



Nursing and Midwifery Council Quality Assurance Review

Programme Approval Report for:

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

Nursing Associate

Leeds Trinity University

January 2025

Contents

Key institutional and programme details	1
Executive summary	2
Conditions and recommendations	3
Conditions	3
Recommendations for enhancement.....	3
Statements of good practice.....	4
Response to conditions.....	4
Explanation of findings for Part 3	5
Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression.....	5
Standard 2: Curriculum	9
Response to conditions.....	13
Standard 3: Practice learning	15
Standard 4: Supervision and assessment	18
Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded.....	22

Key institutional and programme details

Name and location of Approved Education Institution (AEI)	Leeds Trinity University Brownberrie Lane Horsforth Leeds LS18 5HD				
AEI Institution Identifier [UKPRN]	10003863				
Name and location of academic delivery partner(s) if not the AEI noted above	Not applicable				
Name of employer partners for apprenticeships	Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust Airedale NHS Foundation Trust Leeds Community Healthcare Trust				
Approval type	Programme approval				
Name of programme					
NMC Programme Title	AEI/EI Programme Title (in full)	Academic level	Apprentice-ship	Full-time	Part-time
Nursing Associate	Foundation Degree Nursing Associate (Apprentice-ship)	England, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Proposed programme start date	28 April 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				
Date of visit	22 January 2025				
Visitor team	Registrant Visitors: Jenny Pinfield, Anthony Young Lay Visitor: David Wooff				

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 AEI approval panel took place on 22 January 2025 and the approval panel met with representatives from practice learning partners and employers (NHS England, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust, Airedale NHS Foundation Trust, Leeds Community Healthcare Trust), representatives of people who use services and their carers and students from cognate provision.

Context for the review

In responding to a regional and national workforce shortage and skills gap, Leeds Trinity University (LTU) proposes the approval of a new Nursing Associate programme leading to a Foundation Degree Nursing Associate (Apprenticeship).

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor team to the NMC, following consideration of the AEI/EI 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/EI only
C1	Provide signed statement(s) of commitment from employer partners to demonstrate apprenticeship governance arrangements between employers and LTU are in place for the start of the programme and to provide assurance of the viability of projected numbers for the first cohort and the mitigation to protect the learning experience in the possible event of apprentice withdrawals.	Part 3 2.1 (Part 1, 2.1)	Joint	
C2	Review the place of use of the simulated practice learning and update the documentation accordingly as simulated practice learning is not covered by the standards and cannot be counted in practice learning.	3.4; 2.8	Joint	
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	Consider developing a formal process to manage DBS and occupational health requirements when they are undertaken by employer partners.	1.2	NMC only	
R2	Consider closer partnership working with employer partners in co-producing the nursing associate programme, recognising their role as employers and not practice learning partners.	2.1	NMC only	

R3	Update documentation for publication, including a review of language and terminology to ensure narratives are apprentice(ship)-centric throughout and provide clarity on how and where off-the-job learning hours were to be logged by apprentices.			AEI only
R4	Provide a supplementary document that mapped the KSBs to module learning outcomes in line with identified good practice in the apprenticeship sector.			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
	None		

Response to conditions

The visitor team reviewed in full the responses and evidence from the AEI to the conditions set. The findings of the visitor team with regard to responses to individual conditions are recorded in the main body of this report.

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 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
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

Recognition of prior learning is permitted to a maximum of 50%. This equates to 120 points of credit at Level 4.

Findings

1. The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this standard including admissions policies, procedures and forms, programme documents, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and occupational health documentation and student support documentation. The visitor team also met with the programme team and senior staff, students and practice learning partners and employers.
2. In considering Standard 1.1 the visitor team found that the Admissions Policy together with the programme specification show that LTU in collaboration with employer partners confirms on entry to the programme that students meet the specified entry criteria which include clearly specified requirements for numeracy and literacy skills. Satisfying these requirements is deemed to be sufficient to demonstrate capability to develop the numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes. Suitable applicants with strong work experience who do not meet the literacy entry requirements complete a writing task to assess their capability in literacy. Entry criteria also include requirements for proficiency in English language for applicants whose first language is not English and who have not been educated in the UK. The requirements in the programme specification are reflected in the annex of the updated Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. All applicants undertake a skills scan where apprenticeship standard duties are mapped and cross-referenced to relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) to help determine suitability for the programme. Employer partners undertake an initial screening of applications to ensure they meet these entry requirements and will shortlist suitable applicants. The scored interview form and values-based interview questions, developed with employer partners, are used to assess applicants' values and their capacity to develop behaviours in accordance with the Code.
3. With regard to Standard 1.2 the visitor team established that the programme specification outlines the need for students to be of good health and character throughout the programme. From this document it is clear that all offers are subject to occupational health and DBS clearance. On recruitment, students are required to complete an online occupational health questionnaire and undergo an enhanced DBS check. At the visit the visitor team learnt that this requirement was communicated to applicants with the initial information about the programme, which was confirmed by the current students who met the visitor team. LTU's Health Check Guidance and Procedure provides comprehensive information, advice and guidance for students and includes links to NMC Health and Character Guidance and the Higher Education Occupational Physicians and Practitioners (HEOPS) Medical Fitness Standards for Nurse and Midwife Training. Students will also complete an annual health and character self-declaration online as part of the annual re-registration process. If a student has an endorsement on their DBS, the application

is referred to a DBS Concerns Panel for review. If the concern is minor, the admissions process continues. If the concern is significant, the case is dealt with by the Fitness to Practice Committee in accordance with the Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedure which judges if there is any safeguarding risk to determine whether the student is safe to progress. Programme documentation confirms that DBS and occupational health clearance will be managed by employers, although some employer partners were a little unclear about the process. The visitor team therefore makes a **recommendation (R1)** that LTU consider developing a formal process to manage DBS and occupational health requirements when they are undertaken by employer partners.

4. In relation to Standard 1.3 the visitor team found that students are adequately informed of the requirement to declare any cautions or convictions when they complete the health and character declaration for the first time. The declaration form clearly states that it is the responsibility of the student to notify LTU immediately, at any point during their studies, in the event of any untoward incident which may impact a student's professional standing and there is an in-year self-declaration form to report these events. The visitor team concluded that declarations are dealt with fairly and lawfully, as when a student declares any new endorsements or changes to their DBS the same panel consideration process as outlined above (paragraph 3, Standard 1.2.) will be followed. The Fitness to Practice Procedure reminds students that failure to declare will have consequences and LTU reserves the right to suspend or terminate a student's registration for failing to either disclose or address appropriately serious issues which relate to their fitness to practise. Students who met the visitor team confirmed that they are aware of their obligations and that they receive reminders throughout their programme of the need to inform LTU of anything that could impact on their continuance on the programme.
5. With regard to Standard 1.4 the visitor team concluded that a fully completed Practice Assessment Document (PAD) which includes the ongoing record of achievement (ORA) would enable the provision of supporting declarations of health and character for students who have completed the programme prior to entry to the register. This is because the ORA contains the declarations of health and character for each year of study and each student's ORA will be reviewed by the programme leader prior to the final Progression and Award Board to ensure they have met both the programme outcomes and assessment in relation to their studies and the NMC standards in relation to health and character. In addition, the pre-course occupational health questionnaire contains relevant medical information including that relating to vaccinations.
6. In relation to Standard 1.5 the visitor team concluded that the programme permits recognition of prior learning (RPL) that is capable of being mapped to the standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes, up to a maximum of 50% of the programme. This equates to 120 points of specific credit at Level 4 and would allow direct entry into Level 5. Applicants are invited to evidence academic study and practice learning experience from employment or work-related activity which can be mapped against the Level 4 module learning outcomes of the programme, including up to 600 hours of practice. To support this LTU has mapped the programme learning outcomes to the relevant NMC standards of proficiency for nursing associates. The Recognition of Prior Learning Guidelines and Procedures and the Recognition of Prior Learning Request Form are clear that only 50% of the programme can be recognised.
7. Considering Standard 1.6 the visitor team found that students have access to a range of digital technologies which support their theory learning and help to develop

their digital and technological literacy skills. For example, specific software enables them to undertake unlimited self-assessment for drug calculation and to develop their capability in the mathematics and healthcare numeracy skills required to meet the programme outcomes. Additional numeracy support is available from the LTU Learning Hub, which offers support in addition to that provided on the programme. Students who met the visitor team articulated that following initial meetings, the support they received was tailored to their individual needs. When they join the programme a learning training plan identifies any learning needs in relation to literacy and numeracy and an individual action plan of support is created. The skills scan is another tool to help develop numeracy, literacy, digital and technological literacy because it identifies areas for development and growth when joining the programme and subsequently each year together with the amount of new learning the student will need to gain to demonstrate competence in the apprenticeship KSBs. Students also undertake an initial maths and English assessment which shows what level they are currently working at which allows for targeted developmental support throughout their programme.

8. Module descriptors evidence that students have a number of theory and practice learning opportunities relating to the development of numeracy, literacy and digital technology literacy skills. In practice learning students are able to review their skills development through audio/visual technology recordings and are exposed to a range of digitally enhanced simulation technologies. Formative and summative assessments each year support the development of language, numeracy and literacy skills with increasing complexity and through a variety of approaches including practical/written exam, a written assessment (literacy) and an oral presentation (language).
9. Based on the information made available, the team considers that LTU 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
2.1	Ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 provides 2,400 learning hours. Of these, 1,200 hours are theory with 480 hours of direct contact teaching and 720 hours of independent study. There are also 1,200 hours of practice learning, including 720 hours in primary placement and 480 hours in external placements that includes 120 hours of simulated practice learning. The programme will be delivered over two years plus an extra month for the end-point-assessment.

Findings

10. The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this standard including learning and teaching strategies and frameworks, programme and practice learning documentation, mapping documents, notes of stakeholder meetings and contracts and agreements with employers.
11. In relation to Standard 2.1 the visitor team observed that the programme curriculum has been designed to evidence the NMC Code and the NMC standards framework for nursing and midwifery education and a process of mapping the module outcomes and content to the NMC standards of proficiency for nursing associates was undertaken. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework states that LTU engaged with a range of stakeholders across the institution and across the Leeds and Bradford city region to co-create the programme. The People Who Use Services and Carers (PUSC) strategy also discusses co-production of programmes. There is evidence that during the development of the programme LTU engaged via focus groups with current members of the PUSC Group, the current pre-registration nursing student cohort and a Level 5 nursing associate apprentice group from another HEI as well as practice learning partners. The visitor team's meeting with PUSC representatives confirmed good engagement and plans for their involvement in developing, evaluating, delivering, and assessing the programme. They are also involved in recruitment and receive training for involvement in recruitment such as unconscious bias training and confirmed that they complete the same online equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) training as LTU staff. Students who met the visitor team stated that they were involved in the development of the programme and explained how they offer feedback on their current programmes with examples. Nursing students also confirmed that PUSC are involved in the delivery of their programme. All employers present at the visit were practice learning partners (PLPs) and while there is evidence of good partnership working with LTU, there was more limited evidence of co-creating the programme in the role as employer partners. The visitor team therefore **recommends (R2)** that LTU consider closer partnership working with employer partners in co-producing the nursing associates programme, recognising their role as employers and not practice learning partners.
12. At the visit it was confirmed that there is currently only one identified employer partner (Leeds and York Partnership Foundation Trust). The employer partner confirmed that they completed interviews with LTU and will be recruiting six apprentices for the start of the programme in April 2025. Discussions during the visit with other trust partners (Airedale NHS Foundation Trust, Leeds Community Healthcare Trust and Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust) confirmed that they are not yet in a position to confirm plans to send nursing associate apprentices to LTU. However, the programme has a target intake of 25 students in the first year of delivery and the visitor team therefore discussed the viability of a cohort of only six apprentices. Senior leaders and the programme team are committed to delivering a cohort in April 2025, but the visitor team and the AEI panel were concerned about the quality of the learning experience. The visitor team also found that no signed commitment statements from employers were available and, therefore, specified a **condition (C1)** that LTU provide signed statements of commitment from employer partners to demonstrate apprenticeship governance arrangements between employers and LTU are in place for the start of the programme and provide assurance of the viability of projected numbers for the first cohort and the mitigation to protect the learning experience in the possible event of apprentice withdrawals.

13. With regard to Standard 2.2 the visitor team confirmed that student supervision and assessment will be governed by legal agreements between the parties. Practice Learning Agreements stipulate the obligations of LTU and the practice learning partners. Each student will be allocated a Practice Supervisor (PS) and Practice Assessor (PA) within their primary and external placement. The Practice Learning Handbook for students clearly describes the role of PSs, PAs and Academic Assessors (AAs) and the handbook provides detailed information about their roles and responsibilities as well as preparation for placements, the assessment of placement learning, expectations of students when on placement and support available to PSs, PAs and students. Each student will also be assigned an AA. In addition, students will be supported by a workplace mentor from the employer who can help to identify objectives and off-the-job learning opportunities within the workplace. The programme team confirmed that academic assessors are appropriately prepared and supported. Nursing associate apprentices will be allocated a different academic assessor for each part of the programme and in year one they are also the students' personal academic tutor. The AA role is recognised in LTU's workload model. It is clear from the handbooks and supporting documentation that supervisors and assessors will be appropriately trained and there will be ongoing support, including regular updates. Employer partners maintain a database of PSs and PAs and provide in-house training and updates proportionate to their organisational need using the Practice Educator and Assessor Preparation (PEAP) course on the NHS England Learning Hub. Any employer partner lacking an organisational approach to training and support will receive support from LTU to ensure that training and development needs are met.
14. In relation to Standard 2.3 the visitor team found that LTU has mapped the programme and module learning outcomes and content as well as the PAD to the standards of proficiency for nursing associates; this includes mapping of the KSBs at modular level. This ensures that all programme learning outcomes reflect the standards of proficiency.
15. With regard to Standard 2.4 the visitor team found that the programme provides an appropriate breadth of experience for a non-field-specific nursing associate apprenticeship and students will be exposed to all four fields of nursing associate. Theory modules include content relevant to children, young people, adults and people with mental health and learning disability needs. Policy and legislation including safeguarding, consent, capacity, and ethical issues, cover the lifespan. Medicine management and pharmacology content also covers the lifespan and a variety of settings. Specialist software content includes drug calculations relevant to all fields, which will enable students to develop their skills across the lifespan, as well as in specialist nursing associate areas. Within teaching and learning, case studies will be used across all four fields of practice, people of different ages and cultural diversity, and providing care in a range of different settings, such as acute, community, care at home, palliative care, and social care. The placement journey document indicates students have a range of external placements and it is clear what placements they are allocated and what experience they are receiving. External placements will ensure that students experience a range of alternative settings such as primary care, community, social care, accident and emergency. Non-traditional healthcare settings such as educational settings will give students the opportunity to deliver nursing care to patients of all ages with a range of conditions and accommodate all fields of nursing. Placements in specialist services, such as health visiting, school nursing and sexual health services will also provide exposure to the child field. Mental health conditions and learning disabilities are inherent across all nursing fields. Practice learning exposes students to a variety of scenarios across the lifespan in both a six-bed ward and a community living flat. Clinical skills and

simulation equipment has been mapped to the standards of proficiency for nursing associates and includes a range of culturally, gender and age diverse equipment.

16. In considering Standard 2.5 the visitor team found that programme documentation clearly sets out the general and professional content of the programme. The curriculum has been designed to ensure that both theory and practice include general and professional content necessary to meet the standards of proficiency for nursing associates and the programme outcomes because both module and programme learning outcomes and the PAD are mapped against the standards. At Level 4 the curriculum content helps students to develop self-awareness, resilience and professional values and at Level 5 students will lead and manage care, focusing on developing competence in assessing, planning, and delivering safe and compassionate person-centred care. They will have increased responsibility in practice and develop competence in care delivery for people with long-term conditions and complex needs across the lifespan.
17. In relation to Standard 2.6 the visitor team found that programme length and hours are sufficient and permit students to meet the requirements of the standards of proficiency for nursing associates. Programme documentation confirms that the programme will have 2,400 learning hours. Of these, 1,200 hours will be theory with 480 hours of direct contact teaching and 720 hours of independent study. There will be 1,200 hours of practice learning, including 720 hours in primary placement and 480 hours in external placements; 120 hours of simulated practice learning are included in these hours. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework confirms the programme is for two years, plus one month for the end-point-assessment and is a Foundation Degree and apprenticeship.
18. With regard to Standard 2.7 the visitor team confirmed that the programme will provide an equal balance of theory and practice learning, with 1,200 theory hours and 1,200 practice learning; 50% of academic credits are attached to theory modules and 50% to practice learning modules. Learning and teaching strategies will be student-centred, interactive and include a wide variety of learning methods. Programme documentation confirms that the programme is research informed, with LTU's curriculum for social justice threaded through.
19. In relation to Standard 2.8 the visitor team confirmed that technology and simulation will be used to support supervision, learning and assessment. LTU has a Simulation Education Strategy for nursing and the health professions which details the range of modalities and fidelities used. Simulation scenarios provided confirm the operationalisation of simulation and how it is contextualised, including pre and post-simulation activities and debrief. Simulation is not limited to psycho-motor skills but includes a range of other skills and human factors, for example interpersonal, communication, decision-making skills and managing uncertainty. Module descriptors confirm 30 hours of simulated learning in the four practice modules (total 120 hours) to support the development of clinical skills proficiencies and communication and relationship management skills using part-task trainers, role-play, full-body manikins, and ClinicalSkills.net. While the use of simulation in practice learning will enable opportunities for practice, repetition, and reflection, to explore diverse situations and experience infrequent situations, it is not used proportionately because 120 hours of simulated practice learning contribute to external placement hours which is not permitted (see Condition 2, Standard 3.4).

Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that LTU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 2: Curriculum to enable the NMC standards to be met subject to meeting **condition C1**.

Response to conditions

Response to conditions		
No.	Condition details	Findings
C1	Provide signed statement(s) of commitment from employer partners to demonstrate apprenticeship governance arrangements between employers and LTU are in place for the start of the programme and assurance of the viability of projected numbers for the first cohort and the mitigation to protect the learning experience in the possible event of apprentice withdrawals.	<p>For any potential new employer partner LTU will discuss with them the governance that they would be required to commit to in order to support their apprentices in line with NMC Standards for Education and Training of Nursing Associate Apprentices, and employers will be requested to evidence full compliance by signing a commitment statement. A signed commitment statement from the employer who will provide apprentices for the start of the programme was provided.</p> <p>The first cohort will consist of six apprentices and LTU regards this as viable. Credible plans to mitigate the effects on the student learning experience resulting from this smaller cohort size are being put in place. For example, there will be some delivery with the pre-registration nursing students to enhance the learning experience. Should any apprentices withdraw, students will continue to be taught as a group at LTU for their theory. Apprentices will be encouraged to join the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Society and LTU is also linking up with University College Birmingham (UCB) to develop a nursing associates virtual apprentice forum where nursing associates from both LTU and UCB can come together to share experiences from across the country, as well as provide peer support. This could offer a diverse range of perspectives including rural and city and has the potential to broaden the learning experience for all apprentices. It could also help to mitigate against the impact of apprentices withdrawing from the programme and any remaining apprentices not having as much peer learning and support.</p>

		<p>Nursing associates will have support from progress tutors (who are also students' academic assessors) for the duration of the programme and they will work collaboratively with professional support services and the wider apprenticeship team to ensure students are supported from the outset. LTU also uses JISC analytics to monitor student engagement and the lead retention indicator data will enable it to monitor students at risk of withdrawing and operationalising the student engagement policy to support apprentices to stay on the programme and achieve.</p>
--	--	---

Standard 3: Practice learning

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Practice learning requirements

Students will be released for 20% of programme time for academic study (480 hours). They are released for 20% of programme time (480 hours) which is 360 hours of protected learning time on external placement and 120 hours of simulated practice learning. The remaining 60% of protected learning time is made up of 30% (720 hours) of theory and 30% (720 hours) of practice learning in the primary placement.

Findings

20. The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this standard including programme and practice learning policies and related documents and met with the programme team and senior staff, students, practice learning partners and employer partners.
21. With regard to Standard 3.1 the visitor team found that LTU provides sufficient practice learning opportunities to allow students to develop and meet the standards

of proficiency for nursing associates. LTU proposes that students will complete two practice learning modules at each level of the programme with four 30-hour external placements per module. One of them would be diverse simulated learning delivered by LTU. As this is not permitted by the NMC, the visitor team has requested to change this (see Condition 2, Standard 3.4 below). The remainder covers alternative fields, settings, and the lifespan to ensure that students can deliver safe and effective care to a diverse range of people. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework, together with programme and placement documentation, show that students will be exposed to practice learning in a diverse range of settings including pre-conception and maternity care through to post-death care, and provides assurance that a structured approach is taken to ensure students have access to a wide range of care settings. There will be opportunity for reciprocal placement swaps. Students will also have opportunities within external placements to experience practice in other wards, clinics, outpatient departments, and specialist areas of the NHS trust where they are employed. LTU's placements team maintains a database of placement allocations and monitors the student placement journey to ensure each student undertakes external placements with a diverse range of people across the lifespan and in a variety of settings. Staff provided reassurance that if any deficit around experience was noted during assessment, there is opportunity built into the programme to address this.

22. In considering Standard 3.2 it is clear from programme and placement documentation that students will be able to experience the variety of practice expected of nursing associates. This was confirmed in meetings with staff and practice learning partners. The documentation provides assurance that there is sufficient planning to ensure students will experience adult, child, mental health and learning disability fields and there are clear plans to ensure that all age demographics are covered. Reciprocal arrangements are in place across alternate providers. Students met by the visitor team were able to express and rationalise what experiences they would need so that they could meet the holistic needs of people of all ages through their placements and what they would need to do if they could not gain the experience.
23. In relation to Standard 3.3 the visitor team found that institutional support policies and procedures provide sufficient guidance on reasonable adjustments. Students are informed during induction of the support and wellbeing services available at LTU. Disability services offer access to a range of support for students with a disability to ensure they can engage with the programme. In relation to practice learning specifically, the visitor team found that LTU takes account of students' individual needs and personal circumstances when allocating practice learning because any student who declares a disability is seen by the Lead for Practice Education/Practice Learning Facilitator to assess the requirement of a placement inclusion plan (PIP). This may also occur as the result of the mandatory occupational health screening. PIPs are developed in collaboration with the student and are reviewed annually. They are shared with the placement provider if the student gives consent so they can discuss with the student and Lead for Practice Education any adjustments required to support the student's learning. The meeting with PLPs confirmed that they are aware of their responsibilities and reported that PAs and PSs have access to local bespoke training for supporting students as well as to the Practice Educator and Assessor (PEAP) course on the NHS Learning Hub which has modules on supporting students with extra needs. Students confirmed that they are encouraged to declare needs and give permission for this to be shared with practice environments. Students also have the opportunity to appeal placement allocations. If adjustments are not possible the student will be found an alternative external placement which can support their individual needs.

24. In relation to Standard 3.4, option B (work-based learning) applies. The visitor team found that students will be released for 20% of programme time for academic study (480 hours). They are released for 20% of programme time (480 hours) which is 360 hours of protected learning time on external placement and 120 hours for simulated practice learning. The remaining 60% of protected learning time for the programme is made up of 30% (720 hours) of theory and 30% (720 hours) of practice learning in the primary placement. It is clear from the programme documentation that while on external placements there is an expectation for students' full supernumerary status to be upheld. Protected learning time is recorded using timesheets and monitored at progress reviews. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework, programme specification and module descriptors indicate that the 120 hours of simulated practice learning placements contribute to the external placement hours. NMC require a minimum of 460 hours in external placement, and simulated practice learning cannot replace the minimum 20% of hours that should be used for protected learning time in an external practice placement. The visitor team, therefore, specifies a **condition (C2)** that LTU review the place of use of simulated practice learning and update the programme documentation accordingly as simulated practice learning is not covered by the standards and cannot be counted in practice learning.
25. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that LTU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 3: Practice learning to enable the NMC standards to be met subject to meeting **condition C2**.

Response to conditions

Response to conditions		
No.	Condition details	Findings
C2	Review the place of use of simulated practice learning and update the documentation accordingly as simulated practice learning is not covered by the standards and cannot be counted in practice learning.	All programme documentation has been reviewed, and the simulated practice education element has been removed from the external placement hours and embedded within the primary hub placement hours. This now contributes to 15 hours of simulated practice education per 30-credit practice module (60 hours in total across the two years of the programme). As per NMC requirements, all required hours for external placements will be undertaken at the external placements allocated to apprentices. Apprentices will undertake 480 hours of practice in external placement settings (this exceeds the required 460 hours by 20 hours).

Standard 4: Supervision and assessment

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable
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

26. The visitor team considered a range of evidence for this standard including programme and placement documentation, minutes of practice learning governance meetings and other stakeholder meetings and met with the programme team and senior staff, students, practice learning partners and employer partners.
27. With regard to Standard 4.1 the visitor team concluded that the support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC standards framework for nursing and midwifery education. This is because PLPs and other stakeholders have been consulted on the development of the programme with meetings to facilitate feedback and feed forward on the curriculum, assessment and placement allocation. LTU is a member of various regional placement networks and groups that discuss, among other things, issues of placement capacity, audit and evaluation and assessment of students, which facilitates a collaborative approach to practice learning provision. Quarterly regional practice placement review and audit meetings enable ongoing curriculum review and development, identification of placement learning opportunities, placement capacity and student allocation, and the sharing of information related to student progress and responding to fitness for practice issues.

In relation to student support, LTU operates a personal tutor system and the Personal Tutoring Scheme Staff Handbook sets out a framework of core principles for personal tutoring that will apply together with a minimum standard of expectations for all students and staff. Students are encouraged to engage with their learning, own wellbeing and development needs through a range of dedicated support services. During induction and onboarding, students are introduced to support services and these services regularly visit classes across the academic year. Programme documentation clearly describes the role of PSs, PAs and AAs in the support and assessment of students and the training and support available to these staff. The documents also show that students will be prepared before placement with the expectations described.

28. In relation to Standard 4.2 the visitor team found compliance with the NMC standards for student supervision and assessment. This is because practice learning provides inclusive learning experiences and supports the diverse needs of individual students (see paragraph 24, standard 3.3), complies with the programme standards for nursing associates and is designed to meet the NMC standards of proficiencies for nursing associates. There are suitable systems in place to ensure effective coordination of learning within practice learning environments, and students are made aware of the support available to them (see paragraph 28, Standard 4.1). All students will be supervised while learning in practice and the roles and responsibilities of staff are understood by staff and students. There is sufficient support, training and oversight of practice supervision and assessment (see paragraph 28, Standard 4.1).
29. Programme and assessment documentation demonstrates that practice supervisors and assessors will be supporting students by providing regular feedback on their progress towards, and achievement of, relevant proficiencies and skills. The PAD clearly sets out the agreed milestones of achievement relevant to each part of the programme and agreed levels of supervision. The document is explicit on learning and development planning which includes structured interviews for each placement term and, if necessary, action plans. The PAD also includes a section dedicated to assessing professional values and proficiencies based on NMC guidelines, including areas such as confidentiality, dignity, compassion, and safe practice. Achievements are tracked across primary and external placements, and this ensures consistency and broad evaluations. The programme documentation also explains how assessment and supervision will work in practice and maps out student progress and proficiencies against the NMC standards across placements. There is guidance on completing the assessments and for including the various sources of evidence which should lead to objective evidence-based decisions. Within practice learning there is a clear method for students to gain support or to report when they feel that they have not received the support that they need as well as a student evaluation mechanism of practice learning. The visitor team concludes that adequate provisions are in place to address individual needs where necessary, ensuring flexibility and inclusivity without compromising on the integrity of the assessment process. These efforts are monitored and recorded through the Practice Assessment Record and Evaluation (PARE) system. At the visit, students, PAs and PSs demonstrated an understanding of the systems, processes, timelines, and requirements necessary to ensure consistent and fair assessment. Quality assurance of placement learning, supervision and assessment is through educational audit in line with LTU and PLP policies.
30. With regard to Standard 4.3 the visitor team found that LTU has identified a suitable NMC registered nurse to be the Programme Director and this has been communicated to the NMC.

31. In relation to Standard 4.4 the visitor team found that the assessment process encourages the use of feedback from PSs and PAs, and PUSC is involved in all aspects of assessment, including providing evaluation and feedback in practice and theory assessments such as presentations. The PAD document enables PSs, PAs and AAs to provide detailed feedback to students on the achievement of their learning goals and proficiencies. This feedback is discussed with students at tripartite review meetings and the visitor team concluded that there are clear lines of communication between PLPs, students and AAs. Students at the visit confirmed they receive helpful feedback on their assessments, with good levels of support for formative assessment that helps them with their final summative assessments.
32. With regard to Standard 4.5 the visitor team found that students have sufficient opportunity to evidence that they meet the standards of proficiency for nursing associates. This is because module and mapping documents demonstrate how module learning outcomes align with the standards of proficiency. Similarly, all elements of the PAD are mapped against the standards for proficiency for nursing associates and the document requires clear evidence of the assessment and tracking of achievement of proficiencies. The ongoing record of achievement in the PAD records student achievement in both theory and practice modules, ensuring that throughout the programme students can demonstrate they have met the standards for proficiency. The integrated end-point-assessment for the apprenticeship ensures that students have met all professional requirements as the achievement of all standards of proficiency is confirmed by the Progression and Award Board. Thus, successful students can demonstrate the competences required for professional practice upon completion of the programme. In addition, the visitor team was assured that where experience could not be obtained within some clinical areas, assessors and supervisors would not be under pressure to sign off proficiencies that were not within their sphere of competence and that robust arrangements were in place to ensure that students could obtain the experience necessary to pass proficiency.
33. In relation to Standard 4.6 the visitor team established that the programme includes a health numeracy assessment related to nursing associate proficiencies and calculation of medicines. Embedded in three practice modules are formative and summative assessments. The programme specification states that medication calculation examinations are assessed as pass/fail with a requirement to achieve 100% to pass. The programme team and students confirmed at the visit that there is ongoing assessment of proficiency throughout the programme.
34. With regard to Standard 4.7 the visitor team found that there are multiple steps to confirm that students meet the required standards of proficiencies for nursing associates and programme-level outcomes in full. Each year students have to pass theoretical and practice assessments in order to progress to year two or to be eligible for the academic and professional award at the end of the programme. This is monitored, recorded and verified at Progression and Award Boards. Assessment and confirmation of proficiency is conducted by the PA and the AA and evidenced in the ongoing achievement record of the PAD. Assessment is quality-assured through a process of internal and external moderation. The internal moderation and verification of PADs ensures that students have met all of the assessment requirements, and that the suitability of student supervision and assessment is appropriate and consistent.
35. In relation to Standard 4.8 the visitor team established from module and programme documentation that there is an equal balance between practice-related learning and assessment. Mechanisms such as extra hours for unexpected occurrences are in place to ensure that the balance is maintained. The Practice Learning Handbook

provides clear guidance to students how to make up missed hours. Students may be required to work additional shifts during a subsequent placement or undertake an additional placement if they are unable to make up their hours on the current placement. There is a clear commitment from LTU staff and PLPs that off-the-job learning, protected learning time and supernumerary status will be respected.

36. With regard to Standard 4.9 the visitor team confirmed that students are required to complete the PAD for each part of the programme, which ensures all proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement. Achievement is recorded within an electronic achievement system (PARE). There are clear procedures and quality assurance around formative and summative elements with proficiency sign-off and episodes of care to be recorded within the system.
37. Based on the information made available, the team considers that LTU 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
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

38. The visitor team considered programme documentation for this standard.
39. In relation to Standard 5.1 the visitor team confirmed from examining programme documentation that the minimum award for the programme is a Foundation Degree. The programme will be delivered over two years with an extra month for the end-point-assessment.
40. With regard to Standard 5.2 the visitor team found that the programme handbook notifies students that they have five years to register their award. Students are also directed to the NMC guidance on applying for registration more than five years after qualifying which specifies what they will have to do, including undertaking additional education and training, to evidence currency of experience as required in the NMC standards.
41. Based on the information made available, the team considers that LTU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded to enable the NMC standards to be met.

QAA2895 – R14802 – March 25

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2025
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel: 01452 557050
Web: www.qaa.ac.uk/nmc