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**Information for**

**Alternative   
Practice Agencies**

**For students undertaking the BA Honours Degree in:**

## Practical Theology

## (with specialist pathways)

**Chaplaincy with Children & Young People   
Children and Family Ministry  
Community Ministry  
Community Youth Work**

**The Institute for Children, Youth and Mission**

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Introduction

Thank you for considering offering an alternative practice opportunity for a student studying for a BA degree course with the Institute of Children, Youth and Mission (CYM).

CYM is a consortium of major Christian youth work training organisations, whose aim is to create and provide training and resources in Christian Youth Work.

### Professional Practice

The aim of professional practice is the development of professional skills, knowledge and attitudes, which will enable a student to become a qualified worker. A major part of this learning happens within professional practice, where students relate theory and theology to practice and develop the skills, knowledge and ability to work as a professional in their field.

During the course the student’s main practice agency provides a three-year location in which students develop the majority of competences required. In addition to this, students are required to complete two 111-hour alternative practices during the course. These can be completed concurrently or as a block and can be started after Christmas in the student’s first year. Alternative agencies are chosen to enable students to learn other skills and abilities and thus provide a fuller experience of professional youth work practice.

### Criteria for Alternative Agencies

The criteria expected for an alternative agency will normally be that it provides a contrasting context to the student’s main agency, usually in a secular setting in the statutory or voluntary sector. Contrasting is defined as an opportunity that enables the student to:

* Experience different organisational structures and arrangements
* Follow a programme of work which is new and challenging
* Have different supervision and line management

In addition to this the expectation is that the agency:

* will be a recognised institution or organisation
* will be completely separate from the student’s main agency
* will provide a clear line-management and accountability structure
* will involve appropriate work with very different experience to the student’s main agency
* will provide opportunities for the student to achieve the agreed learning outcomes
* will have an appropriate policies (Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Disciplinary and Grievance) in place as well as Employer’s Liability and Public Liability Insurance.

Where students are undertaking their main agency in a secular setting, they must undertake alternative practice in two different churches or Christian organisations.

# Practical Issues

Students are responsible for choosing their alternative professional practice agencies, in discussion with their Practice Tutor and course tutors. Students submit an Alternative Practice Proposal Form to their Regional Centre. This will list their learning needs, detail the opportunities which will be provided through the practice and identify the Line Manager. The Line Manager should have the appropriate professional qualifications and/or experience to supervise a student.

The 111 hours in each alternative professional practice should include preparation, meetings and record-keeping related to the work. At least half of the 111 hours should be spent in face-to-face work with service users. The work should fall within the remit of Youth & Community Work as defined by the National Youth Agency and could include:

* Detached youth work
* Working informally in local schools, e.g. informal lunch-time relational work, pastoral care, counselling or developing extra-curricular activities
* Centre-based youth work
* Community work e.g. drop-in centre, advice work, community education, health education

Alternative practice hours should be completed by the professional practice submission deadline in Years 2 and 3 of the course or as agreed with the Regional Centre.

### Covid-19

A number of students and practice agencies are facing difficulties relating to Covid-19 with reduced or amended working practices. Students should still aim to complete 111 hours but ‘face to face’ work has been amended to include digital or online youth work.

It is likely that the National Youth Agency will make an allowance for a reduced number of hours if it is not possible to complete all 111 hours – the ‘no detriment’ policy will be applied and as long as students are able to demonstrate competence in all areas, they will not be disadvantaged by reduced hours.

### What does an agency have to provide?

The alternative professional practice agency must provide the following:

* A designated Line Manager to whom the student will be accountable and whom they can contact when necessary.
* Appropriate supervision and support – to be agreed with the student.
* A job description for the practice, developed in consultation with the student.
* An appraisal completed by the Line Manager at the end of the practice on the appropriate form and returned to the student, along with signed time sheets which the student will provide.
* Opportunity for the student’s practice to be observed, either by the Line Manager and/or the Practice Tutor. The student is responsible for organising this.
* Any necessary and agreed expenses incurred in the work for the agency

Students should ensure that the agency is familiar with all the necessary paperwork to be completed by the Line Manager.

# Three Way Meetings

A three-way meeting should take place between the Line Manager, the Student and the student’s Practice Tutor (PT) at the beginning of the Alternative Placement. Three-way meetings are an opportunity to discuss learning outcomes for the student in their placement, and explore issues relating to the student’s work in the agency, their professional development and professional practice assessment. The three-way meeting will usually be arranged by the student and is facilitated by the PT. Suggested guidelines for these meetings can be found on MyCYM.

Potential problems in professional practice should be discussed as they arise within supervision or tutorials, rather than waiting for three-way meetings.

### With whom does the agency liaise?

If Line Managers wish to discuss the student’s learning needs or other issues they should contact the student’s Regional Centre. Contact details can be found at the front of this booklet.

**Conflict of interest**

Within CYM structures, conflicts of interest may arise from time to time.  We seek to ensure that all such conflicts are identified, disclosed and managed in a rigorous and transparent way that promotes confidence in the integrity, impartiality and fairness of CYM processes.

A ***conflict of interest*** is a situation in which someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests.  Such competing interests could make it difficult for individuals to fulfil their role impartially, and potentially could negatively influence the performance of their duties and responsibilities. This may particularly be the case in an agency setting where a close personal relationship might affect issues around the supervision and/or assessment of a student.

We therefore require agencies to disclose any potential conflict of interest which may exist within the placement context in relation to the student’s work with the agency, for example, if the Line Manager or other key person within the agency is related to the student.

# Alternative Agency Proposal Form

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Student: | | First/Second Alternative Agency  (delete as appropriate) |
| Signed: | (Student) | Date: |
| Signed: | (Practice Tutor) | Date: |
| Signed: | (Course Tutor) | Date: |

|  |
| --- |
| **Proposed Agency**  Name of Agency: ....................... .....  Address of Agency: ................................................  ...........................................................................................................................................  ...........................................................................................................................................  Type of Work Undertaken by Agency: ..............................................................................  ...........................................................................................................................................  Line-Manager:  Email address: .................................................................................................................  Telephone: ........................................................................................................................  Line Manager JNC Qualified Yes/No  Equivalent qualification (please specify)............................................................................ |
| Learning Goals for the Alternative Agency: |

# Alternative Agency Learning Agreement

It is the student’s responsibility to write this up following their visit to the agency. The Learning Agreement needs to be typed or word-processed and must be submitted to the Regional Centre.

|  |
| --- |
| Name of Student: |
| Name of Agency: |
| Address of Agency: |
| Line Manager:  Job Title:  Qualifications: JNC Qualified Y/N Other (give details) |
| The Alternative Practice  will be for (insert duration)  will commence on (insert date)  will provide 111 hours of practice learning, working with young people and/or communities, at least half of which must be face-to-face work. |
| The student will:  Work to the attached Job Description. (please fix to this page)  Abide by the values and disciplinary procedures of the agency. |
| The agency will:  Provide learning opportunities for the student and will provide the time for the student to complete the academic requirements of the course.  Provide the appropriate management structure for the student, especially insurance cover.  Provide a Line Manager for the student (named above).  Cover any necessary expenses for the student to carry out the work required.  Provide work accommodation for the student where necessary.  Complete an observation and final assessment of the student’s practice. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Signed: | (Student) | Date: |
| Signed: | (for the agency) | Date: |
| Signed: | (Practice Tutor) | Date: |

# Alternative Agency Time Sheet

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student: | |
| Agency: | First/Second Alternative Agency (delete as appropriate) |
| Line Manager: | |

*Please indicate the number of hours spent in the agency and a brief description.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Hours** | | **Activity** |
|  | Face to face | Other |  |
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| **TOTAL HOURS** |  |  |  |

**Grand Total Hours:**

111 or more

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Signed: | Student | Date: |
| Signed: | AA Line Manager | Date: |

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# Alternative Agency Line Manager Appraisal Form

|  |
| --- |
| Student: |
| Agency: |
| Line Manager: |

**Please place a mark on the grid, highlighting where you feel the student is in terms of their professional competence. Then comment on the student’s competence as a trainee worker, giving examples and including strengths, weaknesses and any particular areas of concern.**

## Competence 1: Values, Principles & Practice

Students should demonstrate understanding of the professional principles and practice. They should be clear about their own values and role and show accountability, good practice and good management of self.

### Comments:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Serious concerns | Some concerns | Safe to practise | Competent | Good | Excellent |

## Competence 2: Building Purposeful Relationships

Students should understand issues around development and empowerment, demonstrate effective communication and relationship skills and undertake a range of roles in their work with service users.

### Comments:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Serious concerns | Some concerns | Safe to practise | Competent | Good | Excellent |

## Competence 3: Learning and Informal Education

Students should understand how people learn and apply a variety of learning styles. They should demonstrate their ability to effectively facilitate learning with people individually and in a group context.

### Comments:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Serious concerns | Some concerns | Safe to practise | Competent | Good | Excellent |

## Competence 4: Leadership & Management

Students should understand different approaches to leadership and management and demonstrate their ability to manage work and workers and network with other agencies.

### Comments:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Serious concerns | Some concerns | Safe to practise | Competent | Good | Excellent |

### Competence 5: Communities and Contexts

Students should understand the dynamics and characteristics of communities and organisations and demonstrate community work skills and a commitment to justice, participation and collaboration.

**Comments:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Serious concerns | Some concerns | Safe to practise | Competent | Good | Excellent |

### Competence 6: Professional and Ministerial Formation (If applicable)

Students should demonstrate consistent application of their values. In church contexts they should demonstrate skills in facilitating worship, theological reflection and supporting young people’s spiritual development.

**Comments:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Serious concerns | Some concerns | Safe to practise | Competent | Good | Excellent |

### In your professional opinion is the student safe to practise professionally as a youth and community worker. YES/NO

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signed: | Date: |
| Name: | Role in Agency: |