

Appreciating complexity, context and continuum
in undergraduate nurse clinical education:
English and Australian perspectives

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A thesis submitted to fulfil the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Technology Sydney

2018

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as part of the collaborative doctoral degree and/or fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Date: *18th April 2018*

This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship and University of Technology Sydney Research Excellence Scholarship.

Acknowledgements

'Dare quam accipere'¹

To give than to receive

This thesis owes its completion to the generosity of many people, more than the bound pages here can convey, who gave of their wisdom, guidance, time, encouragement and patience, and it is with the deepest gratitude that I acknowledge their direction and support.

The opportunity to engage with, learn from and be inspired by my supervisors has been a unique and genuine privilege. Words cannot express my gratitude to my principle supervisor, Associate Professor Michelle DiGiacomo, and my co-supervisors Professor Debra Jackson, Professor Bernie Carter, Professor Patricia Davidson and Professor Jane Phillips. I consider myself very fortunate to have such remarkable individuals guide me across the various stages of this research study and encourage me in bringing this thesis to completion. Thank you.

I would like to sincerely thank the staff and students, who gave their time to participate in this study and share their experiences. Their passion and commitment to nurses and nursing was frequently evident and a great motivator.

The support I had at the two study sites has been greatly appreciated. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the research support teams at both sites and the Pre-registration team for their assistance whilst in the UK.

Thank you to my family and friends, especially my father Alan, for their ongoing interest in my study and importantly, constantly ensuring that life outside of the PhD continued. Thank you too, to my fellow post-graduate students and colleagues, for sharing in each other's successes and the dramas along the way and for their encouragement, collegiality and ongoing inspiration.

To my partner Peter – thank you for supporting me practically and emotionally. I could not have got here without you and I will be forever indebted to your unwavering capacity to understand and encourage me.

And a final thank you to Alfie and Jack, my dogs - faithful companions throughout and tireless lifters of spirit.

¹ 'Dare quam accipere' - the motto of Guy's Hospital. Location for my own nursing education 1984-1987. From Survey of London: Volume 22, Bankside (The Parishes of St. Saviour and Christchurch Southwark), Eds. Roberts, H and Godfrey, W H (London, 1950), pp. 36-42. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol22/pp36-42> [accessed 7 October 2017].

Publications and presentations associated with this thesis

Publications

Forber, J., DiGiacomo, M., Davidson, P., Carter, B. & Jackson, D. 2015, 'The context, influences and challenges for undergraduate nurse clinical education: Continuing the dialogue', *Nurse Education Today*, vol. 35, no. 11, pp. 1114-8.

Forber, J., DiGiacomo, M., Carter, B., Davidson, P., Phillips, J. & Jackson, D. 2016, 'In pursuit of an optimal model of undergraduate nurse clinical education: An integrative review', *Nurse Education in Practice*, vol. 21, pp. 83-92.

Conference Presentations

Forber, J., DiGiacomo, M., Davidson, P., Carter, B. & Jackson, D., 2015, Undergraduate nurse clinical education: Visioning the future, NET2015 Conference, 8–10 September 2015.

Forber, J., DiGiacomo, M., Davidson, P., Carter, B., Phillips, J. & Jackson, D., 2017, Undergraduate nurse clinical education: an appreciative dialogue to explore innovative approaches. RCN International Nursing Research Conference, 5-7 April 2017

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Abbrv.	Definition/Explanation	Reference or Source (as applicable)
Assistant in Nursing	AIN	Assistants in nursing work under the supervision of the Registered Nurse and within a plan of care and the limits of the Assistant in Nursing position description	NSW Health (2010) Position Description
Augmented Reality		'The combination of reality and overlay of digital information designed to enhance the learning process'.	Lopreiato, et al. (2016, p. 4) <i>Healthcare Simulation Dictionary.</i>
Australian Commonwealth Supported Student		A Commonwealth supported place (CSP) is a subsidised higher education enrolment. Part of the fees are paid directly to the university by the Australian Government. This is not a loan and students do not have to pay the subsidy back. Only domestic students can access CSPs.	Australian Government Study Assist website: http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/StudyAssist/
Buddy RN, Buddy nurse		'The RN Buddy is a registered nurse, often previously unknown to students, assigned by nurse managers or shift coordinators to work with a student for a shift at a time'.	Walker, Cooke & McAllister (2008, p. 761)
Bursary		An annual payment from the National Health Service (NHS) to help with study and living costs.	GOV.UK NHS Bursaries
Care Workers		Also referred to as nurse aides, nurse assistants or personal care workers. Care workers provide a large percentage of the care in residential aged care facilities. This workforce is not governed by national professional standards	https://www.australiana.geingagenda.com.au/2016/06/08/new-code-of-conduct-covering-aged-care-workers-what-you-need-to-know/
Clinical assessment document		Generic term adopted for the required clinical assessment document, though at either study site more specific terms may apply.	
ClinConnect		ClinConnect is a web-based system used to book, manage and record all clinical placements in NSW Health facilities.	Health Education and Training Institute (HETI): http://www.heti.nsw.gov.au/clinconnect/
Clinical Facilitator or University appointed Facilitator		A clinical facilitator (or University Appointed Facilitators) are Registered Nurses (RN) employed by the universities to supervise, support and assess nursing students in practice on clinical placements.	Andrews & Ford (2013)
Clinical Nurse Consultant	CNC	The CNC role was established in NSW in 1992. This advanced nursing role has functions in 'clinical service and	Wilkes, Luck & O'Baugh (2015, p.1)

		consultancy; clinical leadership; research; education; and clinical service planning’.	
Direct and indirect		<p>Terms used in Chapter Two to distinguish the students experience being reported in the papers included in the literature review.</p> <p>Direct - where students experience 2 or more models of clinical experience and so can make a direct comparison of experience.</p> <p>Indirect - were studies comparison are made to cohorts of student where each cohort experience a different clinical education model.</p>	
Facility Appointed Base Facilitator	FAB	Facility Appointed Base-Facilitators (FAB) supervise students in a model of student supervision where the health facility provides a member of facility staff as the student supervisor for the duration of the students’ placement.	
Fields of study/practice (UK)		<p>In the UK, nursing student study a specific field of practice as part of their nursing degree. There are four fields of nursing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adult nursing • children’s nursing • learning disabilities nursing • mental health nursing’. 	NMC (2010)
Healthcare Assistants	HCA	Healthcare Assistants (HCAs) may work under the direction of various healthcare professionals. Across a range of acute care or community settings. Role and duties vary depending on the nature of the healthcare setting.	The Open University: https://www.open.edu.au/
Health Education England	HEE	HEE is a non-Departmental Public Body established under the provisions of the Care Act (2014). Its role is to make sure there are sufficient skilled healthcare professionals to meet demand for to provide quality healthcare.	https://hee.nhs.uk/
Higher Education Institution		The terms education provider, higher education provider and tertiary education are all used to refer to institutions offering undergraduate or pre-registration nursing programs	
Hub and Spoke		‘Hub and Spoke’ is a clinical learning model where the Hub is the students’ main placement base and the Spokes are secondary places, often related to the Hub	Millar, L. (2014)

		where students gain wider or additional experiences	
Learning Environment Manager	LEM	As defined by Congdon et al. 2013, the Learning Environment Manager role centers on 'dedicated local responsibility for the management of practice learning within each ward and department involved in the education of undergraduate student nurses'.	Congdon, Baker & Cheesman (2013, p.137)
Link Lecturer (UK)		The link lecturer role can be part of the role of university based lecturers. The role provides direct and indirect support to the clinical area, healthcare staff and support for student nurses in clinical practice.	MacIntosh (2015) and NMC (2008)
Mentor and mentorship		A mode of student supervision within the clinical learning environment. The student engages in clinical practice under the supervision of a clinical nurses who takes on the role of mentor. The mentors supports student learning and is required to assess and make judgment about student's performance and attainment of clinical skills.	Jokelainen et al. (2013b)
Models of clinical education		A variety of conceptualised approaches exist for provision of clinical learning experiences, with varying practice education and/or supervision models described. Examples include the traditional or block rotational, the preceptorship model and collaborative education unit models.	Budgen & Gamroth (2008); (HWA 2012)
Module		General term used in this thesis to describe the units of study that comprises the preparatory nursing program as a whole.	
NHS Trust		Most healthcare services in the UK are provided through NHS foundation trusts and NHS trusts, organisational units within the NHS. Most hospitals are managed by NHS Foundation Trusts, which are independent legal entities and have unique governance arrangements.	
Nurse Unit Manager	NUM	The NUM is 'the registered nurse in charge of a ward or unit or group of wards or units in a public hospital or health service or public health organisation'.	NSW Public Health System Nurse' & Midwives' (State) Award: http://www.nswnma.asn.au/industrial-issues/awards-and-conditions/public-health-system/

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia	MBA	Governing body which sets policy and professional standards for nursing and midwifery, registers practitioners and handles complaints. The board is also responsible for the accreditation of courses of study.	http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/
Personal tutor		A small group of students are assigned a personal tutor for the duration of their study which promotes the development of a supportive relationship between an identified staff member and student. Advanced versions of the approach may bring student groups come together for class/small group sessions.	
Placement		An episode of student in situ clinical or practice experience.	
Placement Unit		Generic term for the organisational and administrative unit(s) responsible for clinical placement logistics and administration.	
Practice Education Facilitator (PEF) (UK)		Based in the healthcare setting, PEF's contribute to high-quality learning experience for students. This is facilitated via support and development of mentors, trouble shooting and providing liaison between the healthcare setting and university	Carlisle, Calman & Ibbotson 2009, Scott et al. (2017)
Pre-registration		Pre-registration is the term commonly associated with preparatory undergraduate nursing programs in the UK	
Professional Staff within HEI		Higher education institute staff in a range of roles that support program delivery including administrative, technical and managerial roles	
Simulation		'A technique that creates a situation or environment to allow persons to experience a representation of a real event for the purpose of practice, learning, evaluation, testing, or to gain understanding of systems or human actions.'	Lopreiato et al. (2016, p.33)
Simulation Based Learning Experiences		'An array of structured activities that represent actual or potential situations in education and practice. These activities allow participants to develop or enhance their knowledge, skills, and attitudes, or to analyse and respond to realistic situations in a simulated environment'.	Lopreiato et al. (2016, p.32)

Student supervision		The term used in this thesis to denote the process of student supervision when a generic term is required.	
Supervisor		The generic term used in this thesis to denote students' supervisor, the person with direct responsibility of supporting, teaching and assessing undergraduate student nurses. This is distinct from the term clinical supervision as used in relation to registered practitioners' professional development.	
Virtual Reality		'The use of computer technology to create an interactive three dimensional world in which the objects have a sense of spatial presence; virtual environment and virtual world are synonyms for virtual reality'.	Lopreiato et al. (2016, p.40)

List of Acronyms

AIN	Assistant in Nursing
ANMAC	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (Australia)
CNC	Clinical Nurse Consultant
EU	European Union
FAB	Facility Appointed Base Facilitator
HCA	Health Care Assistant
HEE	Health Education England
HETI	Health Education Training Institute
HWA	Health Workforce Australia
MDT	Multi-disciplinary Team
NBA	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
NMC	Nursing and Midwifery Council (UK)
NHS	National Health Service
NUM	Nurse Unit Manager
PEF	Practice Education Facilitator
WHO	World Health Organisation

ABSTRACT

Clinical learning experiences have long been considered a vital component of preparatory nurse education programs. Internationally, however, reports indicate providing sufficient quality experiences is increasingly challenging, as the demand for new nurses intensifies to address nurse shortages and replenish an aging nursing workforce. In addition, there is a need to meet the demands of societal and population changes which, in turn, are driving change and growth in healthcare policy and provision.

This doctoral study aimed to generate an enhanced understanding of the factors that are conducive to promoting the quality and meaningfulness of the students' clinical learning experience, and identify the individual and organisational factors that support this. Further, the study sought contemporary affirmation of the unique role of clinical learning in becoming a nurse and to envision how the design of innovative, sustainable clinical learning experiences can be promoted into the future.

This study used a qualitative methodology, guided by an appreciative inquiry framework to identify enablers and barriers within clinical education to determine future direction. A two site, cross national study using an embedded case study design, explored the approaches to clinical education in two nursing programs – one in England, United Kingdom and one in New South Wales, Australia. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews (academic and professional staff n=43) and questionnaires (staff n=5, final year students n=78). Thematic analysis and cross-case synthesis were undertaken.

Three major themes emerged from the data: the student experience, the organisational dimension of clinical placements and connecting with the past to create the future. The student experience centred on the people students' encounter, their facilitated engagement as part of the healthcare team, and sufficient opportunities to develop and challenge their practice in order to transition to becoming a nurse. The second theme revealed the complex 'hinterland' at the interface of higher education and healthcare that facilitates placement and student supervision and the merits of the various program features, including placement duration. The findings in the third theme reflect the evolution of nurse education and the parallel shift in nurse and nursing identity over time. Visualising the context and the complex myriad of influences and interconnections spanning individual, organisational and professional domains was aided by a conceptual model, developed using ecological systems theory.

The findings of this thesis provide greater insight into clinical education, the need to continue to promote a shared healthcare and education collaboration in nurturing next generation nurses

and the importance of facilitating engagement in authentic practice at the core of meaningful clinical learning experiences. The findings of this thesis suggest that meaningful experiences are more than the sum of their parts and to identify innovate future designs, modelling the system as a whole is warranted. There is also scope to be flexible and inventive, as 'one size does not fit all' as the needs of students, clinical settings and the profession will continue to evolve over time.