

Part 3: Standards for post-registration education programmes

Specialist community public health nursing and
programmes leading to community nursing
specialist practice qualifications

DRAFT – 11 January 2021



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About these standards

Our education and training standards help nursing and midwifery [students](#) achieve the NMC proficiencies and programme outcomes. All nursing and midwifery professionals must practise in line with the requirements of [the Code](#), the professional standards of practice and behaviour that nurses, midwives and nursing associates are expected to uphold.

Realising professionalism: Standards for education and training includes the [Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education](#), [Standards for student supervision and assessment](#), and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

Our Standards for education and training are set out in three parts:

[Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education](#)

[Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment](#)

Part 3: Programme standards

- [Standards for pre-registration nursing education](#)
- [Standards for pre-registration midwifery education](#)
- [Standards for pre-registration nursing associate education](#)
- [Standards for prescribing programmes](#)
- Standards for post-registration
- [Standards for return to practice programmes.](#)

Introduction

Our Standards for specialist community public health nursing (SCPHN) and community specialist practice qualification (SPQ) programmes set out the standards on entry requirements and entry routes, curriculum, practice learning, supervision and assessment requirements and information on the award and registration requirements for these post-registration programmes.

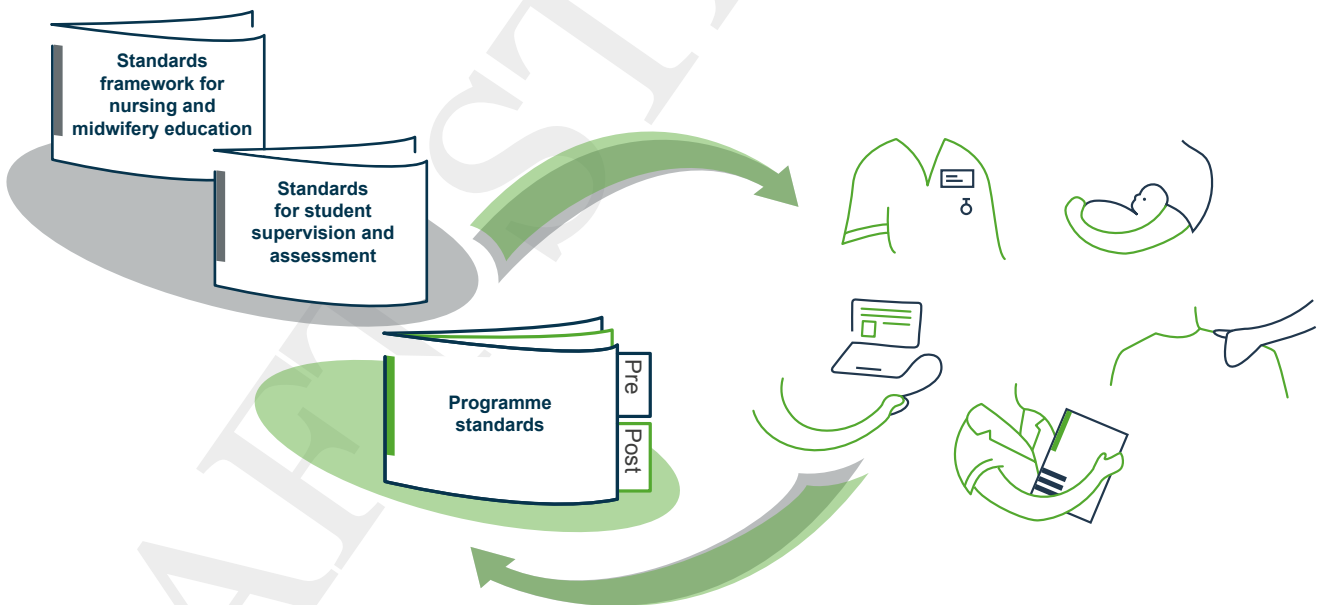
Public safety is central to our standards. Registered nurses and midwives undertaking these post-registration programmes are students in this context. They will be in contact with [people](#) throughout their education. It's important they grow in confidence, and further develop their knowledge and skills in a safe, supportive and effective way.

These programme standards should be read with our Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education and Standards for student supervision and assessment which apply to all NMC approved programmes.

Standards for education and training

Standards of proficiency

for nursing and midwifery professions



All NMC approved post-registration education programmes must comply with all these standards for an education institution to be approved to run an approved programme.

Education providers structure their programmes to comply with our programme standards. They design their curricula around the proficiencies we set. Proficiencies are the knowledge, skills and behaviours that nurses and midwives need in order to practise.

Curricula for specialist community public health nursing and community specialist practice qualifications will be flexible to accommodate opportunities for shared learning, including between post-registration programmes and fields of practice with a range of learning needs and prior experience as registered professionals. Students are assessed against proficiencies for their intended field of SCPHN practice.

The awards are as follows:

SCPHN: in the field of health visiting, occupational health nursing, or school nursing.

SPQ: Students are assessed against proficiencies for their intended community SPQ. This may include community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or in [other specified fields of community nursing](#)¹.

Successful completion of the programme confirms the student is capable of providing safe and effective care in a specific SCPHN role or a community SPQ nursing-practice role.

We publish Standards of proficiency for SCPHN and Standards of proficiency for community SPQs. We also publish Standards of proficiency for registered nurses, Standards of proficiency for midwives and Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.

Through our [quality assurance](#) (QA) processes we check that education programmes meet all of our standards, that the programme outcomes relate to the proficiencies for particular qualifications and that the [approved education institutions \(AEIs\)](#) and [practice learning partners](#) are managing risks effectively. We monitor risks to quality in education and training using internal and external intelligence. This intelligence gathering includes analysis of system regulators' reports.

Before a programme can run, we make sure it meets our standards. We do this through an approval process in accordance with our Quality Assurance Framework.

Overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the quality of any educational programme lies with the AEI in partnership with its practice learning partners.

¹ Where the SPQ field is not predetermined by the NMC it must be specified by the AEI as part of the NMC approval process.

Legislative framework

Article 5(2) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 ('the Order') requires the NMC to establish the standards of proficiency necessary to be admitted to each part of the register and for safe and effective practice under that part of the register. This article applies to SCPHN standards of proficiency.

Article 15(1) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 requires the NMC to establish the standards for education and training which are necessary to achieve the standards of proficiency for admission to any part of the register. This article applies to SCPHN programme standards.

Article 19(6) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 allows the NMC to establish standards of education and training for any additional qualifications that may be recorded on the register. Articles 15(3) to (9) and articles 16 to 18 shall apply in respect of those standards as if they were standards established under article 15(1)(a). This means the NMC may establish standards of education and training and may approve a course of education or qualification in relation to SPQs.

These post-registration programme standards are established under these provisions.

Post-registration SCPHN and community SPQ programmes

Importantly our standards for education and training highlight the need for programmes to adopt an inclusive approach to recruitment and selection, ensuring admissions processes are fair and transparent and address underrepresentation.

The student journey

Standards for specialist community public health nursing and community specialist practice qualification programmes follow the student journey and are grouped under the following five headings:

1. Selection, admission and progression

Standards about an applicant's suitability and continued participation in a specialist community public health nursing programme or programme leading to a community specialist practice qualification

2. Curriculum

Standards for the content, delivery and evaluation of programmes for specialist community public health nursing and community specialist practice qualifications

3. Practice learning

Standards specific to learning that takes place in practice settings for students undertaking programmes leading to specialist community public health nursing and community specialist practice qualifications

4. Supervision and assessment

Standards for safe and effective supervision and assessment for specialist community public health nursing and community specialist practice qualification programmes

5. Qualification to be awarded

Standards which state the award and information for:

Specialist community public health nursing in the field of: health visiting, occupational health nursing, school nursing

Specialist practice qualifications: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or in other identified fields of community nursing practice.

1. Selection, admission and progression

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

- 1.1 ensure that the applicant is an:
 - 1.1.1 NMC registered nurse (level 1) or NMC registered midwife capable of safe and effective practice at the level of proficiency appropriate to the NMC approved Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (SCPHN) programme before being considered as eligible to apply for entry
 - 1.1.2 NMC registered nurse (level 1) with relevant professional registration, capable of safe and effective practice at the level of proficiency appropriate to the NMC approved Community Specialist Practice Qualification (SPQ) programme before being considered as eligible to apply for entry
- 1.2 confirm on entry that each applicant selected to undertake a SCPHN or community SPQ programme has the academic capability to study at the level required for that programme
- 1.3 provide opportunities that enable eligible² NMC registered nurses and/or NMC registered midwives, including NHS, non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded to apply for entry onto an NMC approved SCPHN or community SPQ programme
- 1.4 confirm that the necessary arrangements and governance structures are in place to support practice learning, including employer support and protected learning time, to enable students to undertake and be adequately supported throughout the programme
- 1.5 consider [recognition of prior learning](#) that is capable of being mapped to the:
 - 1.5.1 programme learning outcomes and Standards of proficiency for the applicant's intended field of SCPHN practice
 - 1.5.2 programme learning outcomes and Standards of proficiency for the applicant's intended field of community SPQ practice or in other specified field(s) of community nursing
 - 1.5.3 consider recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) Competency Framework for all Prescribers for applicants applying for entry to programmes that include an integrated NMC approved prescribing qualification, and
- 1.6 where programmes integrate an NMC approved prescribing qualification, ensure that the applicant is a registered nurse (level 1), a registered midwife or a SCPHN before being considered as eligible to apply for entry.

² SCPHN applicants must be RN1, midwife or both. SPQ applicants must be RN1.

2. Curriculum

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

- 2.1 confirm programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education
- 2.2 confirm programmes comply with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment
- 2.3 confirm programmes that include an integrated NMC approved prescribing qualification comply with the NMC Standards for prescribing programmes
- 2.4 state routes within the programme for:
 - 2.4.1 students to enter the SCPHN register in a specific field of SCPHN practice: health visiting, occupational health nursing, school nursing
 - 2.4.2 students to annotate their registration in a specific field of SPQ community practice: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or in other specified field(s) of community nursing
- 2.5 ensure programme learning outcomes reflect the:
 - 2.5.1 Standards of proficiency for SCPHN and each relevant field(s) of SCPHN practice: health visiting, occupational health nursing, school nursing
 - 2.5.2 Standards of proficiency for community nursing that are tailored to the context of community practice. These may be within community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or in other specified field(s) of community nursing
- 2.6 set out the general and professional content necessary to meet the:
 - 2.6.1 Standards of proficiency for each relevant field of SCPHN practice: health visiting, occupational health nursing, school nursing
 - 2.6.2 Standards of proficiency for the community nursing SPQ that is tailored to the specified field of community nursing practice. These may be within community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or in other specified field(s) of community nursing
- 2.7 ensure that field-specific content is included for entry to the register in each field of SCPHN practice
- 2.8 ensure that field-specific content is included for the relevant community nursing SPQ annotation

- 2.9 ensure technology-enhanced and simulated learning opportunities are used effectively and proportionately to support learning and assessment
- 2.10 ensure that the curriculum provides a balance of theory and practice learning opportunities, using a range of learning and teaching strategies
- 2.11 ensure programmes delivered in Wales comply with legislation which supports use of the Welsh language, and
- 2.12 ensure programmes are of a suitable length to support student achievement of all proficiencies and programme outcomes for their award.

3. Practice learning

Approved education institutions must:

- 3.1 ensure that suitable and effective arrangements and governance for practice learning are in place for all students, including arrangements specifically tailored to those applicants who are self-employed and/or self-funded

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

- 3.2 ensure that students work in partnership with the education provider and their practice learning partners to arrange supervision and assessment that complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment
- 3.3 provide practice learning opportunities that allow students to develop, progress and meet the Standards of proficiency for their:
 - 3.3.1 intended field of SCPHN practice: health visiting, occupational health nursing, school nursing
 - 3.3.2 intended SPQ: these may be within the fields of community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or in other specified field(s) of community nursing
- 3.4 ensure that practice learning complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment
- 3.5 take account of students' individual learning needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning, including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

4. Supervision and assessment

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

- 4.1 ensure student support, supervision, learning and assessment complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education
- 4.2 ensure practice supervision, the assessment of practice and academic assessment complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment
- 4.3 provide constructive feedback to students throughout the programme to support their learning and development for meeting the standards of proficiency and programme learning outcomes for their:
 - 4.3.1 intended field of SCPHN practice: health visiting, occupational health nursing, school nursing, or
 - 4.3.2 intended SPQ in the field of: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing, or in other specified field(s) of community nursing
- 4.4 ensure all SCPHN proficiencies and SPQ proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which confirms proficiencies have been met
- 4.5 assess the student's suitability for award and confirm overall proficiency based on the successful completion of a period of practice learning relevant to their:
 - 4.5.1 intended field of SCPHN practice: health visiting, occupational health nursing, school nursing, or
 - 4.5.2 intended SPQ in the field of: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing, and/or in other specified field(s) of community nursing
- 4.6 ensure practice supervisors have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the NMC principles for preceptorship as SCPHNs or SPQs or can evidence prior learning and relevant practice supervisor experience that enables them to facilitate effective evidence-based learning opportunities for post-registration students
- 4.7 ensure practice and academic assessors have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the NMC principles for preceptorship as SCPHNs or SPQs or can evidence prior learning and relevant practice assessor experience that enables them to engage in fair, reliable and valid assessment processes in the context of SCPHN and/or community SPQ, and

- 4.8 ensure the student is assigned to a practice assessor who is an experienced registered SCPHN or community SPQ nurse for the programme the student is undertaking
- 4.8.1 in exceptional circumstances, the same person may fulfil the role of practice supervisor and practice assessor for a part of the programme where the SCPHN/ SPQ student is undergoing training in a practice learning setting. In such instances, the student, practice supervisor/assessor and the AEI will need to evidence why it was necessary for the practice supervisor and assessor roles to be carried out by the same person.

5. Qualification to be awarded

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

- 5.1 ensure that the minimum academic level for SCPHN and community SPQ is at postgraduate level
- 5.2 inform the student that the NMC must be notified:
- 5.2.1 of their SCPHN award³ within five years of successfully completing the programme and if they fail to do so they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in NMC standards for the award to be registered, or
- 5.2.2 of their community SPQ⁴ within five years of successfully completing the programme and if they fail to do so they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in NMC standards, for the award to be added as an annotation to their professional registration, and
- 5.3 confirm that following successful completion of an NMC approved programme of preparation for SCPHN or community SPQ, that includes an integrated prescribing qualification, the registered nurse (level 1), midwife or SCPHN is eligible to be recorded as a prescriber
- 5.3.1 a nurse or midwife independent/supplementary prescriber (V300).

³SCPHN registration <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/your-registration/scphn-registration/>

⁴Recordable qualifications <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/your-registration/recording-qualifications/>

Glossary

Approved education institutions (AEIs): the status awarded by the NMC to an institution, or part of an institution, or combination of institutions that works in partnership with practice placement and work placed learning providers. AEIs will have provided us with assurance that they are accountable and capable of delivering NMC approved education programmes.

Community nursing: care provided by nurses outside the physical setting of a hospital environment such as care provided where people live, at home or close to home, residential care, care in educational settings, primary care, community clinics, outreach centres, prison and other community settings or establishments.

Other specified field(s) of community nursing: this may include nurses practising in the context of offender health, the social care sector, hospice sector, as determined by the AEI and their learning practice partner.

People: individuals or groups who receive services from nurses and midwives, healthy and sick people, parents, children, families, carers, representatives, also including educators, students and others within and outside the learning environment.

Practice learning partners: organisations that provide practice learning necessary for supporting pre-registration and post-registration students in meeting proficiencies and programme outcomes.

Quality assurance: NMC processes for making sure all AEIs and their approved education programmes comply with our standards.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL): a process that enables previous certificated or experiential learning to be recognised and accepted as meeting some programme outcomes, this means it includes both theory and practice achievement.

Simulation: an artificial representation of a real world practice scenario that supports student development through experiential learning with the opportunity for repetition, feedback, evaluation and reflection. Effective simulation facilitates safety by enhancing knowledge, behaviours and skills.

Student: any individual enrolled onto an NMC approved education programme whether full time or less than full time.



The role of the Nursing and Midwifery Council

What we do

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the regulator of almost 725,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.

Our core role is to regulate. First, we promote high professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. Second, we maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. Third, we investigate concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates— something that affects less than one percent of professionals each year.

To regulate well, we support our professions and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout people's careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address new challenges. We also support people involved in our investigations, and we're increasing our visibility so people feel engaged and empowered to shape our work.

Regulating and supporting our professions allows us to influence health and social care. We share intelligence from our regulatory activities and work with our partners to support workforce planning and sector-wide decision making. We use our voice to speak up for a healthy and inclusive working environment for our professions.

These standards were approved by Council at their meeting on (DATE TBC).