

NMC Response to Consultation on changes to the National Student Survey

Introduction

1. We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation. Our response builds on the feedback we provided to the previous Office for Students consultations. We believe it is important that the National Student Survey continues to operate uniformly across the four countries in the UK, to ensure parity of experience and insight for students. We are keen to engage with the Office for Students to ensure we can help support this process.

Our role in education for registered nurses, midwives and nursing associates

2. Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the professional regulator of more than 758,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.
3. Our core role is to regulate. This includes promoting high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. We approve education programmes leading to registration with us, and once approved we carry out monitoring activity ensuring that our standards continue to be met.
4. Part of our education quality assurance (QA) process includes reviewing data and information available on the courses that we regulate which includes the National Student Survey (NSS).
5. The NSS provides a valuable insight into students' perceptions of their courses. This enables us to help triangulate any concerns so that we can take appropriate intervention, ensuring that our standards can continue to be met.

Consultation responses

1. *Do you agree we should retain the current criteria for NSS core questions?*

We agree with the current criteria set for the NSS. However, we also value the previous questions that have been asked on students' experience of practice settings where this is a key component of their programme. Where nursing and midwifery students spend 50 percent of their programme in practice this is a

fundamental component of their student experience. We would therefore strongly support that this additional bank of questions continue to be asked. This would therefore be at slight variance to the criteria that questions should be applicable to all disciplines. We do however support that the core bank of questions should follow this principle.

2. *What are the consequences – both positive and negative – of changing to the use of direct questions for the NSS?*

No comment

3. *What are the consequences – both positive and negative – of removing the summative question for England only?*

One of the key benefits of the NSS is its four country approach, enabling students, and regulators to have a uniform insight into students' perceptions of their course. We would strongly oppose the summative question being removed for England, and instead support a consistent four country approach.

By providing a ubiquitous approach the four countries students can use that information to make more informed choices about their degree programmes, as well as enabling parity for PSRBs when using intelligence as part of their activities.

4. *Should we retain the current summative question for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales or move to the revised question with a focus on quality not satisfaction?*

We would support the proposal to refocus the summative question on quality rather than satisfaction of the programme. We would also strong support this question being adopted in England and not just the three other countries.

5. *Should a question on freedom of expression be offered as an additional question after the core questionnaire?*

We would support this as an additional question.

6. *Should a question on mental wellbeing provision be offered as an additional question after the core questionnaire?*

We would support this as an additional question.

7. *What are the unintended consequences of asking questions to students on the awareness of mental wellbeing services where no support to respondents can be offered?*

No comment

8. Do you agree that we develop a process where the NSS is reviewed on a four-year cycle? Is the proposed timing between reviews a sensible balance between developing insight and maintaining capacity to change?

We would agree with the proposed timeline for review.

9. What would be the impact on students and providers of the fieldwork period running from mid-February to the end of April for all providers?

No comment

10. In relation to the design and use of the NSS in Wales, what effect (if any), positive or negative, will the proposals outlined in this document have on: a. opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language? b. treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

No comment

11. In relation to the use of the design and use of the NSS in Wales, how could the proposals be changed so that the policy decision would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on: a. opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language? B. treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

No comment

12. Did you find any aspects of the proposals unclear? If so, please specify which, and tell us why.

No comment

13. In your view, are there ways in which the objectives of this consultation (see paragraph 7) could be delivered more efficiently or effectively than is proposed here?

No comment