



NMC Practice Learning Review

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Housekeeping

- We're recording the session. The link will be sent to everyone after the webinar so you can review content and share with colleagues unable to attend
- Everyone, except the presenters, are automatically muted
- Use the Q&A feature to submit any questions or comments at any time
- The 'raise your hand' feature won't be used today
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- Audio-only participants can email questions and comments to EducationandStandards@nmc-uk.org



Why are we reviewing practice learning?

- Our standards for education and training set out how pre-registration nursing, nursing associate and midwifery programmes should be delivered.
- This ensures that future professionals achieve the standards of proficiency they need to deliver safe, effective care for people when they join the Register.
- When the UK left the EU, we gained the flexibility to set the standards for pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes.
- Since January 2024, we have been reviewing our practice learning requirements to understand how we can continue to best support student learning across the UK.

Independent research

- In 2024 we commissioned independent research from the Nuffield Trust, in partnership with the Florence Nightingale Foundation, to better understand what contributes to effective practice learning across the UK and in other countries.
- While the research shows positive learning experiences, it also highlights how nursing and midwifery students across the four nations experience varied practice learning and supervision.

Key lines of enquiry

- **Further examining the practice learning experiences of students with protected characteristics** (including those who require reasonable adjustments) to understand how these are taken into account as part of students' learning, and whether they impact student retention.
- **Exploring if we should expand the type of support we offer to students, practice supervisors and practice assessors**, including strengthening requirements for protected learning time for nursing associate students.
- **Developing indicators and metrics to measure the quality of students' practice learning as part of our education quality assurance function.** To help us to understand where we can better support students to achieve the proficiencies they need to deliver the best care for people.
- **Evaluating key aspects of the midwifery curricula to understand midwifery students' practice learning experiences**, including what works well and what could be improved. To help us to understand how they can be best supported to achieve their midwifery specific proficiencies, for example, number of births.
- **Evaluating key aspects of nursing curricula including what works well and what could be improved.** To help us understand nursing students' relationships with our education standards, and how they can be best supported to achieve the proficiencies within their intended field of nursing.

Key lines of enquiry

- We found that while many students across the UK benefit from positive practice learning experiences, the quality of these experiences can vary.
- We also found that high-quality practice learning experiences are underpinned by effective communication, strong collaboration, sustained commitment, and an openness to learning, all within a positive and supportive working and learning culture.
- We also found that wider factors beyond the NMC's remit can affect students' practice learning experiences.

Key lines of enquiry

More information is available in the Council our website:

- Visit the NMC website
- Search 'Council meetings'
- Click the first result and scroll down to 'previous Council meetings'
- Click 'Meetings 2025' and click '26 November 2025'

The papers include a:

- Review of the quality of nursing and midwifery practice learning: Outcome of the key lines of enquiry and recommendations for next steps (p95-101)
- An executive summary of the NMC practice learning review key lines of enquiry (p102-110)
- Annex A - Review of practice learning – thematic analysis from stakeholder engagement (p111-120).

Factors outside the remit of the NMC which impact on practice learning

Placement capacity
impacting on quality

Costs of living, studying
and travel for students

Financial constraints for
care delivery organisations
leading to education
being considered as a
nice to have rather
than a must have

Restructuring and
redundancies in HEIs
impacting on partnership
working and support for
students

The need to value the
contribution of practice
supervisors, practice
assessors and academic
assessors in a climate of
resource challenge

Additional actions to support practice learning



- Develop a position statement for practice learning which includes partnership working and works all NMC programmes (pre and post registration)



- Strengthen supporting information
- Develop case studies including best practice from the stakeholders

Consultation

Anti-racism, bias awareness and cultural curiosity, safety and respect

- To improve care for Black, Asian and ethnic minority people who use services, including women and families who are receiving midwifery care during pregnancy, birth, and during the postnatal period.
- Help to tackle the Black maternal health crisis and wider health inequalities experienced by service users across the UK.

New anti-racism principles published in May

- Figures released by MBRRACE-UK show that Black women are three times more likely to die during pregnancy or in the immediate postnatal period, and maternal mortality rates for Asian women are 1.3 times as high compared with White women
- Further reports from the Health and Social Care Committee, Five x More and Birthrights add to the growing evidence base that there are stark disparities in maternal outcomes.
- The NMC will design the principles over the next few weeks and aims to publish them by late spring. Universities will be asked to work to the principles from the start of the next academic year.

Pre-registration nursing programmes

- Reducing the requirement for 4,600 programme hours, while maintaining a balance of 50% theory and 50% practice learning – instead, specifying a minimum of 1,800 hours for each (3,600 hours total).
- Whether there needs to be a percentage maximum for simulated practice learning (proportionate if practice learning hours are reduced).
- Adding a new requirement that students must have a practice learning opportunity within a community setting across health and social care.

Nursing associate programmes

Area for consultation

- To remove the requirement for nursing associate programmes to be no less than 50% of the minimum programme hours required of a nursing degree and require a minimum of 2300 hours.

Please note: This amendment would only be required if the minimum number of programme hours for nursing is reduced to 3600 hours.

Pre-registration midwifery programmes

- Including a requirement to holistically assess students' competence and confidence in labour and birth when supporting and caring for 40 women who have a physiological vaginal births.
- How caring for no less than another 40 women with additional and complex needs can be strengthened including if this should be along the whole continuum of maternity care.
- Exploring whether to extend the duration of midwifery programmes.

Pre-registration midwifery programmes

- Exploring options for a final placement to better support midwifery students' transition to registered practice.
- Continuity of supervision practice supervisors for student midwives should be provided wherever possible.
- Exploring should simulation supported by the standards for student supervision and assessment contribute towards practice learning hours

Standards Framework for Nursing and Midwifery Education

- Strengthen the focus on partnership and collaborative working for reasonable adjustments (approved education institutions (AEIs), practice learning partners (PLPs) and students)

Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment

- For practice learning experiences with a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SCPHN), a SCPHN RM (Registered Midwife) could be Practice Assessor for a pre-reg nursing student

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Practice learning review consultation

Have your say



[www.nmc.org.uk/about-us/consultations/
practice-learning-consultation/](http://www.nmc.org.uk/about-us/consultations/practice-learning-consultation/)



Keep in touch

NMC monthly drop-in sessions

- Please contact us for answers to any questions you may have. We are unable to offer clinical advice as this is outside our regulatory remit.
- To attend one of these sessions:
 - Search 'Education Quality Assurance Updates' on the NMC website
 - Scroll down to 'Drop in sessions'
 - Click the 'Register to join here' to register for the session
- The sessions are on the first Wednesday of the month and 12.30-13.30.
- r1.dotdigital-pages.com/p/129A-1GXI/drop-ins

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