



Education Programme

Nursing and midwifery practice is changing every day and as the regulator, we have a role to play in ensuring the education and training standards our professionals must uphold reflect the work they're doing. This briefing provides an overview of new standards we've released in recent years.

Education Framework standards

Our new education framework standards aim to give our approved education institutions and practice learning partners the flexibility to develop creative approaches to education, while still being accountable for the local delivery and management of approved programmes in line with our standards.

They are made up of three parts, plus the relevant standards of proficiency:

- Standards of proficiency (one for each profession)
- **Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education**
- **Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment**
- Part 3: Programme standards

Part 1 sets out the standards that all our approved education institutions must meet. Part 2 sets out our expectations for the learning, support and supervision of students in the practice environment. They also set out how students are assessed for theory and practice learning. Part 3 provides the detail relevant to each of our approved programmes and outlines selection, admission and progression.

New standards for registered nurses

Our new **standards of proficiency for registered** nurses are ambitious and focused on outcome based requirements. They are provided across seven platforms, including coordinating care and being an accountable professional. The two annexes include communication and relationship management skills and nursing procedures which underpin the proficiencies. Together these represent the skills, knowledge and attributes all nurses must demonstrate at the point of registration.

The standards take into account the changes taking place in society and health care, and what people will need from nurses in the future as care needs become more complex.

In addition, the new standards for pre-qualifying nursing programmes also ensure that all nurses gain experience across the four fields of nursing practice – child, adult, learning disabilities, and mental health – and are able to understand, support and care for people with both mental and physical health needs. All nursing programmes must be approved against the new nursing standards by September 2021.

Prescribing Programme Standards

In order to reflect current practice and better support the 88,000 nurses and midwife prescribers on our register, we developed new **Standards for prescribing programmes**, which came into effect in January 2019. All prescribing programmes must be approved and delivered against these standards from September 2021.

We also decided to adopt **the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Competency Framework for All Prescribers**, as this clearly sets out what all prescribers, including those on our register, need to know and be able to do in order to prescribe safely and effectively.

Nursing Associate Standards

Nursing associates are new members of the nursing team in England. They bridge the skills gap between health and care assistants and registered nurses.

We value having a skilled health and care workforce, able to meet increasing healthcare demands. So we're pleased to have developed **Standards of proficiency for nursing associates** and **Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes**. The standards of proficiency set out what they should know and be able to do when they join our register. These standards are designed to align with the standards of proficiency for nursing, so that nursing associate programmes can be a stepping stone in to nursing programmes for those with the desire and the ability to progress.

Returning to Practice

It's also really important that there are sufficient numbers of nurses and midwives to provide us all with safe and effective care. This is why we are providing more options for nurses and midwives to re-join our register.

Our new **standards for returning to practice** enable our approved education institutions to develop innovative new return to practice

courses. We've also introduced a two part test of competence as an alternative route to returning to practice.

We already have over 1,000 people per year re-joining our register after a career break and we hope that, with help from educators and employers, more people will think about returning to nursing and midwifery roles.

New standards for midwifery

Most recently, we've launched our new future midwife standards: **Standards of proficiency for midwives** and **Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes**. These standards set out what midwives need to know, and be able to do, to register with us and practise as a midwife in the UK.

Development of these included a full public consultation where we were pleased to receive over 1,600 responses, with a significant number of responses from the public.

The standards are also outcome focused, giving our approved education institutions and their practice learning partners the flexibility to design and deliver midwifery programmes with creativity and innovation to meet the changing needs of women and families over the next ten years.

For more information, please visit www.nmc.org.uk

