



EVALUATION OF ODP SURGE PRACTICE EDUCATOR TRAINING WEBINARS

July 2026

ODP SURGE on behalf of the College of Operating Department Practitioners;
An NHS England Funded Project [2026]

Introduction

As part of the commissioned work for the ODP SURGE project, a series of webinars based on the CODP Standards for Supporting Pre-registration Operating Department Practitioner Education in Practice Placement (2021) and the Allied Health Professional Educator Career Framework was developed and delivered.

Stakeholder engagement from the December 2025 clinical and university educators (CUE) forum was captured to complement existing knowledge around delivery of practice educator training and the themes therein analysed: with problems and potential solutions identified. This knowledge was incorporated into the material for the webinars by the project team to support alignment of practice educator training with CODP guidance.

Representatives from each of the HEIs delivering pre-registration programmes were contacted via CODP and invited to take part in webinars hosted by ODP SURGE team: the delivery of the sessions was supported by an ODP educator with responsibility for delivery of practice educator training: David Huggins from the UEA to ensure message was seen as impartial.

Sessions were delivered over 4 dates in May and June 2026 to 22 participants, representing 15 of the 29 higher educational institutions (HEIs) that currently deliver pre-registration programmes to ODP learners in the United Kingdom.

Based on comments made during the webinars and responses from a post webinar evaluation form, several key themes and recommendations emerged.

1. Standardisation and Consistency

The strongest recurring theme from participants was the desire for greater consistency in core Practice Educator Training across organisations and education providers.

Feedback:

- Develop a **standardised or nationally recognised Practice Educator Training package** that can be delivered consistently across the UK.
- Future potential for a **generic training package** that HEIs and placement providers can adapt to local requirements while maintaining core standards.
- Provide a **standardised document set, handbook, or resource pack** aligned to CODP standards.
- Develop a **standardised update resource** to support ongoing educator development and ensure consistency of updates.

Potential benefits identified:

- Reduced variation in interpretation of standards.
- Greater equity for students and educators.
- Improved consistency in assessment and supervision practices nationally.

2. Practice Educator Register and Data Management

Participants consistently raised the need for a central mechanism for recording and tracking Practice Educator training: there is much inconsistency in knowing the current numbers and location of practice educators, discussion around where the responsibility for maintaining records lies between the placement providers, HEIs and CODP.

Feedback:

- Explore development of a **national or central Practice Educator register**.
- Consider whether the **College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP)** could host or oversee a live register.
- Improve collaboration between **HEIs and placement providers** to maintain accurate records.
- Investigate use of **ESR** or other existing workforce systems for recording training completion.

Potential benefits identified:

- Easier verification of Practice Educator status.
- Improved workforce planning.
- Ability to capture additional information, such as language skills (e.g., Welsh speakers).

3. Inclusivity and Workforce Considerations: Level 6 Qualification Requirement

The requirement for Practice Educators or assessors to hold a Level 6 qualification as per the CODP standards generated significant discussion and concern. Feedback emphasised the importance of ensuring changes do not inadvertently exclude members of the existing workforce.

Feedback:

- Many experienced ODPs do not possess a Level 6 qualification despite having substantial expertise.
- The requirement may reduce the available pool of assessors and negatively impact placement capacity.
- Concerns were raised about excluding experienced practitioners from assessing students within their own profession.
- Attendees requested clarification on future decisions regarding the Level 6 requirement.

Recommendations:

- Review the impact of the Level 6 requirement on workforce capacity and ensure training implementation plans do not disadvantage established educators who may lack newer qualifications
- Engage with other AHP professions to understand alternative approaches to assessor requirements.
- Consider mechanisms that recognise professional experience alongside formal academic qualifications by reviewing how experienced educators trained under previous systems can continue to contribute

4. Training Design and Delivery

Participants highlighted the need for flexible, accessible training approaches that may enhance the perception of undertaking educational roles to individual professionals as well as organisational development.

Recommendations:

- Frame Practice Educator Training as a **CPD opportunity** to encourage engagement.
- Deliver learning in **smaller, manageable modules** rather than relying on full-day release.
- Consider **micro-credentialing approaches** to recognise completion of discrete training elements.
- Ensure assessment methods are appropriately aligned with the competencies being assessed.

Overall Webinar Evaluation Feedback

Feedback on the webinars was generally positive and participants reported that the sessions were helpful to clarify the detail of the CDP standards, practice educator terminology and roles, training expectations across different pre-registration qualifications, minimum training content and assessment requirements as well as responsibilities of those delivering Practice Educator Training.

Participants also indicated that the resource pack provided would support implementation of future changes and that some of these changes could be made during the 2026-27 academic year.

Possible Recommendations Emerging from Feedback and ODP SURGE activity/response

Possible recommendation	Current response
Develop a nationally recognised core Practice Educator Training package	While this might be an appropriate activity, this is not the direction of travel that other AHP groups have taken. For instance, NMC have removed the requirement for Practice assessors to complete a standardised training, instead insist that they should have some training (to allow flexibility). Similar standard courses or programmes in OT (Apple) and PT (ACE) have been discontinued. Therefore, the project took a pragmatic approach to support current HEIs who have a responsibility to provide PE training by providing guidance and resources.
Establish a central register and recording system for Practice Educators.	We could see where colleagues had a desire for this, however it was not clear who would be responsible or where this would be held centrally. It is not possible for the CDP to keep this due to limited funding or resource. Therefore a practical decision was made in the project to provide a template for HEIs / placement providers to utilise locally and can be used as evidence when required to support HCPC regulatory requirements.
Review the impact of the Level 6 qualification requirement on	This was not within the scope of the project. However, there is a perception that the

placement capacity and workforce inclusion.	requirement in the CODP Standards (2021) that to be a practice educator that an individual must have some training at level 6, is limiting the possibility for experienced colleagues with NVQ3 of Diploma qualifications from supporting learners. In the training and resources, we have tried to simplify this requirement but also provided clarity that they still can be involved as practice supervisors. However, we do agree this review would be helpful.
Provide flexible, modular training and CPD opportunities for educators.	This will need wider exploration to understand what is meant by this, as it may be more about funding support or lack of time for release from practice or lack of visibility. At present there is a wide variety of HEI post registration CPD training courses available.
Strengthen collaboration between CODP, HEIs and placement providers to support implementation and governance	This is welcomed and perhaps the forum for this may be via the CODP Clinical and University Educators (CUE) Forum.