

**From Lab to Community:
Scaling Authentic Learning Through
UEL's Neighbourhood Health Hub**

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Context: The Human Performance Clinic

- Laboratory providing consultancy services
- Exercise testing for diverse populations
- Clientele: community → sports teams → elite athletes
- Student-delivered testing under supervision
- Foundation for authentic learning model



Needs Analysis

- Additional support needed to run consultancy services
- Students need real-world experience with diverse populations and hands on experience for future employment
- Existing peer mentoring scheme, but not for applied skills
- Students lack experience with necessary testing protocols
- Students not used to working with clients



Initial Concept: Student Training Programme

- Structured student training programme
- Focus on relevant applied skills and testing protocols
- Include professional behaviours and client communication
- Use of role plays for practice in safe learning environment
- Progressive pathway to student-led clinic delivery
- Opportunity to support growing consultancy demand

Implementation

- Authentic learning environment for students
- Additional sessions on professionalism and client interaction
- Focus on consultancy services (HPC)
- Development of soft skills through practice and role plays
- Progression for students to gain leadership skills/experience
- Students delivering real tests to real clients



Early Outcomes and Challenges

Challenges

- Hard to work training session availability around student timetables
- Ensuring regular attendance and engagement
- Completion of full training programme

Successes

- Overwhelmingly positive student feedback
- Increased confidence in professional interactions
- Created foundation for scaling authentic learning

Evolution: The Health Advice Centre

- Different focus: clinical exercise physiology vs sport performance
- Community health assessment and exercise prescription
- Built on lesson learned from HPC training model
- Over 1,000 client consultations delivered in first year
- Expanded partnerships: NHS, community organisations

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Impact: The Health Advice Centre

- Student-led clinical practice under supervision
- Authentic assessment aligned with AHCS standards
- Partnership development: NHS (Barts, NELFT, EPUT), Nuffield Health
- Students working with real clients, real health conditions, building trust with diverse communities
- Multilingual, culturally responsive service delivery

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“The diversity of our student body truly shone through, as they connected with residents in multiple languages—building trust and creating a genuine sense of belonging. It was inspiring to see the resilience, professionalism, and compassion our students demonstrated when supporting residents—many of whom face extremely challenging circumstances.” – **Dr Alireza Monajati, Director of Careers and Enterprise (HSB)**



Scaling: The Neighbourhood Health Hub



The Neighbourhood Health Hub

- Sector-leading initiative launched October 2025
- Expanded scope
- Exercise Rehabilitation Clinic (Barts NHS partnership, Q2 2026)
- Integration of UG and PG students
- Model for HEI-community health partnerships



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Lessons Learned

Challenges

- Resource allocation and sustainability
- Balancing education and service delivery demands
- Managing risk while maintaining authenticity

Critical Success Factors

- Strong partnerships with clear mutual benefits
- Comprehensive student training and support
- Quality assurance and ethical approval processes

Transferable Insights

- Start small: pilot with existing resources and capacity
- Build incrementally based on evidence and feedback
- Invest in partnerships – mutual benefit is essential
- Balance educational scaffolding with authentic challenge

- ***Addresses sector priorities***
 - Practice-based education and authentic assessment
 - Student experience and employability
 - Community engagement and social responsibility



Thank you for listening!

Any questions?

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