



Nursing and Midwifery Council Quality Assurance Review

Major Modification Report for:

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

Nursing Associate

University of Cumbria

February 2025

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Key institutional and programme details

Name and location of Approved Education Institution (AEI)	University of Cumbria Fusehill Street Carlisle CA1 2HH				
AEI Institution Identifier [UKPRN]	10007842				
Name and location of academic delivery partner(s) if not the AEI noted above	None				
Name of new employer partners for apprenticeships	There are no new employer partners				
Approval type	Major modification				
Name of programme					
NMC Programme Title	AEI Programme Title (in full)	Academic level	Apprentice-ship	Full-time	Part-time
Nursing Associate	FdSc Nursing Associate	England, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 5		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nursing Associate	FdSc Nursing Associate (Higher Level Apprenticeship)	England, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed programme start date	1 September 2025				
Standard(s) under assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part 3: Standards for nursing associates				
Date of visit	12 February 2025				
Visitor team	Registrant Visitors: Mrs Karen Hibbert Mr John Freeman Lay Visitor: Dr John Byrom				

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) or Education Institution (EI) programme approval panel. All evidence submitted by the AEI or EI is reviewed by the visitors.

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

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 conjoint visit with the University of Cumbria's approval panel took place on 12 February 2025.

Context for the review

This review coincides with the University of Cumbria's (UoC's) five-year periodic review of programmes and its revised Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. The conjoint panel simultaneously scrutinised nursing associate programmes and pre-registration nursing programmes (all four fields) alongside their related apprenticeship routes.

The modifications proposed include the introduction of additional 40-credit modules (to replace some 20-credit modules) and a change to assessment methods to provide a greater range of assessment types and a more authentic approach to assessment.

Other minor changes to modules were proposed as quality enhancement initiatives, such as the strengthening of digital literacy and use of technology; strengthening Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives throughout the curriculum; and responding to stakeholder engagement. These minor changes would ordinarily be reported through the annual self-reporting process.

The implementation date of 1 September 2025 is for both new and continuing students. Continuing students will transfer to the new programme as they enter year two of the nursing associate programme. UoC has undertaken a full mapping of the existing and new programmes to ensure all learning outcomes and standards can be met for transferring students. Students who have taken leave of absence will join the new programme at an appropriate point and have their learning mapped to the new programme to ensure nothing is missed.

The programme team has worked extensively with all the stakeholders to evaluate current provision and make appropriate changes. Evidence was provided of both the consultation process and events, and the impact the consultations had on the revised programme. Impact

of consultations includes increased engagement with, and involvement of, people who use services and their carers (PSCs) at all stages of the student and programme lifecycle.

In terms of representation during the visit, the visitor team met with the programme team, senior managers of both the UoC and trusts (Director of Nursing or similar level position), Practice Education Facilitators and Practice Education Managers from a range of practice learning partners (PLPs) and education partners (EPs), and a diverse range of PSCs. As this visit was in conjunction with the review of pre-registration nursing programmes, just over a dozen students participated of whom three were nursing associate apprenticeship students.

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor team 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 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 UoC's 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/EI only
C1	Address the list of housekeeping updates to internal documentation as outlined in the UoC's minutes of the conjoint panel.			AEI only
Date for all conditions to be met to meet intended delivery date		5 March 2025		

Joint conditions relate to both NMC standards and the AEI/EI's 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(s)	NMC only/ Joint	AEI/EI only
R1	Produce an action plan to support wider engagement of people who use services and their carers (PSCs) in the ongoing development of programmes and in working directly with students in learning, teaching and assessment activity.	2.1, 4.1	Joint	
R2	Produce a three-to-five-year strategy for the development of Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Interprofessional Learning (IPL) within pre-registration nursing and pre-registration nursing associate programmes.	2.1	Joint	
R3	Undertake further communication with current students so they understand and have had further opportunity to ask questions about the transition to the new provision. Pay particular attention also to working with employers to promote the clarity and accuracy of information			AEI only

	about progression routes and the transition to the new provision for Higher Level Apprenticeship learners.			
R4	Review the communication about practice learning allocation, to reassure transferring students that they will have the opportunity to achieve all the required proficiencies by the end of their programmes.			AEI only
R5	Undertake a review of the student experience on different campuses and, where necessary, develop mechanisms to ensure that there is parity and, where possible, uniformity of student experience and opportunity across all campuses.			AEI only

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)	NMC only/ Joint
GP1	The strong partnership working arrangements with both trusts and practice learning colleagues that have led to a high degree of faith in the integrity of the awards and the commitment of the programme team to continuing partnership working.	2.1	Joint
GP2	The initiative to share UoC facilities with community groups which has developed relationships with PSCs and facilitated community involvement.	2.1	Joint

Response to AEI only conditions

The response to UoC 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	Address the list of housekeeping updates to internal documentation as outlined in the UoC's minutes of the conjoint panel.	The Chair of the conjoint panel confirmed via email dated 3 March 2025 that condition C1 has been met. The visitor team considers that for condition C1, the UoC has fully addressed the requirements of the condition and therefore condition C1 is met.

The visitor team considers that all conditions have been satisfactorily addressed resulting in the team being able to confirm that all required standards are met.

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor team to the NMC, following consideration of the AEI/EI 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

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	<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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 (RPL) metrics

UoC's academic regulations clearly state that for awards of more than 120 credits RPL is permissible for up to two-thirds of a programme except where public, statutory, and regulatory body (PSRB) regulations are different, in which case PSRB regulations will take precedence. Therefore, the 50% maximum applies other than for NMC-registered nurses where exemptions of up to 66% of the award are permitted under RPL.

All applications for RPL for this programme are assessed by the external examiner.

Findings

1. The majority of the standards in this section remain unchanged by this modification. However, as UoC submitted updated documentation against some standards, the visitor team considered a range of evidence for the purpose of cross-checking and currency and met with the programme team to explore these standards further. Programme specifications, programme handbooks and academic regulations were reviewed to ensure admissions requirements and processes were accurately reflected. Staff CVs were checked and the visitor team confirmed that there are appropriate registrants able to provide the declarations of good health and character.
2. In considering Standard 1.6 the visitor team explored the enhancements to improving students' ability in numeracy, literacy, digital literacy and the use of technology throughout the programme. The programme team outlined UoC's updated staff development strategy which has mandatory digital development for staff (Digital Badges) to support staff developing and incorporating digital and technological skills within programmes.
3. Within the programme team's presentation, academic skills and digital literacy were highlighted as 'golden threads' throughout Levels 4 and 5. The visitor team reviewed the indicative module content on NASS4001 Foundations of Nursing Associate Practice and confirms that it includes a range of topics relevant to digital technology, communication and the development of associated skills.
4. Throughout the programme, numeracy is developed through the NHS SN@P programme with numeracy tests of increasing difficulty applied progressively during the programme. Literacy skills are developed from induction onwards and are further enhanced through the different genres of academic writing students are exposed to.
5. The range of different assessments being introduced includes a portfolio, set exercises, and greater use of presentations and oral assessments. Together these should enable the further development of verbal fluency and digital and technological skills. The majority of these assessments use lived experiences and case studies, which makes the assessments authentic and relevant to nursing practice. The final portfolio includes an individual learning analysis, a future development action plan and feedback from a variety of stakeholders, such as PSCs, peers, practice supervisors and so on. These changes are in line with the UoC LTA plan.

6. A newly appointed Royal Literary Society Fellow is available to support healthcare students two days per week (by appointment), a Learning Developer is available to support those for whom English is a second language and a Functional Skills Tutor is available for one-to-one support (face-to-face or online) and this support includes digital literacy skills.
7. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that the UoC has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression to enable the NMC standards 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.	<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

The Programme Planner states there are 1,177.5 theory hours and 1,185 practice learning hours (of which 200 are simulated practice learning hours, as approved in August 2023).

The total number of learning hours is: 2,362.5 which slightly exceeds the minimum requirement of 2,300 hours.

The minimum requirement of 1,150 theory and practice hours to provide the required 50:50 ratio of theory to practice is met.

The programme length for both direct entry and apprenticeship students is two years, full-time.

Findings

8. The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this section of the standards including stakeholder consultation documents, programme specifications and handbooks, exemplar programme planners, module descriptors and a mapping of the nursing associate programme outcomes to the standards of proficiency. The visitor team met with all the stakeholder groups to discuss their involvement in the development of the modifications.
9. In considering Standard 2.1 the visitor team reviewed consultation documents and presentations for employer and placement partners, people who use services and their carers (PSCs), students and external academics. The visitor team considers that these provide evidence of extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholders in the co-production of the modifications. This engagement was confirmed by all the stakeholder groups met during the visit who were able to provide examples of where they felt they were listened to and valued. For example, students had requested deconflicting the hand-in dates for assessments to reduce what they considered pressure points in the calendar and this has been implemented. The PSCs reported a growing engagement with the programme throughout the modification process including reviewing applicant interview questions and input to module content and learning outcomes to ensure the carer perspective is heard within the curriculum.
10. The PLP and EP representatives reported that the level of partnership working and engagement with the programme team has resulted in a high degree of faith in the integrity of the awards made to students. The visitor team noted as **good practice (GP1)** the strong partnership working arrangements with both trusts and practice learning colleagues that have led to a high degree of faith in the integrity of the awards and the commitment of the programme team to continuing partnership working.
11. The PSCs' representatives reported that the UoC has made significant efforts to engage with community organisations and PSCs and that the UoC's initiative to make university facilities available to community groups has resulted in an increased level of engagement and enthusiasm to become involved in programme development and delivery. The visitor team noted as **good practice (GP2)** the initiative to share UoC facilities with community groups which has developed relationships with PSCs and facilitated community involvement.
12. To capitalise on this increased engagement the visitor team also identified a joint **recommendation (R1)** to produce an action plan to support wider engagement of PSCs in the ongoing development of programmes and in working directly with students in learning, teaching and assessment activity.
13. The visitor team explored with the programme team and students how the identity of nursing associate students and pre-registration degree nursing students (all four fields) is developed and valued in the teaching of shared modules. The programme team stated that students are encouraged to share and reflect on their placement experiences with each other to support interprofessional learning/education. While

the students clearly appreciate the cross-programme and cross-field learning, they all expressed the view that they would like to see more specialisation in respect of their own learning and career aims. This led to a further joint **recommendation (R2)** to produce a three-to-five-year strategy for the development of Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Interprofessional Learning (IPL) within pre-registration nursing and pre-registration nursing associate programmes.

14. In considering Standard 2.2 there has been no change to the UoC's overall approach to the standards for student supervision and assessment as a result of this modification, other than the changes to theory assessments outlined under Standard 1.6 above. The visitor team reviewed the programme specification, the practice learning handbook and the programme handbook, and further discussed elements of this with stakeholders to triangulate between the documented evidence and the understanding of stakeholders. Based on the evidence provided the visitor team considers that the programmes comply with this standard.
15. In considering Standard 2.3 the visitor team reviewed Mapping Document NA 2025 and confirms that the programme learning outcomes are mapped appropriately to the standards of proficiency for nursing associates. The visitor team also reviewed the arrangements for the transfer of current students to the new programme and was satisfied that the mapping arrangements are sufficiently robust to ensure transferring students will be able to meet all learning outcomes and standards, and that appropriate arrangements for allocation of practice learning experiences are in place. However, students expressed some concern about the transfer arrangements and this led to two UoC-only **recommendations (R3 and R4)** around ensuring additional communication with continuing students on the transition arrangements.
16. In considering Standard 2.4 the visitor team reviewed the new programme presentation, the programme handbook, the critical review document, the validation briefing document and the annual monitoring reviews. The documentary evidence shows that this modification reduces the current six theory modules each year to four. Levels 4 and 5 will each have two twenty-credit modules, two forty-credit modules, and one practice module (no credit). Four of the modules in the programme are Nursing Associate specific with the remaining four modules shared with pre-registration nursing students.
17. The four shared modules cover biological sciences, perspectives and determinants of health and wellbeing, decision making, and therapeutic interventions. The Nursing Associate specific level 4 module (NASS4001) covers the key principles that underpin Nursing Associate practice, with the level 5 modules (NASS5022, NASS5003, NASS5004) covering the development of Nursing Associate practice in acute care, analysis of the principles and priorities of care in a range of care contexts and analysis of organisational and teamwork theory influencing healthcare delivery. The programme team was able to give a clear rationale for the changes to the programme and the visitor team considers that the content and assessment of changed modules continue to provide an appropriate breadth of experience for a non-specific nursing associate programme across the lifespan and in a variety of settings.
18. In considering Standard 2.5 the visitor team reviewed the programme specification, the programme handbook, the academic modules and learning outcomes, the operating guide and the mapping document. The evidence provided clearly shows students on this programme are able to achieve all the standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes.

19. In considering Standard 2.6 the visitor team reviewed the programme handbook, the programme specification, the operating guide and the exemplar programme planner. The documentation clearly demonstrates the programme is two years long and meets the minimum requirements for the programme hours with 1,185 practice hours and 1,177.5 theory hours.
20. In considering Standard 2.7 the visitor team reviewed the operating guide and discussed the range of learning and teaching strategies employed across the programme. The visitor team confirms that there is an equal balance of theory and practice across the programme and that the learning and teaching strategies include face-to-face, asynchronous/synchronous, simulation, simulated practice learning (SPL), digital platforms and practice learning experiences.
21. In considering Standard 2.8 the visitor team reviewed the operating guide and the validation briefing document. As part of practice experiences, UoC will continue to deliver 200 hours of SPL as per the previous approval. SPL will be allocated across the programme to enhance practice learning opportunity experience. This enables learners to practise skills in a safe environment, to get exposure to clinical skills and scenarios that they may find difficult to experience in practice and to allow some further interprofessional learning opportunities. The addition of 200 SPL hours was approved through a modification in August 2023. The documentary evidence identifies the use of technology to develop the learners across the curriculum. This includes the use of the virtual learning environment, PARE, clinical skills.net, and SN@P. The programme team and stakeholders confirmed the use of technology and simulation across the curriculum to support learning and assessment.
22. The nursing associate programme is not integrated within another qualification of the UoC therefore Standard 2.9 is not applicable.
23. The discussion with students about their experience of the curriculum delivery highlighted some differences in delivery between the different campuses of the UoC. The visitor team was confident that all students have equity of opportunity to meet the learning outcomes and NMC standards irrespective of campus location although this discussion did result in a UoC-only **recommendation (R5)** to explore the parity of student experience further.
24. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that the UoC has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 2: Curriculum to enable the NMC standards 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 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

Direct entry students (Option A) and apprenticeship students (Option B) are full-time students and follow the same pattern of delivery for theory and practice learning.

Direct entry students (Option A) are always supernumerary in practice learning.

Apprenticeship students (Option B) are released for 1,177.5 hours for theory (which is just under 50% of the total learning hours of 2,362.5 and in excess of the minimum 20% of the total learning hours).

A typical apprentice will spend 540 hours in practice with their own employer as protected learning time (22% of the total learning hours) and are released for 645 hours for external practice placements (27% of the total learning hours, in excess of the minimum threshold of 20% of the total learning time). This time is spent as a supernumerary.

Findings

25. The standards in this section remain unchanged by this modification. However, as UoC provided updated documentation against the standards, the visitor team considered a range of evidence for the purpose of cross-checking and currency.
26. In considering Standards 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, the visitor team reviewed the Practice Learning Handbook FDS Nursing Associate 2024/25, the Critical Review Registered Nursing and Nursing Associate document and the Operating Guide – Apprenticeships: Nursing Associate and met with students and practice education facilitators and practice education managers from a range of PLPs and EPs.
27. The documentary evidence and discussion with stakeholders demonstrate a hub and spoke model is promoted so that learners gain as many experiences as they can in clinical practice, working with a range of social and healthcare practitioners to gain a better understanding of the role of other healthcare professionals and to gain a better understanding of the patient journey across differing departments and services. The allocation process for practice learning opportunities is unchanged from the original approval. Documents indicate appropriate practice learning opportunities are provided to give care to a range of people across the lifespan.
28. A clear process for the development of practice learning support plans for reasonable adjustments is in place. Students and PLPs/EPs were able to provide examples of how the reasonable adjustments process works and the students the visitor team met who had practice learning support plans in place stated that they feel well supported. The students reported that the intervention of their personal tutor to help secure support in practice learning was rarely required. The PLPs/EPs cited the use of additional laptops, dictaphones and a BSL interpreter to support students on placement and how absences are monitored to highlight any potential undisclosed/unknown issues.
29. Protected learning time (PLT) is recorded electronically through timesheets and monitored through the tripartite progress review (TPR) meetings. Employed students commented that sometimes it is difficult to get their PLT but that they fully expect to complete this by the end of the programme. The students commented that they know who to contact if they are having any issues and feel well supported by the programme team.
30. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that the UoC has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 3: Practice learning to enable the NMC standards to be met.

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.	<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

31. The standards in this section remain unchanged by this modification. However, as UoC provided updated documentation for this section of the standards, the visitor team considered a range of evidence for the purpose of cross-checking and currency.
32. For Standards 4.1-4.9 the visitor team reviewed the practice learning handbook, the programme handbook, the operating guide, mapping document NA 2025, the practice assessment documents and the critical review. The visitor team also met with the programme team, PSCs, and practice education facilitators and practice education managers from a range of PLPs and EPs.
33. In considering Standard 4.1 the visitor team confirms that the range of programme documentation provided demonstrates the standard has been met and noted that there was scope to capitalise on increased engagement of stakeholders (see recommendation R1).

34. In considering Standard 4.2 the visitor team identified a potential issue from the Critical Review Registered Nursing and Nursing Associate, which referred to some practice assessors lacking confidence to assess specific proficiencies. The visitor team discussed this with the programme team and the PLPs/EPs who expressed confidence that the CPD strategies already in place to ensure all registrants have the opportunity to update and maintain their NMC revalidation requirements were appropriate. The visitor team was further assured that there are strategies in place to ensure all students have the opportunity to complete all their proficiencies.
35. With the assurance relating to the competence and confidence of practice assessors, the visitor team considers that the documentary evidence confirms that the standards for student supervision and assessment are met. The programme team's and stakeholders' descriptions of the processes to ensure practice supervisors, practice assessors and academic assessors are appropriately prepared for their roles triangulated with the documentary evidence. The placement education facilitators (PEFs) outlined how they work with the UoC to ensure students have the necessary variety of placement experiences with qualified practice supervisors and practice assessors available. The PEFs confirmed that UoC provides face-to-face training for practice assessors and practice supervisors and that there are in-house support programmes from the PLPs/EPs to support registrants to meet the requirements of revalidation. Students were clear that they know who their practice supervisors, practice assessors and academic assessors are and that this is recorded on the practice assessment record and evaluation system (PARE) and further that they know who to contact if they have a concern or need support.
36. In considering Standard 4.3 the visitor team confirms that the programme leader is a registered nurse, and this information is correctly recorded on QA Link.
37. In considering Standard 4.4, students, the programme team and the PLPs/EPs were all able to confirm that students have their first tripartite progress review (TPR) within the first four weeks. This is within the first theory block and is undertaken by the personal tutor. Subsequent TPRs are scheduled every three months, four times per year. These regular meetings monitor progress, and the tripartite system allows for dialogue between academic assessors, students and the practice supervisor and/or practice assessor about progress and expected levels of achievement at different stages of the programme. The documentation identifies that students receive feedback on their summative assessments and practice placements, and the students informed the visitor team that they feel well supported.
38. In considering Standards 4.5 and 4.7 the documentary evidence shows that the programme is mapped to the standards of proficiency for nursing associates. The proficiencies are assessed through the summative assessments in theory and practice and all proficiencies must be achieved to complete the programme and be eligible to register with the NMC.
39. In considering Standard 4.6 the documentary evidence indicates a health numeracy assessment and calculation of medicines with a pass mark of 100% in two modules. The SN@P numeracy assessment is undertaken as part of Part 2 practice assessment and therefore has no academic credits assigned to it.
40. In considering Standard 4.8 the Programme Handbook NA Apprenticeship clearly identifies the ratio of theory to practice as 50:50.
41. In considering Standard 4.9 the visitor team considers that the practice assessment document (PAD) and ongoing achievement record have not changed since the

original approval and that the PAD is mapped directly to the standards of proficiency for nursing associates.

42. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that the UoC has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 4: Supervision and assessment to enable the NMC standards 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 award for a nursing associate programme is a Foundation Degree of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (England), which is typically two years in length.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Findings

43. Arrangements for the award of qualifications for programmes have not changed as a result of the modification and therefore this standard was not considered.

QAA2893 – R14846 – March 25

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