



Nursing and Midwifery Council Quality Assurance Review

Major Modification Report for:

**Pre-registration nursing associate qualification
leading to:**

Nursing Associate

University of Central Lancashire

March 2025

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Key institutional and programme details

Name and location of Approved Education Institution (AEI)	University of Lancashire (formerly University of Central Lancashire) Faculty Of Health and Care Preston PR1 2HE England				
AEI Institution Identifier [UKPRN]	10007141				
Name and location of academic delivery partner(s) if not the AEI noted above	Blackburn College Feilden Street Blackburn Lancashire BB2 1LH				
Name of employer partners for apprenticeships	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust Royal Blackburn Hospital Haslingden Road Blackburn BB2 3HH				
Approval type	Major modification				
Name of programme					
NMC Programme Title	AEI Programme Title (in full)	Academic level	Apprenticeship	Full-time	Part-time
Nursing Associate	FdSc Nursing Associate	England, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nursing Associate	FdSc Nursing Associate (Apprenticeship)	England, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed programme start date	22 September 2025				
Standard(s) under assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part 3: Standards for nursing associates Note that the AEI has taken a programme centred approach to Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment and therefore Part 2 has been reviewed, in the context of this programme, through this current review.				
Date of visit	25 March 2025				
Visitor team	Registrant Visitors: Mr Matthew Aldridge Dr Zanib Bi Mohammed Lay Visitor: Ms Alison Blackburn				

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 and a conjoint visit with the Approved Education Institution (AEI) programme approval panel. All evidence submitted by the AEI is reviewed by the visitors.

Visits enable both the NMC visitors and the AEI programme approval panel to gather further evidence and clarifications to inform their judgements and make recommendations about the AEI's ability to meet the NMC standards. Visits will normally include meetings with a range of stakeholders such as students, people who use services and carers, employers, practice learning partners, the programme team, and senior managers.

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

The conjoint visit with the approval panel took place on 25 March 2025.

Context for the review

The modification request is to approve satellite delivery at Blackburn College (the College) of the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) FdSc Nursing Associate and the FdSc Nursing Associate (Apprenticeship). The proposed modification follows the recent modification of the BSc Pre-registration nursing programme, which changed the structure of the programme from large 60-credit modules in year/part 1 to smaller modules. The proposal is to restructure the delivery so as to mirror the structure of the pre-registration nursing programme to facilitate recognition of prior learning. The proposal is a response to stakeholder feedback and evaluation of the programme and includes strategies to promote retention and build resilience in students, based on recent pedagogic research.

The modification aims to incorporate delivery for a small cohort at the College to appeal to students in the Blackburn area and is a response to requests from practice partners and local workforce need in the region. It is anticipated that in the first year of recruitment there will be 20 students and in the second 30 students. A combination of appropriately qualified academics employed by the College and under the provisions of the agreement and the arrangements are set out in the UCLan Collaborative Provision Policy and procedures. Moreover, during the site visit, the delivery of teaching via satellite provision at the College in partnership with UCLan clearly evidenced operational and governance arrangements including the approval of advertisement for further staff and the skillset necessary for academic teaching at the satellite College. Clarification was sought pertaining to the recruitment and staffing level of the teaching team at the College which will be undertaken by UCLan, and the use of the same quality assurance mechanisms at both institutions. Blackburn College does not currently run any NMC-approved programmes in partnership with UCLan or any other AEI. To mitigate any risk, there will be opportunities for College staff who are new to this role to shadow and be mentored by UCLan staff in relation to UCLan academic regulatory processes and the NMC standards of knowledge and skills which underpin the teaching role. As an example, this could include learning through

shadowing UCLan staff or attending academic regulations meetings related to, for example, fitness to practise and academic misconduct. Clear accountability was established between the parties for the roles and responsibilities related to the teaching and assessment of the programme. UCLan will be developing the teaching material although the course work will be assessed and marked by the College with UCLan moderating this to ensure quality assurance standards. Evidentially, the programme has been developed using a range of individuals and services: UCLan staff; practice placement (ELHT); people who use services and carers (PSCs); and students. Overall, the visitor team was satisfied with the reviewed evidence which includes the desk-based analysis of the evidence submitted, the presentation by the panel on the day, and responses from individuals that there is a strong synergy between the two organisations which harnesses a clear sense of collaboration and teamworking. Notably, underpinning the process is effective communication and accountability between the parties in terms of meeting the outcomes as per NMC regulatory Standards of proficiency for the nursing associates programme (2023).

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor team to the NMC, following consideration of the AEI response to any conditions required by the approval panel, 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 team'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

The **provisional judgement** (following the visit and prior to the consideration of the AEI response to any conditions) was as follows:

Programme is recommended to the NMC for approval after conditions are met to ensure the programme meets all standards and requirements and enables students to achieve stated NMC standards of proficiency and learning outcomes for theory and practice.

Conditions

Conditions				
No.	Condition details	Specific standard not met	NMC only/ Joint	AEI only
C1	That the course team update the signed partnership agreement to correct typo 7.2 and ensure dated at the top			AEI only
C2	That the course team complete the KSB mapping document in respect of maths, English and personal development plan			AEI only
C3	That the course team review the Off the Job Hours form and correct the totals			AEI only
Date for all conditions to be met to meet intended delivery date		22 April 2025		

Joint conditions relate to both NMC standards and the AEI programme approval outcomes. All conditions must be met for a programme to be recommended to the NMC for final approval.

Recommendations for enhancement

Recommendations				
No.	Recommendation	Specific standard	NMC only/ Joint	AEI only
R1	That UCLan Course Team and the College look to develop and operationalise Interprofessional Education (IPE) activity and make clear how IPE would be operationalised for Blackburn including any implementation strategy.	2.4	Joint	
R2	That UCLan Course Team keep under review the use of written assessments in light of comments around AI, and consider alternative forms of assessment, if necessary, in future.	4.4, 4.5, 4.7		AEI only
R3	That Blackburn College look to provide a subject-specific librarian for health.	2.7		AEI only

R4	That Blackburn College look to provide a simulation technician role to support that facility.			AEI only
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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	NMC only/ Joint
GP1	The strength of the partnership working between UCLan and its partner College is to be commended.	2.3	Joint
GP2	The Comensus group - widespread involvement in, and commitment to the curriculum is evident and to be commended.	2.8	Joint
GP3	Partner college to be commended for high level of preparation of simulation and skills facilities, as well as the significant investment made to enhance the learning environment.	2.8	Joint
GP4	Level of individualised and strategic support available to the student body is commendable	4.2	Joint
GP5	Programme team clearly responsive to student feedback and uses this to inform programme improvement	4.4	Joint

Response to conditions

Response to AEI/EI only conditions

The response to UCLan conditions that are not directly related to individual NMC standards are reported in the table below.

Response to AEI/EI only conditions		
No.	Condition details	Findings
C1	That the course team update the signed partnership agreement to correct typo 7.2 and ensure dated at the top	<p>The Chair of the conjoint panel confirmed by email (dated 4 June) that all internal conditions, as noted in the minutes of the visit, have been met and evidence of the updated Partnership agreement has been provided.</p> <p>The visitor team considers that for Condition C1, UCLan has fully addressed the requirements of the condition and therefore Condition C1 is met.</p>
C2	That the course team complete the KSB mapping document in respect	The Chair of the conjoint panel confirmed by email (dated 4 June) that all internal conditions, as noted in the minutes of the

	of maths, English and personal development plan	visit, have been met and evidence of the updated documents has been provided.
C3	That the course team review the Off the Job Hours form and correct the totals	The Chair of the conjoint panel confirmed by email (dated 4 June) that all internal conditions, as noted in the minutes of the visit, have been met and evidence of the updated document has been provided.

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor team to the NMC, following consideration of UCLan's response to any conditions set, is therefore as follows:

All conditions relating to this programme have been addressed and **the 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.

Explanation of findings for Part 3

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	<p>Confirm on entry to the programme that students:</p> <p>1.1.1 meet the entry criteria for the programme as set out by the AEI and are suitable for nursing associate practice</p> <p>1.1.2 demonstrate values in accordance with the Code</p> <p>1.1.3 have capability to learn behaviours in accordance with the Code</p> <p>1.1.4 have capability to develop numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes</p> <p>1.1.5 can demonstrate proficiency in English language</p> <p>1.1.6 have capability in literacy to meet programme outcomes</p> <p>1.1.7 have capability for digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	<p>Ensure students' health and character are 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 decision making guidance. This includes satisfactory occupational health assessment and criminal record checks.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	<p>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 ensure that any declarations are dealt with promptly, fairly and lawfully.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4	<p>Ensure that the registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the educational programme or their designated registered nurse substitute or designated registered nursing associate substitute, are able to provide supporting declarations of health and character for students who have completed a pre-registration nursing associate programme</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5	<p>Permit recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes, up to a maximum of 50 percent of the programme. This maximum limit of 50 percent does not apply to applicants to pre-registration nursing associate</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	programmes who are currently a NMC registered nurse without restrictions on their practice.				
1.6	Support students throughout the programme in continuously developing their abilities in numeracy, literacy and digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recognition of prior learning metrics

The University permits recognition of prior learning (RPL) that is capable of being mapped to the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates up to a maximum of 50% of the programme, in line with NMC regulations.

Findings

1. In consideration of Standard 1, the visitor team reviewed a range of evidence demonstrating that the selection and admissions process enables UCLan to confirm that students are suitable for the programme, including confirmation of their proficiency in language, numeracy and digital technology and the values and behaviours required by the Code. The visitor team also met with the programme team and senior staff, students and practice learning partners (PLPs) and employers.
2. With regard to Standard 1.1, the visitor team found that, in line with UCLan's Collaborative Provision Policy and procedures, the College uses the same admissions criteria and recruitment process as UCLan and a recruitment working group, made up of the School's recruitment lead, the apprenticeship lead and the admissions tutor, has worked with the College to advise on processes. Applications for the direct entry route are made via UCAS, and selection is undertaken in line with UCLan's admissions policy based on the applicant's potential for meeting the required entry criteria. The entry criteria include the agreed UCAS points, evidence of English and numeracy in the format of GCSE Grade C/4 or above in both maths and English or equivalent. International applicants are required to have the same number of UCAS points required for entry along with the equivalent maths and English qualifications, and IELTS 6.5 in all components. Applicants are interviewed online. The interview forms seen by the visitor team were detailed and clear in terms of requesting and recording the information required under the standard, for example in relation to qualifications, experience, and health and character (Disclosure and Barring Service and occupational health) status. The interview questions have been developed to utilise Values Based Recruitment and the 6Cs of nursing, and applicants are informed of this prior to interview to enable them to prepare for the interview.
3. For applicants applying via the apprenticeship route, the candidate's initial application is considered by the employing organisation. Entry criteria are checked by the admissions tutor prior to inviting the candidate for interview. On receipt of formal support from the employer, the candidate will undertake the same recruitment process as direct entry candidates. At the apprenticeship interviews there will always be a member of staff present from the employer partner, and employers are provided with a detailed Apprentice Employer Handbook. Blackburn College will follow this same process (the College will recruit only apprentice learners). The visitor team was able to see evidence of an offer processing form, welcome email and a template formal offer letter which observed Competition and Markets Authority consumer protection legislative requirements.

4. Recent changes in apprenticeship rules require the provider to have a means of confirming that apprentice applicants who have not completed maths GCSE or equivalent can demonstrate the capability to develop numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes. The provider has developed a process for assessing applicants' capability.
5. With regard to Standard 1.2, the visitor team established that UCLan assesses the character and health of prospective students in line with the NMC's decision-making guidance and the programme specification makes clear that 'all offers are subject to a successful values-based interview, satisfactory occupational health report and receipt of a satisfactory enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) certificate'.
6. At interview, all applicants are asked whether there is anything which may be disclosed as part of a DBS check, as this may risk an offer of a place on the course being withdrawn. The interview form for the College includes a question as to the status of the applicant's occupational health check and it was explained to the visitor team that a question on occupational health was not similarly included in the Direct Entry form as this was covered separately. A Direct Entry applicant, once they confirm they will be taking a place on the course, is contacted to undertake checks in relation to their health and character. The relevant programme handbook explains that this must be done before they enter a practice environment, to ensure they are of good character, that they are fit and healthy and do not pose a risk to the public. Apprenticeship applicants successful at interview will be offered a place on the relevant apprenticeship subject to successful occupational health and DBS checks which the employer will conduct. The programme handbooks emphasise the importance of conduct and behaviour in line with the Code throughout the student's studies in order for the University to be able to sign the declaration of good health and good character which will allow the student to be entered onto the register as an associate nurse. The declaration of good health and good character is revisited on an annual basis and is signed by each student at enrolment. Students are required to declare in a timely manner if they become subject to a change in their health or good character during the course of their studies. Where the School considers that this information raises questions about the student's fitness to practise, the matter will be referred for consideration under this Procedure. Any DBS concerns at the College are referred to the University's DBS panel.
7. With regard to Standard 1.3, the visitor team found that students are fully informed of the requirement to declare immediately any police charges, cautions, convictions, or determinations that their fitness to practise is impaired. As noted above, at interview all applicants are asked whether there is anything which may be disclosed as part of a DBS check, as this may risk an offer of a place on the course being withdrawn. The relevant programme handbooks explain that this must be done before they enter a practice environment to ensure they are of good character and do not pose a risk to the public. Students are further advised that if they do not complete these checks in a timely manner, they may not be cleared to participate in practice learning and may be required to withdraw or interrupt their studies and re-join the course later once their clearances are confirmed.
8. The University's fitness to practise procedure ensures that there is a fair, transparent and effective process for considering cases where there are concerns about a student's suitability for professional education and training and/or fitness to practise and thus that the Standard is met. The procedure covers allegations relating to conduct, attitude, competence and health, and has several levels of referral and outcome, depending on the nature of the concern. If an Investigating Officer is appointed that person will be independent of the parties involved. The procedure

applies equally to the College. Any concerns by the College about a student's fitness to practise are reported on a cause for concern form. College staff will be invited to train as Investigating Officers should they wish.

9. With regard to Standard 1.4, on completion of a programme the NMC requires higher education institutions to provide confirmation of good health and good character in order for students to enter the professional register. The visitor team found that UCLan requires students to sign a declaration of good health and good character and that the Associate Dean for Pre-Registration nursing provides supporting declarations to the NMC via the online portal following final checks and sign-off by the course leader. This final sign-off is completed at the Assessment Board, at which members of both University and College course teams are present.
10. In considering Standard 1.5, the visitor team established that the University permits RPL that is capable of being mapped to the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates up to a maximum of 50% of the programme, in line with NMC regulations. Whilst the norm for the University, as set out in its academic regulations, is to allow a greater amount of RPL, it is made clear in the academic regulations that 'where courses are subject to the regulations of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and those regulations are different from the Academic Regulations of the University, the regulations of the professional, statutory and regulatory bodies will take precedence, subject to approval through the University's course approval and review processes' and it was confirmed to the visitor team that this approval had been given. It was confirmed that partner institutions operate UCLan's RPL process, and UCLan's External Examiner handbook includes in the examiner's duties the 'review of Recognition of Prior Learning'.
11. With regard to Standard 1.6, the visitor team found that the demonstration of 'excellent literacy, numeracy, digital and technological skills in relation to Nursing Associate practice, professional communication and general conduct' is included in the programme learning outcomes and the visitor team saw a mapping of the Nursing Associate Professional Standards against the programme modules. Programme handbooks for the respective Nursing Associate courses (direct entry and Apprenticeships) at Blackburn College outline the support offered to enable students to continuously develop their abilities in numeracy, literacy, and digital and technological literacy, both through their course and with additional support provided through library sessions and one-to-one sessions with an Academic Support Mentor. The Assessment Strategy also facilitates the development of these skills.
12. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that UCLan has appropriate arrangements in place for Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression to enable the standards to be met.

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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Comply with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Ensure that programme learning outcomes reflect the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4	Design and deliver a programme that supports students and provides an appropriate breadth of experience for a non-field specific nursing associate programme, across the lifespan and in a variety of settings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5	Set out the general and professional content necessary to meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6	Ensure that the programme hours and programme length are: 2.6.1 sufficient to allow the students to be able to meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates, 2.6.2 no less than 50 percent of the minimum programme hours required of nursing degree programmes 2.6.3 consonant with the award of a Foundation degree (typically 2 years).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7	Ensure the curriculum provides an equal balance of 50 percent theory and 50 percent practice learning using a range of learning and teaching strategies.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.8	Ensure technology and simulation opportunities are used effectively and proportionately across the curriculum to support supervision, learning and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.9	Ensure nursing associate programmes which form part of an integrated programme meet the nursing associate requirements and nursing associate proficiencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Curriculum requirements

600 hours of theory and 600 hours of practice learning per year = 1,200 total hours per year and 2,400 total hours over the 2-year programme with a 50:50 theory: practice ratio.

Findings

- The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this standard including the programme modification document, programme specifications and handbooks,

Collaboration agreement and Collaborative Provision Policy and procedures, and a range of college procedures. The visitor team also met with the programme team and senior staff, students and PLPs and employers.

14. In considering Standard 2.1, the visitor team reviewed evidence confirming that the curriculum is appropriately mapped against the NMC Standards for nursing associates. A detailed mapping document outlines how the standards have been aligned with module content to ensure comprehensive coverage of all required elements. In addition, the programme and module handbooks demonstrate that the content and structure of delivery have been systematically considered within the curriculum design. During the visit, the programme team described the alignment of modules and the heutagogy approach underpinning curriculum design. The programme modification document provides a clear rationale and justification for changes to module credits and delivery structure. The programme specification sets out the learning outcomes alongside the credit and award structure.
15. The Collaborative Provision Policy and associated procedures further evidence a coordinated approach to partnership delivery and quality assurance (QA), ensuring alignment with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements. This includes clear reference to how UCLan manages collaborative delivery through robust QA processes and governance frameworks.
16. UCLan documentation details a clearly defined collaborative process involving key stakeholders including practice partners, students, and PSCs in the mapping and development of the Foundation Degree (FdSc) Nursing Associate programme. The Collaborative Provision Policy also references a defined governance structure which takes a risk-based approach to managing delivery and ensuring legal compliance in achieving learning outcomes through partnership arrangements.
17. With regard to Standard 2.2, the previous approval of Gateway 2 for the initial approval of the Nursing Associate Programme remains valid and unchanged for this major modification. The evidence reviewed by the visitor team demonstrates that the Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (SSSA) roles are clearly articulated to key stakeholders. In particular, documentary evidence outlines the responsibilities and expectations of practice assessors (PAs), practice supervisors (PSs), and academic assessors (AAs) in supporting student learning in practice settings.
18. UCLan sets out the person specification required for those undertaking the role of AA, including the requirement for NMC registration and relevant professional experience. This ensures that individuals fulfilling the AA role are appropriately qualified and capable of undertaking assessment responsibilities in accordance with NMC expectations. Further clarification regarding the AA role is provided in the School of Nursing and Midwifery (SONM) Guidance, which remains unchanged for this modification and outlines the expected responsibilities and functions of the AA within the context of the programme. This guidance ensures that expectations are consistently communicated across academic and practice partners with a clear governance structure in place.
19. The AA Process Document details the process by which AAs are allocated to students. Importantly, the document confirms that students will not be allocated the same AA for the entire duration of the programme. This approach supports objectivity in student assessment and aligns with the NMC requirement for separation of supervision and assessment functions. This was also supported in discussions with the programme team and in the meeting with PAs who assured the visitor team that

they understood their role in relation to the SSSA and were provided adequate time in the execution of their daily duties to fulfil the role of PA, while evidencing clear lines of accountability and responsibility of working together with UCLan.

20. The Reasonable Adjustments Plan (RAP) illustrates UCLan's approach to supporting students requiring adjustments in practice-based learning environments. This is further supported by the Inclusive Support in Practice document, which provides clear guidance for academic staff, students, and practice partners on the development and communication of RAPs. The document sets out the process for the creation and sharing of reasonable adjustment plans to ensure they are effectively implemented in practice. Discussions with the programme team also clarified the process for communicating RAPs to practice partners, and this was triangulated in meetings where students were able to give an example of the communication of specific learning needs to practice, and from PLPs who also confirmed that reasonable adjustments in practice were communicated in an effective and timely manner.
21. Additionally, UCLan's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy outlines how support for students with disabilities is embedded within the wider institutional framework. This policy evidences UCLan's commitment to inclusivity, with defined procedures to ensure that appropriate support mechanisms are in place across both academic and practice settings. This was confirmed by managers and staff that the visitor team met where the programme team and the executive team were able to discuss access and participation plans (APPs) in relation to attainment and awarding gaps and how these were being addressed. Furthermore, the programme team and executive team were able to outline the role of the EDI committee, the implementation of an 'EDI dashboard' and the provision of unconscious bias training for all staff. Moreover, College staff will be able to benefit from shadowing UCLan staff to ensure sharing of good practice.
22. In relation to Standard 2.3, the visitor team found that the mapping document provides detailed evidence of how the indicative content of each module is aligned to the NMC platforms and proficiencies. This mapping confirms that the programme meets the required NMC standards, ensuring that students are supported to achieve the appropriate outcomes across theoretical and practice learning components. This was further supported by the programme team presentation on the module structure, educational approach and course structure.
23. The visitor team also noted clear alignment of the programme with relevant academic and professional benchmarking standards. Documentation including the module handbook and the programme specification demonstrate systematic mapping of learning outcomes and content to ensure compliance with national frameworks and NMC requirements. Furthermore, the Collaborative Provision Policy outlines a robust governance structure supporting programme delivery through partnership arrangements. This includes a risk-based approach to managing collaborative delivery, ensuring legal compliance and the achievement of learning outcomes in all delivery contexts. During the visit, the visitor team was assured of the excellent level of partnership working between UCLan and its partner College across all areas and found this to be a feature of **good practice (GP1)**.
24. With regard to Standard 2.4, the visitor team found documentary evidence that provides assurance that students are exposed to a range of practice learning environments, including experience across the four fields of nursing. This document is monitored by the UCLan AA to ensure compliance with NMC requirements regarding cross-field exposure. It includes recorded evidence of placements in

hospital, home, and community settings, which is cross-referenced with students' PARE records to ensure consistency and accuracy. Discussion with managers, staff, and PLPs provided further assurance that the programme team, students and PLPs are all aware of hours recording and monitoring through systems and regular meetings. Moreover, during the meetings it was indicated that SONM at UCLan has forged positive relations with practice placement partners, whereby the adult nursing associate students benefit from this with ease around accessing cross-field exposure.

25. The monitoring of apprenticeship student progress is embedded within the programme structure. Formal progress reviews take place at 12-week intervals, providing an opportunity for UCLan and practice partners to assess the student's development and address any emerging concerns. In addition, course leaders conduct a review at the end of Year 1 to confirm that placement progress is on track and that all necessary experiences are being accessed. Students have access to their personal tutor support also.
26. An example of a student's practice learning journey is captured in the External Placement and Exposure Record, which clearly demonstrates how students gain experience across the four fields of nursing through external practice learning opportunities. This example evidences the programme's commitment to ensuring that all students have sufficient breadth and depth of clinical exposure to meet the required proficiencies. Students the visitor team met were able to provide specific examples of how this had been operationalised.
27. The visitor team discussed interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities for student nurse associates with the programme team and was able to confirm that these include a blend of online and face-to-face resources alongside students on other healthcare profession programmes. A **recommendation (R1)** was made by the visitor team and the approval panel for both UCLan and the College to make clear how these IPE opportunities would be made available to partner College provision before the partner provision begins.
28. With regard to Standard 2.5, the visitor team found that the module descriptors and the curriculum mapping document provide clear evidence that the programme incorporates the general and professional content necessary to meet the NMC standards. The content has been designed to align with the requirements set out in the SFNME and the Standards of Proficiency for Nursing Associates, ensuring that students are adequately prepared for professional practice.
29. Further evidence of how students are supported to achieve the required proficiencies is provided in the Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Documents (NAPADs) 1 and 2 which outline the specific proficiencies students must demonstrate in practice and the mechanisms through which these are assessed and recorded. The PADs confirm that there is a structured and consistent approach to the assessment of proficiency supported by academic and practice partners. PLPs and students the visitor team met confirmed that the NAPAD system embedded in PARE (the electronic platform housing the ePAD) allows for AAs, PAs and students to work collaboratively to enable students to meet practice proficiencies and requirements.
30. In considering Standard 2.6, the visitor team found that the programme documentation for both the Direct Entry and Nursing Associate Apprenticeship routes confirms that the required duration of study is met, with students undertaking 1,200 hours of theory and 1,200 hours of practice. This meets the stipulations outlined in Directive 2005/36/EC Article 31(3) regarding the recognition of professional

qualifications, ensuring that graduates are eligible for registration and recognition across relevant jurisdictions.

31. The UCLan Articulation and Transfer Scheme (ATS) agreement sets out the terms of partnership between UCLan and the College. This agreement outlines how PSRB requirements will be upheld across all delivery sites and includes mechanisms for ensuring academic consistency, quality assurance, and regulatory compliance across both institutions, thereby supporting the integrity and standardisation of programme delivery. As a result of discussion with the programme and executive teams and as noted earlier under 2.3, the visitor team was assured of the high level of collaborative working between UCLan and the College and found this to be a feature of **good practice (GP1)**.
32. With regard to Standard 2.7, the visitor team found that evidence from programme documents confirms that there is an equal split between theory and practice learning within the programme structure. This balance aligns with NMC requirements and supports the development of both academic knowledge and clinical competence in a complementary manner.
33. Modules NU1902 and NU2902 are identified as dedicated practice learning modules within which the NAPAD is used to assess students' achievement of proficiencies. The module descriptors provide further detail on the structure and content of both theory and practice modules, including clearly defined learning outcomes and indicative content, ensuring transparency and coherence in programme delivery.
34. The programme modification document provides a rationale for recent changes to the curriculum specifically aimed at enhancing the reflective capabilities of students and embedding practical skills development throughout all modules. This integrated approach ensures that theoretical learning is consistently linked to clinical practice, supporting students in developing critical thinking, decision-making, and hands-on skills in a cohesive learning environment. This was confirmed in meetings with programme staff who provided the underpinning pedagogical rationale and were able to confirm that this modification had also been made with student feedback and co-production.
35. In considering Standard 2.8, the visitor team found evidence that demonstrates that the standard is met because this evidence defines the 'Comensus' group's structure and demonstrates clear engagement with PSCs in the development of simulation-based activities within the programme. This demonstrates a collaborative approach to curriculum enhancement, ensuring that the voices of PSCs inform the design of relevant and meaningful learning experiences. This view was confirmed in meetings with the programme team, students and PSCs who all described clear involvement of PSCs in module design, delivery, and assessment. The visitor team found this to be a feature of **good practice (GP2)**.
36. Although simulation cannot be used to replace clinical practice hours in this context, it has nonetheless been thoughtfully integrated into the curriculum. Documentary evidence outlines how simulation and skills-based learning are mapped across the programme's modules. This strategic document demonstrates how simulation activities are aligned with learning outcomes, reinforcing the development of clinical skills in a structured and supportive environment. The visitor team toured the newly completed extensive simulation suite which comprises a ward area with high fidelity patient simulators, an integrated AV system for streaming and recording, a GP practice room, an immersive suite and a home environment (currently under development) and found the arrangements and their operation to be a feature of

good practice (GP3). Students the visitor team met confirmed that simulation is embedded in the current curriculum and gives opportunities to learn how to practise in a safe environment.

37. The visitor team found evidence that details the auditing process undertaken to ensure the suitability and effectiveness of the skills and simulation suites. It includes information on the available resources, confirming that the learning environments are appropriately equipped to facilitate simulation-based learning. The programme team confirmed that support will be offered by UCLan's simulation team in training the College partner team in simulation facility methodology. This comprehensive approach supports the development of student proficiency in a safe and controlled setting and contributes to the overall quality of the programme's practice learning provision.
38. Standard 2.9 is not applicable because the programme is not delivered as an integrated programme.
39. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that UCLan has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 2: Curriculum to enable the NMC standards to be met.

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 allow students to develop and meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates to deliver safe and effective care to a diverse range of people across the lifespan and in a variety of settings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	Ensure that students experience the variety of practice expected of nursing associates to meet the holistic needs of people of all ages.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Take account of students' individual needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4	<p>Ensure that nursing associate students have protected learning time in line with one of the following two options:</p> <p>3.4.1 Option A: nursing associate students are supernumerary when they are learning in practice</p> <p>3.4.2 Option B: nursing associate students, via work-placed learning routes:</p> <p>3.4.2.1 are released for a minimum of 20 per cent of the programme for academic study</p> <p>3.4.2.2 are released for a minimum of 20 per cent of the programme time, which is assured protected learning time in external practice placements, enabling them to develop the breadth of experience required for a generic role, and</p> <p>3.4.2.3 for the remainder of the required programme hours, protected learning time must be assured.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Practice learning requirements

Option A students have 2,400 protected learning hours with an equal balance between theoretical and practice learning as per the Apprenticeship Course Handbook.

Students undertaking Option B on work-placed learning routes work to a structured programme that enables 1,200 hours of theoretical learning and 1,200 hours of protected learning time in external practice learning.

Findings

40. The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this standard including the Collaborative Provision Policy and procedures, University Employer Guide to Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, handbooks, Course Management Team meetings and

Course Review meetings, and College policies and met with the programme team and senior staff, students, PLPs and employer partners.

41. With regard to Standard 3.1, the visitor team found evidence to confirm that the NAPAD is used for the assessment of practice learning and is implemented through the PARE electronic ePAD system. This ensures a standardised and accessible mechanism for recording student progress and assessment in practice settings, in line with NMC requirements.
42. The record of external practice learning hours provides further assurance that student exposure to practice is monitored and accurately recorded because it documents hours completed across various settings, covering lifespan and conditions, and contributes to the oversight of diverse nursing exposure as required for nursing associate training. This was confirmed in meetings the visitor team held with the programme team, students, and PLPs who gave specific examples of how student exposure in practice is tracked and recorded during the programme.
43. The Student Nursing Associate Skill Delivery document presents an overarching mapping of clinical skills across the programme. This document outlines which skills are delivered within specific modules, supporting a systematic approach to skills acquisition and confirming alignment with the broader curriculum structure.
44. The Indicative Direct Entry Planners and Indicative Apprenticeship Planners further evidence the structure and delivery of the programme, clearly demonstrating the division between theoretical and practical learning components. Practice learning is linked to dedicated practice modules, within which the PAD is used to assess student performance and progression. This was confirmed to the visitor team by the programme team and PLPs.
45. The SONM Apprentice Employer handbook states that the apprenticeship programme has been co-designed by groups of employers, professional bodies, and Higher Education providers, collectively referred to as 'Trailblazers'. This collaborative development process is central to the apprenticeship model and ensures that the programme is responsive to the needs of practice and aligned with regulatory and professional standards. This was further evidenced in meetings with the programme team, students, PSCs, and PLPs who confirmed that they had been consulted and engaged in co-production re-design of the programme.
46. The Trailblazer group is responsible for proposing the Apprenticeship Standard, the associated Assessment Plan, and the End Point Assessment (EPA). This approach ensures that the apprenticeship programme delivers a fully bespoke curriculum specifically tailored to the needs of apprentices. It integrates academic learning with structured, work-based training, and provides clearly defined mechanisms to assess competence in both domains.
47. The Trailblazer-led design results in a programme that is grounded in real-world practice, co-produced with stakeholders, and focused on ensuring that apprentices are equipped with the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for professional registration and employment. This partnership-driven model aligns with national apprenticeship frameworks and supports quality and consistency in delivery. Discussion with PLPs during the visit specifically addressed placement capacity, for which this programme has been scoped, and PLPs assured the visitor team that sufficient placement capacity exists in the region. Furthermore, collaboration between PLP Trusts ensures that students have a broad range of exposure to placements across different fields of nursing practice.

48. The Simulation Narrative Document provides explanatory detail on the role of simulation within the curriculum, distinguishing between simulation as a pedagogical approach and as a method for delivering and reinforcing clinical skills. The integration of simulation is further substantiated through submitted evidence, which maps simulation-based learning against individual modules to ensure consistency and relevance.
49. Finally, the Annexe A & B Skills Sessions document presents a clear mapping of NMC proficiencies as outlined in Annexes A and B. This mapping is consistent with the simulation strategy, confirming that the programme is designed to ensure students are able to meet all necessary proficiencies through a structured and evidence-based approach to skills and simulation delivery. This was further supported in meeting with the programme team who presented an overview of the programme and outlined where simulation will be incorporated.
50. In relation to Standard 3.2, the evidence the visitor team reviewed demonstrates that UCLan has appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that apprenticeship students are provided with a range of practice learning experiences that meet the required standards. The TNA and NA Programme Planner Handbooks and the Apprenticeship Employer Handbook clearly outline the practice learning requirements for apprenticeship students. These documents set out expectations for employers, including the provision of appropriate placement learning environments and adherence to programme requirements. Students the visitor team met confirmed that they have access to a range of experiences and can accurately evidence and record this. During the site visit, the delivery of teaching via satellite provision at the College in partnership with UCLan clearly evidenced operational and governance arrangements in meeting the NMC outcomes for the apprenticeship programme. Overall, the visitor team felt that the synergy between the two different organisations harnessed a strong sense of teamworking underpinned by effective communication and accountability thereby meeting the NMC regulatory Standards of proficiency for nursing associates (2023).
51. The record of external placement hours shows the process for the monitoring of student practice learning activity and confirms that students are receiving exposure to a range of clinical environments. This includes external placements, which are coordinated with PLPs. The documentation lists the PLPs involved and describes the partnership arrangements in place, providing transparency and assurance regarding placement provision.
52. For direct entry students, the narrative confirms that placements are arranged by UCLan which records practice learning hours and opportunities for field-specific exposure and confirms that oversight is provided by the AA and the programme lead. This ensures that all students, regardless of route, are supported in accessing diverse and appropriate practice learning environments. Collectively, this evidence submitted and discussions with the programme team, students and PLPs provides assurance that UCLan maintains a structured and equitable approach to practice learning. The arrangements support students in gaining a range of field-specific experiences, in alignment with NMC requirements, and ensure that both apprenticeship and direct entry pathways are effectively managed through collaborative oversight.
53. In considering Standard 3.3, the visitor team saw evidence demonstrating that UCLan has a comprehensive and structured approach to supporting students requiring reasonable adjustments, both in academic and practice settings. The Reasonable Adjustment Plan for Practice outlines a clear process involving the

student, student services, and occupational health where appropriate. This was also confirmed in meetings with the programme team who were able to describe the occupational health process for both apprenticeship and direct entry students. This ensures a collaborative and responsive approach to meeting individual needs in practice learning environments.

54. The 'Belonging at UCLan: Statement of EDI ambition to 2028' document, which will also be used at the College, further supports this process by detailing how additional needs are identified and clarifying the responsibilities of students, academic staff, and PLPs in implementing and maintaining support. This guidance fosters a culture of inclusivity and shared responsibility, aligning with wider institutional commitments. Students the visitor team met who were already on the NA programme were able to articulate that they felt included and supported by their teaching team and had a clear sense of role identity as student nurse associates.
55. UCLan's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion is formally embedded through its EDI Policy, which is operationalised through the School of Nursing and Midwifery (SONM) EDI Committee. This committee, which meets quarterly, provides oversight and monitoring of EDI-related initiatives and practices, including those related to reasonable adjustments. At the meeting with the executive team, the visitor team was assured that EDI is taken seriously and is measured, recorded, reported, and acted upon by leaders including being raised at the Council of Deans forum.
56. Additional support is detailed in the Student Handbook, which provides guidance for students on how to access disability support services and seek help where adjustments are needed. The Inclusive Support in Practice Guide offers practical examples of how adjustments can be made in placement settings, providing clarity for both students and practice partners. Students the visitor team met were able to give practical examples of how additional needs had been assessed and met by both UCLan and in practice.
57. There is a Support to Study Policy and Procedure in place which reinforces a proactive and inclusive approach by encouraging students to seek support early and by promoting a positive learning environment. Collectively, this evidence provides the visitor team with assurance that students requiring reasonable adjustments are supported effectively across both theory and practice, in accordance with regulatory expectations and institutional policy. Students also confirmed that they can access timely and helpful support from their tutors when required. Students also explained that tutors are good at tailoring explanations to their level of understanding, particularly in relation to topics such as anatomy and physiology.
58. With regard to Standard 3.4, evidence the visitor team reviewed confirmed that students undertaking the programme via Option A are expected to be rostered as supernumerary while in the practice learning environment. This requirement is clearly outlined and reinforced through the annual declarations submitted by practice partners. These arrangements ensure that students in Option A are afforded appropriate time and support to focus on learning, free from service delivery pressures. Students the visitor team met and PLPs gave assurances that protected learning time was maintained. For students undertaking Option B via work-based learning routes, the programme is structured to deliver 1,200 hours of theoretical learning and 1,200 hours of protected external practice learning. This is supported by the Work-Based Learning Handbook, which references the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) definition of Protected Learning Time (PLT), distinguishing it from the concept of supernumerary status.

59. Protected learning hours for Option B students are systematically monitored and recorded through both the PAD and the Record of External Placement Hours, ensuring transparency and accountability in relation to practice learning requirements.
60. Together, both documentary evidence and evidence from the visit, which included feedback from the students, provided assurance that both programme routes meet the required practice learning hours in accordance with NMC Standards for Nursing Associate registration. The distinction between supernumerary and protected learning time is clearly articulated and operationalised in a manner that supports regulatory compliance and student development across both pathways.
61. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that UCLan has appropriate arrangements in place for Standard 3: Practice learning to enable the NMC standards to be met.

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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	Ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3	Ensure they inform the NMC of the name of the registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the education programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4	Provide students with constructive feedback throughout the programme to support their development.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	Ensure throughout the programme that students meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.6	Ensure that all programmes include a health numeracy assessment related to nursing associate proficiencies and calculation of medicines which must be passed with a score of 100%.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.7	Assess students to confirm proficiency in preparation for professional practice as a nursing associate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.8	Ensure that there is equal weighting in the assessment of theory and practice.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.9	Ensure that all proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which must demonstrate the achievement of proficiencies and skills as set out in Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Findings

62. The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this standard including the SONM Academic development programme, PADs, Work based Learning Handbook, module descriptors, assessment documents, Collaborative Provision Policy and procedures, person specifications, CVs, JDs, College policies (including professional learning and continuing professional development (CPD) policy) and met with the programme team and senior staff, students, practice learning and employer partners.
63. With regard to Standard 4, the visitor team reviewed evidence that demonstrates the clear alignment of the programme with the Standards Framework for Nursing and Midwifery Education (SFNME), particularly in relation to staff training and development. These documents confirm that staff involved in the delivery of the programme receive appropriate preparation for their academic roles, ensuring they are equipped to support student learning, supervision, and assessment effectively. This supports the maintenance of high standards in teaching and contributes to student success and progression. Programme and management staff the visitor team met gave assurances about the opportunities and pathways for staff CPD that

were available and confirmed that the same opportunities would be provided for the partner College provision. Moreover, there is opportunity for College staff to shadow the fitness to practise Investigating Officer highlighting parity around staff training and support.

64. The apprenticeship Programme Handbook further outlines the required Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs) aligned with NMC registration requirements. This ensures that the apprenticeship pathway is robust, meets regulatory expectations, and prepares students for safe and effective practice.
65. Course Management Team meetings and Course Review meetings' Terms of Reference and support materials provide assurance of ongoing quality monitoring. These meetings include formalised agendas and structured action plans to address areas for development. This systematic approach to course review demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement and the enhancement of the student experience. Programme and management staff the visitor team met confirmed that UCLan will maintain responsibility for overall programme quality and work closely with the College to embed QA processes. These arrangements are governed by UCLan's Academic Regulations and quality assurance procedures, ensuring consistency and regulatory compliance across all sites of delivery, this further includes reviews undertaken by the external examiner report as a quality monitoring mechanism.
66. With regard to Standards 4.2 and 4.3, as referenced in section 2.7 and supported by evidence previously submitted during Gateway 2, which remains unchanged for this modification, the programme demonstrates ongoing compliance with the NMC Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (SSSA). PADs and handbooks provide detailed information on the implementation of SSSA roles, including clear definitions and expectations for PAs, PSs, and AAs. These roles are effectively embedded in the programme to support safe, structured and supportive student learning in practice environments. The visitor team was further able to ascertain from students that the clinical placement sites with regards to the skillset and knowledge of PAs and PSs were safe and effective with students receiving adequate supervision.
67. Evidence of reasonable adjustment processes is provided through the Belonging at UCLan statement, which sets out the institutional approach to identifying and addressing additional learning needs. This is further supported by UCLan's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) framework, which ensures that adjustments are made in accordance with legislative requirements and best practice standards. The PARE placement document also supports this by facilitating oversight of student support needs within the practice environment. Students the visitor team met described the level of support they receive, including academic, pastoral, mental health and further career options and the visitor team found this to be a feature of **good practice (GP4)**.
68. The visitor team confirmed that the NAPAD is consistently used for the assessment of practice learning and remains the core tool for recording student progress against NMC proficiencies. This, combined with previously submitted Gateway 2 evidence, affirms UCLan's continued compliance with SSSA requirements.
69. Additional support for this standard is demonstrated through the College professional learning and CPD policy, which outlines staff training and development within the College professional learning context. This document evidences the commitment of both UCLan and the College to ensuring staff involved in student learning, both

academic and practice-based, are appropriately prepared for their roles, further enhancing the quality of supervision and assessment across the programme. PLPs the visitor team met who included both practice education facilitators and ward-based PAs confirmed the training and preparation they received for the role, and how UCLan provided support when they had issues with students in practice.

70. In respect of Standard 4.4, the evidence submitted demonstrates that UCLan has in place a structured and comprehensive approach to student assessment, underpinned by clear policies and aligned with NMC standards. The Standards of Feedback for Written Assignments outlines the expectations regarding the quality and timeliness of feedback provided to students. This ensures consistency in the marking process and supports student development through constructive and actionable commentary and the visitor team found this to be a feature of **good practice (5)**.
71. Further evidence is provided in the form of module descriptors, including Module NU1315 (Level 4), which highlights the use of heutagogical principles within the learning design. This approach encourages self-determined learning and places an expectation on students to actively engage with learning opportunities beyond scheduled content, supporting the development of autonomy and reflective practice. This included a 'feedback literacy scale' and tailored support from personal tutors.
72. The PADs and the FdSc Nursing Associate Direct Entry Handbook detail the range of assessment modes used throughout the programme. These include both theoretical and practice-based assessments, with clear guidance on how assessment is conducted and the support mechanisms available to students. This ensures that students are adequately prepared for assessment and aware of the resources available to support their academic and professional development. Students the visitor team met confirmed that they received timely support and summative and formative feedback and feedforward in order to help them prepare for submissions, and to develop future submissions from submitted assessments. Both UCLan and the College were able to detail the level of both personalised and strategic support available for the student body. Students can use the University Report and Support process, and for those who are reluctant to come forward, UCLan has anonymised systems also.
73. The Assessment Strategy provides further assurance by mapping assessments across the programme plan. This document confirms that assessments are appropriately distributed and aligned with module learning outcomes and programme aims. Collectively, these documents provide the visitor team with assurance that assessment is robust, varied, and supported by a coherent framework that enables students to achieve the required standards of proficiency and academic performance.
74. With regard to Standard 4.5, the FdSc Nursing Associate Proficiencies Mapping Document provides comprehensive evidence that all programme modules have been systematically mapped against the NMC Standards of Proficiency for Nursing Associates. This ensures that the curriculum is structured to support students in meeting all required outcomes for safe and effective practice.
75. Further assurance is provided through the NAPADs, which detail how each proficiency must be achieved in practice and formally signed off in accordance with the SSSA. These documents demonstrate a rigorous approach to practice assessment and confirm that successful completion of all elements of the programme leads to the achievement of the required standards.

76. Additional supporting evidence is presented in the module descriptors and the Assessment Strategy, which clearly outline where health numeracy is assessed within the programme. Specifically, the requirement for students to achieve a pass mark of 100% in an in-class test is embedded in Module NU2366 (Level 5). This reflects the NMC's stipulation for numerical competence in relation to medicines management and provides assurance that students are assessed to a safe standard prior to registration. In discussions with the programme team, the visitor team explored the entry level numeracy qualifications, support for numeracy learning in-programme and the methods of assessment and gained further assurance that this standard was met.
77. In respect of Standard 4.6, evidence the visitor team reviewed outlines where in the programme the health numeracy assessment is placed and outlines that the final pass mark of 100% in an in-class test must be achieved in Module NU2366.
78. With regard to Standard 4.7, the evidence reviewed by the visitor team confirms that the programme effectively supports students in achieving the required proficiencies for registration as Nursing Associates. The programme specification outlines the overall structure, aims, and requirements of the programme, providing a clear framework within which student proficiency is developed and assessed.
79. PADs, module descriptors and the Assessment Strategy collectively demonstrate how student achievement of proficiency is embedded across both academic and practice components of the programme. These documents set out how assessments are aligned to the NMC Standards of Proficiency for Nursing Associates and how they are used to measure student progress and capability throughout the programme.
80. The England NAPAD Ongoing Achievement Record (OAR) provides a structured mechanism for recording and tracking proficiency development over time. It offers a longitudinal view of student performance and ensures that all required outcomes are documented, verified, and signed off in accordance with the SSSA. The programme team, students and PLPs were able to confirm that student progress is tracked, recorded, and acted upon in a timely manner through practice documentation.
81. Together, this evidence alongside discussion with the programme team during the visit provides assurance to the visitor team that students are appropriately prepared for professional practice and that their proficiency is formally confirmed prior to registration as a nursing associate.
82. With regard to Standard 4.8, evidence the visitor team reviewed, including the programme specification, module descriptors, and Assessment Strategy, demonstrates that the programme maintains an integrated approach with equal weighting between theory and practice, in line with NMC requirements. The credit structure across the modules confirms that students undertake balanced learning in both academic and practice settings, supporting the integrated development of knowledge, skills, and professional behaviours.
83. The module descriptors further provide clarity on the credit value of individual modules and confirm how these contribute to the overall award. They also include detailed information on learning outcomes, assessment methods, and indicative content, ensuring transparency and consistency in programme delivery. During discussions, the programme team was able to confirm the rationale for the credit structure and detail how modules were set out to ensure a connected learning

experience.

84. Additionally, the handbooks articulate the award criteria and align with the information set out in the programme specification, reinforcing the standards students must meet to progress and successfully complete the programme. This collective evidence provides assurance that the credit structure and award requirements are clearly defined, appropriately balanced, and in full compliance with regulatory expectations.
85. In respect of Standard 4.9, evidence reviewed by the visitor team, including the England NAPAD OAR, previously validated at Gateway 2 and unchanged for this modification, demonstrates that student proficiency is recorded systematically throughout the programme. These documents serve as a formal and structured record of the proficiencies and clinical skills achieved by students during their practice learning experiences.
86. The OAR provides a longitudinal record of progress, enabling AAs, PSs, and PAs to track development against the NMC Standards of Proficiency for Nursing Associates. This ensures that students meet the required outcomes prior to completion of the programme and registration. Meetings with the programme team confirmed how and where proficiencies are recorded, and PLPs confirmed that the record of proficiencies was managed through the NAPAD and OAR.
87. This system of ongoing assessment and documentation is in full compliance with the programme requirements and the SSSA, providing assurance to the visitor team that student proficiency is appropriately recorded, monitored, and confirmed.
88. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that UCLan has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 4: Supervision and assessment to enable the NMC standards to be met.

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 award for a nursing associate programme is a Foundation Degree of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (England), which is typically two years in length.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Notify students during the programme that they have five years in which to register their award with the NMC. In the event of a student failing to register their qualification within five years they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as is specified in our standards to register their award.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Findings

89. UCLan's academic regulations and the programme specification confirm the nursing associate programme to be a Level 5 Foundation Degree award comprising 240 credits and the standard course duration as two years.
90. In considering Standards 5.1 and 5.2, the visitor team saw evidence within the relevant programme handbooks that students are notified during the programme that they have five years in which to register their award with the NMC, and that in the event of them failing to register their qualification within this timeframe they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain further experience.
91. The evidence reviewed by the visitor team demonstrates that Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded is met in that the programme is in line with the Regulated Qualifications Framework (England) and students are notified of the period of registration.

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