within the complex health and social care systems that support people with mental disorder.
Themes	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
5.1 Teamworking	Use your understanding of how individual personal qualities, emotions and behaviours impact on teamworking and the quality of patient care.
	Demonstrate a working knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of, and the interface between multidisciplinary team members, including peer support and peer working.
	Understand team dynamics and use effective negotiation skills to resolve conflict and dysfunction.
	Recognise and manage unconscious dynamics between yourself, your patients, the liaison team, and other healthcare teams.
	Model, educate and adapt the service, using conflict resolution skills within and between teams, co- producing improvements with patients and carers.
	Actively participate and contribute to the success of a team by working collaboratively with colleagues from diverse backgrounds and experiences and promoting inclusivity.
	Demonstrate proficiency in the use of negotiating skills with medical and surgical colleagues and managers in physical healthcare settings.
5.2 Leadership	Recognise and appraise the leadership skills of others in various contexts.
	Demonstrate the development and application of your own leadership skills in a variety of clinical and non- clinical settings.
	Demonstrate inclusive leadership style and awareness of the impact of hierarchy and power within relationships with patients and colleagues.
	Demonstrate an understanding of how your own leadership style and approach impact on others, adapting your approach to meet the needs of the team.

	Lead, take charge, and offer opinions and direction.
	Support colleagues to enhance their performance and support their development.
	Provide clinical supervision to colleagues at all times.
	Competently manage and lead a team/service, providing consultation and specialist advice to team members and other agencies, including medical and surgical colleagues, and managers in physical healthcare settings.

High Level Outcome 6 (GPC 6)	Identify, promote and lead activity to improve the safety and quality of patient care and clinical outcomes of a person with mental disorder.
Themes	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
6.1 Patient safety	Understand and apply the principles and systems of clinical governance that assure, promote, and improve safety and quality of patient care.
	Participate in activities that promote reflection and learning from critical incidents.
6.2 Quality improvement	Apply an understanding of the impact of quality improvement activities in improving patient outcomes and system performance.
	Lead on quality improvement activities relevant to your clinical practice, including supervising others.
	Disseminate findings from quality improvement activities, implement and manage relevant change.

High Level Outcome 7 (GPC 7)	Lead on the provision of psychiatric assessment and treatment of those who are identified as being vulnerable within Liaison Psychiatry. Demonstrate advocacy, leadership and collaborative working around vulnerability and safeguarding in patients, their families and their wider community.
Themes	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
7.1 Safeguarding	Apply knowledge of individual and systemic factors contributing to vulnerabilities and safeguarding concerns in people of all ages.

	Work within legislative frameworks and local processes to raise and report safeguarding concerns in a timely manner and contribute to safeguarding processes.
	Demonstrate understanding of the impact of victimisation/exploitation and trauma in vulnerable groups.
	Understand how physical health comorbidity contributes to the vulnerabilities and safeguarding concerns in people with mental disorders.
	Demonstrate advocacy, leadership and collaborative working around vulnerability and use of safeguarding procedures in patients in physical health care settings.
	Advise others on the use of mental health and capacity legislation in people in physical health care settings.

High Level Outcome 8.1 (GPC 8)	Promote and lead on the provision of effective education and training in clinical, academic and relevant multi-disciplinary settings.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
8.1 Education & Training	Apply understanding of the principles and methods of learning, education, teaching, training and feedback in a variety of clinical and non-clinical settings.
	Identify your own training needs and pursue your own continuing professional development.
	Adapt teaching and training to the needs of particular learners in physical healthcare settings.
High Level Outcome 8.2 (GPC 8)	Demonstrate effective supervision and mentoring skills as essential aspects of education to promote safe and effective learning environments.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
8.2 Supervision	Demonstrate the professional qualities of an effective trainer, teaching and guiding individuals and groups, providing safe and effective clinical supervision in emergency and non-emergency situations or settings.
	Actively participate in clinical, psychiatric and educational supervision, demonstrating as appropriate effective skills, creating safe and effective learning environments.

High Level Outcome 9 (GPC 9)	Apply an up-to-date advanced knowledge of research methodology, critical appraisal and best practice guidance to clinical practice, following ethical and good governance principles.
Theme	Key Capabilities (KCs). By the end of the endorsement in Liaison Psychiatry, you will be able to:
9.1 Undertaking research and critical appraisal	Critically evaluate data, papers, reviews, and meta-analyses and implement findings in daily clinical practice.
	Translate research into local clinical practice and disseminate critical appraisal findings to wider communities.
	Apply knowledge of up to date appropriate statistical methods.
	Demonstrate proficiency in the use of objective evidence-based clinical assessment instruments.
	Work within ethical frameworks when carrying out or appraising research.
	Apply the principles of Research Study Protocols where available.
	Demonstrate practical contribution to an ethically approved research study where relevant research support is available.