Nursing and Midwifery Council Quality Assurance Review

Major Modification Report for:

Return to practice qualification leading to:

Return to Practice - Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visiting)

Glasgow Caledonian University

January 2025

Contents

Key institutional and programme details

Name and location of Approved Education Institution (AEI)	Glasgow Caledonian University Department of Nursing and Community Health School of Health and Life Sciences Cowcaddens Road Glasgow G4 0BA Scotland
AEI Institution Identifier	10007762
Name and location of programme delivery partner(s) if not the AEI noted above	Not applicable
Name of employer partners for apprenticeships	Not applicable
Approval type	Major modification

Name of programme				
NMC programme title	**AEI programme title (in full)**	*Academic level(s)*	**Full-time**	**Part-time**
Return to practice – Nursing/SCPHN	Return to Practice Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visiting)	Scotland ☐ Level 10 ☒ Level 11	☒	☒
Proposed modification start date	1 September 2025			
Standard(s) under assessment	☒ Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment ☒ Part 3: Standards for return to practice programmes			
Date of visit	Desk-based review 17 January 2025			
Visitor team	Registrant Visitor: Joanna Dunn			

Executive summary

Quality Assurance Reviews (QARs) are undertaken for the specific purpose of making recommendations to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) in relation to the approval (or otherwise) of the above-named programme(s) or in relation to the approval (or otherwise) of major modifications to the above-named programme. Reviews follow the Gateway approach to programme approvals and major modifications, as outlined in QAA Guidance for Approved Education Institutions and Education Institutions on NMC Quality Assurance Reviews.

Reviews involve a period of desk-based analysis with the opportunity for NMC visitors to request further information, evidence or clarification. All evidence submitted by the AEI or EI is reviewed by the visitors.

Following a review, a draft report is shared with the AEI or EI for the purposes of confirming factual accuracy before the report is finalised.

The review was conducted as a desk-based review which was completed on 27 January 2025.

Context for the review

The proposed modification submitted by Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) seeks to align its Return to Practice Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visiting) programme to the 2023 NMC Standards for Return to Practice programmes. GCU was already delivering a Return to Practice Specialist Community Public Health Nurse programme which was approved at undergraduate level in 2020. However, the minimum credits/award for Practice Specialist Community Public Health Nurse programmes according to the 2023 NMC Standards for Return to Practice programmes has to be at postgraduate master's level and the level of study has, therefore, been changed from undergraduate to postgraduate level.

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor to the NMC is as follows:

> **Programme is recommended to the NMC for approval** - the programme **meets** all standards and requirements and enables students to achieve stated NMC standards of proficiency and learning outcomes for theory and practice.

The detailed findings of the NMC visitor's review are explained in more detail in the following sections. This includes a summary of any conditions of approval and confirmation of whether these have been satisfactorily addressed.

Conditions and recommendations

Conditions

Conditions				
No.	Condition details	Specific standard not met	NMC only /Joint	AEI/EI only
	None			

Joint conditions relate to both NMC standards and the AEI/EI's programme approval outcomes. All conditions must be met in order for a programme to be recommended to the NMC for final approval.

Recommendations for enhancement

Recommendations				
No.	Recommendation	Specific standard(s)	NMC only /Joint	AEI/EI only
	None			

Recommendations are to be addressed and reported in the annual self-assessment report.

Statements of good practice

Statements of good practice relating to the NMC standards			
No.	Details	Specific standard(s) (eg 3.1)	NMC only/ joint
	None		

Explanation of findings for Part 3

Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression

	Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:	Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
1.1	Confirm on entry to the programme that students are, or were, registered with the NMC.	☒	☐	☐	☐
1.2	Confirm on entry to the programme that students: 1.2.1 demonstrate values in accordance with the Code 1.2.2 have capability to behave in accordance with the Code 1.2.3 have capability to update numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes 1.2.4 can demonstrate they meet NMC English language requirements 1.2.5 have capability in literacy to meet programme outcomes 1.2.6 have capability for digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes	☒	☐	☐	☐
1.3	Ensure students' health and character is sufficient to enable safe and effective practice on entering the programme, throughout the programme and when submitting the supporting declaration of health and character in line with the NMC's health and character guidance. This includes facilitating satisfactory and timely occupational health assessment and criminal record checks.	☐	☐	☐	☒
1.4	Ensure students are fully informed of the requirement to declare immediately any police charges, cautions, convictions or conditional discharges or determinations that their fitness to practise is impaired made by other regulators, professional bodies and educational establishments, and that any declarations are dealt with promptly, fairly and lawfully.	☐	☐	☐	☒
1.5	Ensure the person responsible for directing the educational programme or their designated substitute is able to provide supporting declarations of health and character for students who have completed a return to practice programme.	☐	☐	☐	☒
1.6	Consider students' prior learning and experience in relation to the standards of proficiency, programme outcomes, and the students intended scope of practice upon readmission.	☐	☐	☐	☒
1.7	Support students throughout the programme in updating their abilities in numeracy, literacy and digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes.	☒	☐	☐	☐

Findings

1. The visitor considered a range of programme documentation such as the programme specification, honours level equivalence documents and the SCPHN timetable for this standard.

2. With regard to Standard 1.1 the visitor reviewed the programme specification and confirmed that the entry criteria are in line with this standard. These enable applicants with a lapsed Specialist Community Public Health Nurse - Health Visiting (SCPHN - HV) registration and current first level nursing or midwife NMC registration to access the programme. GCU's previously approved arrangements for assuring itself that applicants have no conditions of practice remain unchanged.

3. In reviewing Standard 1.2 the visitor reviewed the admissions process and subsequent support for students now studying the programme at postgraduate level. The programme timetable evidences the academic support with sessions from the GCU Learning Development Centre and library services. Student support is provided by personal tutors and students are signposted to existing GCU support.

4. Similarly, in relation to Standard 1.7 the visitor confirmed that students are appropriately supported in updating their numeracy as well as digital and technological literacy as evidenced by the programme timetable, which includes sessions on digital literacy, database research and academic writing as well as introductions to the support available from the library and Learning Development Centre.

5. The visitor confirmed that Standards 1.3 - 1.6 were not affected by the proposed modification and were therefore not considered.

6. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that GCU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression to enable the NMC standards affected by the modifications to be met.

Standard 2: Curriculum

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
2.1	Ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education.	☐	☐	☐	☒
2.2	Comply with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.	☒	☐	☐	☐
2.3	Ensure that programme learning outcomes reflect relevant standards of proficiency.	☒	☐	☐	☐
2.4	Design and deliver a programme that supports students to return to their intended area of practice.	☒	☐	☐	☐
2.5	Ensure that programmes delivered in Wales comply with legislation which supports use of the Welsh language.	☐	☐	☐	☒
2.6	State routes within the return to practice programme that allow:				
	2.6.1 nurses to be readmitted to, or remain on, the register in one or more of the specific fields of nursing practice: adult, children's, learning disabilities and mental health nursing	☐	☐	☐	☒
	2.6.2 midwives to be readmitted to, or remain on, the register as midwives	☐	☐	☐	☒
	2.6.3 specialist community public health nurses (SCPHNs) to be readmitted to, or remain on, the register as specialist community public health nurses	☒	☐	☐	☐
	2.6.4 nursing associates to be readmitted to, or remain on, the register as nursing associates.	☐	☐	☐	☒
2.7	Set out the content necessary to meet the programme outcomes for each field of nursing practice: adult, mental health, learning disabilities and children's nursing.	☐	☐	☐	☒
2.8	Set out the general and professional content necessary to confirm the relevant standards of proficiency and programme outcomes for each part of the register.	☒	☐	☐	☐
2.9	Ensure that specific content such as: safeguarding, consent, pharmacology and medicines administration and optimisation is included for the student to be readmitted to, or remain on, the register.	☐	☐	☐	☒
2.10	Ensure the curriculum uses a range of learning and teaching strategies which may include flexible or distance learning, which must be used effectively and proportionately to support learning and assessment.	☐	☐	☐	☒
2.11	Ensure technology and simulation opportunities are used effectively and proportionately across the curriculum to support supervision, learning and assessment.	☐	☐	☐	☒
2.12	Ensure that all return to practice programmes are an appropriate length to support programme outcomes.	☐	☐	☐	☒

Length and structure of programme

> The programme is delivered at postgraduate level (SCQF Level 11) and consists of one module attracting 30 credits. As part of the programme, students will undertake 300 or 450 hours of practice for single registration depending on their length of lapse or registration.

Findings

7. The visitor considered programme and placement documentation for this standard. This included the programme specification, programme timetable, student handbook and practice assessment document.

8. In considering Standard 2.2 the visitor reviewed the module descriptor, practice assessment document (PAD) and student handbook and found that the PAD includes clear information about the qualifications that are required for the practice supervisor and practice assessor to meet the NMC (2022, updated 2024) Standards for post-registration programmes. These are reflected in the revised module descriptor and student handbook.

9. With regard to Standard 2.3 the visitor confirmed that the programme learning outcomes in the revised module descriptor reflect the SCPHN standards of proficiency. The curriculum is delivered at postgraduate level and contextualised to SCPHN (HV) from a theoretical perspective. The practice learning experience allows students to be supervised and assessed in line with the standards for student supervision and assessment because the PAD fully aligns to the standards of proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses. It contains the six spheres of influence relevant to the outcomes for an SCPHN (HV) and students will be assessed by a practice supervisor and practice assessor who will have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the principles for preceptors as SCPHNs.

10. In relation to Standard 2.4 the visitor reviewed the module descriptor and the programme timetable and found that the revised module descriptor contains SCPHN specific content that relates to the spheres of practice and reflects the SCPHN timetable. It demonstrates that the programme will support students to return to SCPHN in the field of health visiting as it develops the knowledge and skills required to meet the standards of proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses and enables students to be confident in delivering safe, effective, child and family-centred care.

11. In considering Standard 2.6 by examining the programme specification, the visitor confirmed that successful completion of the programme will enable students to be re-admitted or remain on the register.

12. In relation to Standard 2.8 the visitor examined the programme specification and concluded that it sets out the general and professional content necessary to confirm the standards of proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses.

13. The visitor confirmed that Standards 2.1, 2.7 and 2.9 - 2.12 were not affected by the modification and were therefore not considered. Standard 2.5 does not apply to this provision.

14. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that GCU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 2: Curriculum to enable the NMC standards affected by the modifications to be met.

Standard 3: Practice learning

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
3.1	Provide practice learning opportunities that confirm students can deliver safe and effective care in their intended area of practice to a diverse range of people.	☐	☐	☐	☒
3.2	Provide practice learning opportunities that confirm students meet the communication and relationship management skills and procedures in their intended area of practice, as set out in the relevant standards of proficiency.	☐	☐	☐	☒
3.3	Ensure that students experience a range of settings for their intended area of practice, demonstrating an ability to meet the holistic needs of people.	☐	☐	☐	☒
3.4	Ensure technology enhanced and simulation-based learning opportunities are used effectively and proportionately to support learning and assessment	☐	☐	☐	☒
3.5	Take account of students' individual needs, personal circumstances and intended area of practice when allocating their practice learning including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.	☐	☐	☐	☒
3.6	Ensure that students are supernumerary.	☐	☐	☐	☒

Practice learning requirements

The programme has 300 - 450 practice learning hours for single registration depending on their length of lapse or registration. The type of placement learning experience is identified in the Scottish Practice Assessment Document (PAD) which allows students to gain practice experience within the intended area of practice.

Findings

15. Arrangements for practice learning were not affected by the modifications and therefore this standard was not considered.

Standard 4: Supervision and assessment

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
4.1	Ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education.	☐	☐	☐	☒
4.2	Ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.	☐	☐	☐	☒
4.3	Ensure they inform the NMC of the name of the person responsible for directing the education programme.	☐	☐	☐	☒
4.4	Provide students with constructive feedback throughout the programme to support their development.	☐	☐	☐	☒
4.5	Ensure throughout the programme that students meet the required standards of proficiency and programme outcomes to be readmitted, or remain, the register.	☒	☐	☐	☐
4.6	Ensure that students meet communication and relationship management skills and procedures.	☐	☐	☐	☒
4.7	Assess students to confirm proficiency in preparation for being readmitted to, or remaining on, the register.	☐	☐	☐	☒
4.8	Ensure that relevant proficiencies are recorded in a record of achievement which confirms these proficiencies and skills have been met.	☐	☐	☐	☒
4.9	Confirm students' safe and effective practice and suitability to be readmitted to, or remain on, the register.	☐	☐	☐	☒

Findings

16. The visitor considered programme and assessment documentation for this standard which included the module specification, student handbook and the practice assessment document (PAD).

17. In considering Standard 4.5 the visitor reviewed the module descriptor and PAD. The visitor found that the programme ensures that students are able to meet the required standards of proficiency and programme outcomes to be readmitted to, or remain on, the register. This is because students are assessed in both theory and practice. From the revised module documentation, it is clear that the theory assessment relates both to the SCPHN standards of proficiency and the module learning outcomes. The module descriptor points to specific guidance in the student handbook where formative assessment guidance clearly states that it must be related to an area of health visiting practice. In the PAD, students are assessed against the standards of proficiency for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses.

18. The visitor confirmed that Standards 4.1 - 4.4 and 4.6 - 4.9 were not affected by the modification and were therefore not considered.

19. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that GCU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 4: Supervision and assessment to enable the NMC standards affected by the modifications to be met.

Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
5.1	Ensure that the minimum credits/award for a return to practice programme for nurses and midwives is at bachelor's degree level and postgraduate master's level for Specialist Community and Public Health Nurse programmes.	☒	☐	☐	☐
5.2	Ensure that the minimum credits/award for a return to practice programme for nursing associates is at foundation degree level.	☐	☐	☐	☒
5.3	Notify students during and before completion of the programme how they apply to re-join the NMC register.	☒	☐	☐	☐
5.4	Notify students during and before successful completion of the programme that they have five years to reinstate their registration with the NMC. In the event of a student failing to re-register within five years they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in our standards.	☒	☐	☐	☐

Findings

20. The visitor considered programme documentation for this standard which included the module descriptor, student handbook and modification narrative.

21. With regard to Standard 5.1 the visitor reviewed the module descriptor and narrative to support the modification and found that the Return to Practice programme consists of one 30-credit module offered at postgraduate master's level, which is Level 11 of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The minimum level of award for the qualification is therefore met.

22. In relation to Standards 5.3 and 5.4 the visitor, reviewing the revised module descriptor and student handbook, confirmed that students are informed how to rejoin the register and that they have five years to reinstate their registration with the NMC.

23. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that the GCU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded to enable the NMC standards affected by the modifications to be met.