



Nursing and Midwifery Council Quality Assurance Review

Programme Approval Report for:

Post-registration qualifications leading to:

**Specialist Practitioner - General Practice Nursing
Specialist Practitioner - Community Mental Health
Nursing
Specialist Practitioner - Community Learning
Disabilities Nursing**

Bangor University

August 2025

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Key institutional and programme details

Name and location of Approved Education Institution (AEI)	Bangor University Bangor Gwynedd LL57 2DG				
AEI/EI Institution Identifier [UKPRN]	10007857				
Name and location of programme delivery partner(s) if not the AEI/EI noted above	N/A				
Name of new employer partners for apprenticeships	N/A: this is not an apprenticeship route				
Approval type	Programme Approval				
Name of programme					
NMC programme title	AEI/EI programme title (in full)	Academic level(s)	Apprentice-ship	Full-time	Part-time
SPQ Titles					
Specialist Practitioner - General Practice Nursing	General Practice Nursing SPQ PGDip	England, Wales, Northern Ireland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specialist Practitioner - Community Mental Health Nursing	Community Mental Health Nursing SPQ PGDip	England, Wales, Northern Ireland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specialist Practitioner - Community Learning Disabilities Nursing	Community Learning Disability Nursing SPQ PGDip	England, Wales, Northern Ireland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Interim awards available There are no interim awards for this qualification that lead to NMC registration	
Proposed programme start date	19 January 2026
Standard(s) under assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part 3: Standards for post-registration nursing programmes Note that the AEI has taken an institutional approach to Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment and therefore compliance with Part 2 has been confirmed through a previous review.
Date of visit	20 August 2025
Visitor team	Registrant Visitors: Mrs Sarah Ward Miss Nikki Rochnia Lay Visitor: Mrs Helen Collinson

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(s). 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 carers, employers, practice learning partners, the programme team and senior managers.

For programme approvals, all standards within Part 3: Standards for post registration nursing are reported upon. For major modifications, only those Part 3 standards impacted by the modification are reported upon. The visitor team confirms with the AEI/EI which Part 3 standards are in scope for a major modification.

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

The conjoint visit with the Bangor University's approval panel took place on 20 August 2025.

Context for the review

Bangor University (BU) has been commissioned by Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) as the sole provider for the Specialist Practitioner programme with three pathways including Specialist Practitioner - General Practice Nursing, Specialist Practitioner - Community Mental Health Nursing and Specialist Practitioner - Community Learning Disabilities Nursing; all provided via distance learning. This review was conducted to approve the Specialist Practitioner programme with the three pathways.

There is a strategic approach to stakeholder engagement with the use of people who use services and carers (PSCs), prospective students, practice learning partners (PLPs) and employers to support recruitment, programme delivery, quality assurance and evaluation. The evidence suggests that an extensive list of academic staff, practitioners, and PLP stakeholders contributed to the development of the programme.

The visitor team met with a range of senior and programme staff, practice assessors (PAs) and practice supervisors (PSs) from the PLPs, and representatives from PSCs. As this is the first post-registration programme that BU has offered the visitor team was unable to meet with existing students and had planned to meet with former students from the pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes. Unfortunately, the students were then unable to attend on the day, and the student meeting did not take place, although two of the representatives from PLPs were BU nursing alumni.

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor team to the NMC, following consideration of BU's response to any conditions required by the approval panel, is as follows:

Programme is recommended to the NMC for refusal - the programme does not meet all standards and requirements to enable 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** of the visitor team following the visit and prior to the consideration of BU'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(s) not met	NMC only/ Joint	AEI only
C1	Demonstrate that there are opportunities for non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded applicants to apply for entry onto the NMC-approved community nursing SPQ programmes.	1.4	Joint	
C2	Formalise the programme-level approach to recognition of prior learning (RPL) in order to ensure that the parameters for RPL for SPQ programmes are clearly articulated and that this is clear in the admissions and derogations to academic regulations.	1.6	Joint	
C3	Ensure the SPQ programmes are co-produced in line with its institutional approach and that all three pathways are represented in co-production.	2.1 (SFNME 1.12 and 5.5)	Joint	
C4	Ensure that governance structures provide suitable and effective arrangements for practice learning that are specifically tailored to students who are self-employed and/or self-funded.	3.1	Joint	
C5	Ensure feedback provided post internal meeting is actioned.			AEI Only
C6	Remove all reference to the CPD within the documentation as the panel did not approve the modules to be delivered as stand-alone CPD.			AEI Only
C7	Completion of the editorial revisions and clarifications as directed by the Quality Enhancement Recommendation.			AEI Only
Date for all conditions to be met to meet intended delivery date		30 September 2025		

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

Recommendations for enhancement

Recommendations				
No.	Recommendation	Specific standard(s)	NMC only/ Joint	AEI/EI only
R1	Monitor protected learning time and ensure that strategies are in place to manage potential conflicts with clinical service demands.	1.5 and 3.4	Joint	
R2	Monitor capacity closely in order to ensure that students are assigned to a PA who is an experienced registered community SPQ nurse for the programme the student is undertaking.	2.2 and 4.6	Joint	
R3	Ensure PSs and PAs are prepared to support SPQ students specifically and have been introduced to the associated practice assessment document (PAD).	4.1	Joint	
R4	Review programme learning outcomes to ensure they fully reflect Level 7 expectations.	5.1	Joint	
R5	Integrate the distance learning 'prepare for Academic Study' pre-course into the programme.			AEI Only

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

Response to conditions

The visitor team reviewed in full the response(s) and evidence from BU to the conditions set. The findings of the visitor team with regard to responses to individual conditions are recorded below.

Response to NMC and Joint NMC/AEI conditions

Response to conditions		
No.	Condition details	Findings
C1	Demonstrate that there are opportunities for non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded applicants to apply for entry onto the NMC-approved community nursing SPQ programmes.	The visitor team reviewed the revised admissions information provided and confirmed that the documents now clearly note opportunities for non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded applicants. The visitor team therefore considers that for Condition C1, BU has fully addressed the requirements of the condition and Standard 1.4 is met.
C2	Formalise the programme-level approach to RPL in order to ensure that the parameters for RPL for SPQ programmes are	The visitor team reviewed the revised admissions and RPL information provided and noted the BU response that there was no requirement for derogations to academic regulations for RPL as the approach to SPQ RPL aligns with the BU RPL Policy. The visitor team

	clearly articulated and that this is clear in the admissions and derogations to academic regulations.	concluded that the parameters for RPL remain unclear, particularly in relation to the zero-credit practice-based learning modules and whether these would be eligible for RPL. The visitor team therefore considers that for Condition C2, BU has not fully addressed the requirements of the condition and Standard 1.6 is not met.
C3	Ensure the SPQ programmes are co-produced in line with its institutional approach and that all three pathways are represented in co-production.	The visitor team reviewed the documentation provided in relation to co-production, including the intended action plan. The visitor team noted that the information clearly indicates that PSCs will be engaged throughout the programme, including co-design of the programme and curriculum; however, no further evidence has been provided to demonstrate this has been implemented in relation to the mental health and general practice pathways. Additionally, no further evidence has been provided in relation to co-production with students. The visitor team concluded that there is insufficient evidence of PSC and student involvement in co-production of the SPQ programmes. The visitor team therefore considers that for Condition C3, BU has not fully addressed the requirements of the condition and Standard 2.1 is not met.
C4	Ensure that governance structures provide suitable and effective arrangements for practice learning that are specifically tailored to students who are self-employed and/or self-funded.	The visitor team reviewed the response to conditions which confirmed that now there were opportunities for non-NHS, self-funded and self-employed students to apply for the SPQ programmes; the governance structures that provide suitable and effective arrangements for practice learning would be utilised for all students. The visitor team therefore considers that for Condition C4, BU has fully addressed the requirements of the condition and Standard 3.1 is met.

The visitor team considers that not all conditions listed above have been satisfactorily addressed for the reasons cited and therefore some required NMC standards remain unmet as follows:

Standard 1.6: Consider recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the programme learning outcomes and standards of proficiency for the applicant's intended field of community nursing SPQ practice or in other specified field(s) for the community nursing SPQ in health and social care practice.

Standard 2.1: Ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (2018, updated 2023), including the confirmation of appropriately qualified and experienced people for programme delivery for all selected fields of community nursing SPQ practice.

Response to AEI only conditions

The response to BU 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
C5	Ensure feedback provided post internal meeting is actioned.	<p>The Chair of the con-joint panel confirmed by email (dated 10 October 2025) that all internal conditions, as noted in the minutes of the visit, have been met.</p> <p>The team consider that for Condition C5, BU has fully addressed the requirements of the condition and therefore Condition C5 is met.</p>
C6	Remove all reference to the CPD within the documentation as the panel did not approve the modules to be delivered as stand-alone CPD.	<p>The Chair of the con-joint panel confirmed by email (dated 10 October 2025) that all internal conditions, as noted in the minutes of the visit, have been met.</p> <p>The team consider that for Condition C6, BU has fully addressed the requirements of the condition and therefore Condition C6 is met.</p>
C7	Completion of the editorial revisions and clarifications as directed by the Quality Enhancement Recommendation.	<p>The Chair of the con-joint panel confirmed by email (dated 10 October 2025) that all internal conditions, as noted in the minutes of the visit, have been met.</p> <p>The team consider that for Condition C7, BU has fully addressed the requirements of the condition and therefore Condition C7 is met.</p>

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

Programme is recommended to the NMC for refusal - the programme does not meet all standards and requirements to enable students to achieve stated NMC standards of proficiency and learning outcomes for theory and practice.

Explanation of findings for Part 3

1: Selection, admission, and progression

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not Met	Met after conditions	Not applicable
1.1	<p>Ensure that on entry to the programme the applicant is an:</p> <p>1.1.1 NMC registered nurse (level 1) or NMC registered midwife capable of safe and effective practice at the level of proficiency appropriate to the NMC approved specialist community public health nurse (SCPHN) programme.</p> <p>1.1.2 NMC registered nurse (level 1) with relevant professional registration, capable of safe and effective practice at the level of proficiency appropriate to the NMC approved community nursing specialist practice qualification (SPQ) programme.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Confirm on entry that each applicant selected to undertake SCPHN or community nursing SPQ programme has the academic capability to study at the level required for that programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	Provide opportunities that enable eligible NMC registered nurses and/ or NMC registered midwives, including NHS, non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded applicants to apply for entry onto an NMC approved SCPHN programme.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.4	Provide opportunities that enable eligible NMC registered nurses, including NHS, non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded applicants to apply for entry onto an NMC approved community nursing SPQ programme.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5	Confirm that the necessary arrangements and governance structures are in place to support practice learning, including employer support and protected learning time, to enable students to undertake and be appropriately supported throughout the programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6	<p>Consider recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the:</p> <p>1.6.1 programme learning outcomes and standards of proficiency for the applicant's intended field of SCPHN practice or SCPHN public health nurse practice.</p> <p>1.6.2 programme learning outcomes and standards of proficiency for the applicant's intended field of community nursing SPQ practice or in other specified field(s) for the community nursing SPQ in health and social care practice.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7	Where programmes intend to offer SCPHN and/or SPQ students' admission to an NMC approved independent/supplementary (V300) prescribing programme consider recognition of prior learning that	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	is capable of being mapped to the RPS Competency Framework for all Prescribers for applicants.				
1.8	Where programmes intend to offer admission to an NMC approved independent/supplementary (V300) prescribing programme to SCPHN and/or SPQ students, ensure that the applicant is a registered nurse (level 1) and/or a registered midwife before being considered as eligible to apply for entry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Findings

1. The review team considered a range of evidence in relation to selection, admission and progression including the BU Admission Policy, entry requirements, evidence related to the interview process, practice learning documentation, the Local Level Agreement (LLA) and RPL information. The visitor team also met with representatives from PLPs and the programme team, who provided an informative presentation which included information related to admissions, RPL and arrangements for practice learning experiences.
2. Standards 1.3, 1.7 and 1.8 are not applicable as BU is not seeking approval for an SCPHN or a programme that includes an NMC-approved independent/supplementary prescribing qualification.
3. In considering Standards 1.1 and 1.2, the visitor team reviewed the entry requirements and application process, including interview materials. The entry requirements clearly state that applicants must have at least one year of registration with the NMC and that applicants are expected to hold a first class or upper second class honours degree. All applications and supporting documents are checked by the university admissions team prior to shortlisting. Applicants are interviewed and references are checked for a successful applicant. The visitor team concluded that this ensures the applicant is an NMC-registered nurse with relevant professional registration and that they have the capability to study at the level required for the programme. The interview process and reference request provide further assurance that the applicant is capable of safe and effective practice at the level of proficiency appropriate to the NMC-approved community nursing specialist practice qualification (SPQ) programme. The interview process also includes questions around Level 7 study and successful applicants are encouraged to undertake a short course to support digital literacy further ensuring capability to study at the required level.
4. In considering Standard 1.4, the visitor team reviewed the narrative submitted. During the visit, programme staff stated that applicants must be working in the NHS or in organisations delivering NHS services to gain entry to the programme. This would preclude non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded NMC-registered nurses from applying for entry onto an NMC-approved community nursing SPQ programme. This resulted in **condition (C1)** that requires BU to demonstrate that there are opportunities for non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded applicants to apply for entry onto the NMC-approved community nursing SPQ programmes.
5. In relation to Standard 1.5, BU outlines a commitment to supporting effective practice learning, including supporting protected learning time. The commissioned arrangements with HEIW and the LLA template from HEIW ensure that expectations are clearly set out for practice learning and protected learning time and BU states that stakeholder events have included discussion of protected practice learning hours. The expectations around protected learning time are clearly outlined in the PADs and associated guidance and within the LLA template, and it is confirmed

during the application process that applicants have support from a manager to undertake the SPQ programme. The visitor team met with PLPs who confirmed that students would have supernumerary status and that practice learning time would be protected, although it was stated that this may be subject to clinical need. The evidence provided demonstrates that there are structures in place to support practice learning within the current arrangements and that students will be appropriately supported throughout the programme, allowing this standard to be met. However, the visitor team **recommends (R1)** that BU monitor protected learning time and ensure that strategies are in place to manage potential conflicts with clinical service demands.

6. In considering Standard 1.6, the visitor team reviewed the BU RPL Policy, which is detailed in the University Academic Regulations, the RPL SPQ document and documents related to the RPL application process. RPL is available and there is a clear process in place to ensure applications are assessed and mapped against the programme learning outcomes and Standards of proficiency for community nursing specialist practice qualifications. The RPL SPQ document outlines the approach to RPL and provides the mapping tool for SPQ programmes; however, discussion with the programme team during the visit suggested only general rather than specialist modules would be considered for RPL, which is not clearly stated within this document. This resulted in **condition (C2)** which requires BU to formalise the programme-level approach to RPL in order to ensure that the parameters for RPL for SPQ programmes are clearly articulated and that this is clear in the admissions and derogations to academic regulations.
7. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that BU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression to enable the NMC standards to be met subject to meeting **conditions (C1) and (C2)**.

2: Curriculum

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not Met	Met after conditions	Not applicable
2.1	<p>Ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education including the confirmation of appropriately qualified and experienced people for programme delivery for:</p> <p>2.1.1 all selected fields of SCPHN practice and/or SCPHN PHN practice and/or for</p> <p>2.1.2 all selected fields of community nursing SPQ practice and/or in other specified fields of community nursing SPQ in health and social care practice</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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	Confirm SCPHN and/or community nursing SPQ programmes comply with the NMC Standards for prescribing programmes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.4	<p>State routes within the programme for:</p> <p>2.4.1 students to enter the SCPHN register in a specific field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse.</p> <p>2.4.2 students to enter the SCPHN register for the public health nurse qualification.</p> <p>2.4.3 students to annotate their registration in a specific field of community nursing SPQ practice: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing.</p> <p>2.4.4 students to annotate their registration in community nursing SPQ practice in health and social care.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5	<p>Ensure programme learning outcomes reflect the:</p> <p>2.5.1 core and field specific standards of proficiency for SCPHN and for the intended field(s) of SCPHN practice: health visiting, school nursing, occupational health nursing</p> <p>2.5.2 core standards of proficiency for SCPHN that are tailored to SCPHN public health nursing.</p> <p>2.5.3 standards of proficiency for community nursing SPQ that are tailored to the intended field and related context of community nursing practice. These may be within community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or in specified field(s) for community nursing SPQ in health and social care practice.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.6	<p>Set out the general and professional content necessary to meet the:</p> <p>2.6.1 core and field specific standards of proficiency for each intended field of SCPHN practice: health visiting, school nursing, occupational health nursing,</p> <p>2.6.2 core standards of proficiency for SCPHN public health nurse qualification.</p> <p>2.6.3 standards of proficiency for the community nursing SPQ that is tailored to the intended field of community nursing practice. These may be within community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing, or in other specified field(s) of community nursing in health and social care</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7	<p>Set out the content necessary to meet the programme outcomes for each intended field of:</p> <p>2.7.1 SCPHN practice: health visiting, school nursing, occupational health nursing and/or SCPHN public health nursing,</p> <p>2.7.2 community nursing SPQ practice: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing and/or in other specified field(s) of community nursing in health and social care.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.8	Ensure that the curriculum provides a balance of theory and practice learning opportunities, using a range of learning and teaching strategies.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.9	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"/>
2.10	Ensure programmes delivered in Wales comply with legislation which supports use of the Welsh language.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.11	<p>Ensure programmes are:</p> <p>2.11.1 of suitable length to support student achievement of all proficiencies and programme outcomes for their intended SCPHN or community nursing SPQ award.</p> <p>2.11.2 no less than 45 programmed weeks of theory and practice learning for full-time programmes/pro rata for part time programmes.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Curriculum requirements

This part-time programme will take place over two years with 45 weeks of theory and practice learning. The programme consists of 120 credits and a non-credit bearing practice assessment. The total notional learning hours are 1,200 for the programme (200 per 20 credits), with 675 of those being practice learning hours.

Findings

8. The visitor team considered a range of evidence in relation to the curriculum including stakeholder engagement documentation, the Teaching and Learning Strategy and programme documentation including SPQ programme specifications, programme planners and PADs. The visitor team also met with the programme team, who provided an informative presentation outlining the programme structure and practice learning, and with representatives from PLPs, which included two alumni students.
9. Standard 2.3 is not applicable as BU is not seeking approval for a programme that includes an NMC-approved independent/supplementary prescribing qualification.
10. In considering Standard 2.1, the programme is designed in alignment with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (SFNME) (2018, updated 2023), ensuring that all learning, teaching, and assessment activities meet the regulatory requirements for quality, safety, and professional practice. All programme team members are confirmed as having the appropriate professional registration, academic qualifications, and field-specific experience to deliver and assess learning at the required academic and professional level, and this was evidenced through academic CVs and honorary contracts. The visitor team also reviewed evidence around stakeholder engagement and co-production including Stakeholder Engagement Guidance, the Stakeholder Engagement Policy and evidence of who engaged with stakeholder events. The policy and guidance outline a strategic approach to stakeholder engagement noting the use of PSCs, prospective students, PLPs and employer stakeholders to support recruitment, programme delivery, quality assurance and evaluation. The evidence of this, presented prior to the visit, was an extensive list of academic staff, practitioners, and PLPs who have contributed to the development of the programme. However, it was noted that there was minimal input from PSCs and from students during the programme development stage. The limited engagement was further evidenced during the visit where the visitor team discussed stakeholder engagement with the programme team, PLPs and PSCs. The planned meeting with students did not take place due to student availability. BU has a formally established group of PSCs and the visitor team confirmed that representatives from the learning disabilities community and services were actively involved in all aspects of the learning disabilities programme. PSC representatives were not available during the visit from the mental health and general practice perspective, and discussion with the programme team suggested there had been limited engagement in co-production in relation to these two pathways. The visitor team therefore concluded that this standard is not met, which resulted in **condition (C3)** which requires BU to ensure the SPQ programmes are co-produced in line with its institutional approach and that all three pathways are represented in co-production. This will ensure the programme continues to be responsive, inclusive, and reflective of the perspectives of those directly impacted by community and public health nursing practice.
11. In considering Standard 2.2, BU takes an institutional approach to NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment (SSSA), (NMC 2018, updated 2023) where SSSA training is undertaken using an All Wales approach which is evidenced in the All Wales SSSA and All Wales SPQ PAD documents. BU also provided relevant handbooks for PAs, PSs and academic assessors (AAs) that further support compliance with SSSA. The visitor team confirmed that collectively these documents provide a strong framework to guide the preparation, role clarity, and responsibilities of PSs, PAs and AAs, and demonstrate alignment with national and regulatory expectations. During the visit, there was a discussion about the identification and availability of suitably qualified PAs mapped against the proposed student intake for

January 2026. The programme team showed clear intent to utilise suitably qualified PAs; however, the visitor team felt that this should be monitored. The visitor team therefore **recommends (R2)** that BU monitor capacity closely in order to ensure that students are assigned to a PA who is an experienced registered community SPQ nurse for the programme the student is undertaking.

12. In considering Standard 2.4, the visitor team reviewed the programme specifications for each route which made it clear which route students would be undertaking and allows students to annotate their registration in the specified field of community nursing SPQ practice.
13. In considering Standards 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7, the visitor team reviewed the revised programme specifications and programme and module mapping documentation and confirmed that the programme outcomes clearly reflect the Standards of proficiency for community nursing SPQ and are effectively tailored to the intended field and related context of community nursing practice. The programmes consist of generic and field-specific modules. The programme specifications set out the general and professional content necessary to meet the intended field of practice, and alongside the module information, they set out the content necessary to meet the tailored programme outcomes.
14. In considering Standards 2.8 and 2.9, the visitor team reviewed the Teaching and Learning Strategy and programme narrative which demonstrate that students will construct their knowledge through a variety of structured learning activities appropriate to their programme of study. The programme has been designed to be delivered on a full and part-time distance learning basis, with part-time taking place over two years, and the programme planners confirm that there are 45 programmed weeks of theory and practice learning. However, the discussion during the visit and a follow-up email confirmed that BU requested approval for the part-time option only. The programme provides a balance of practice and theory hours. The total notional learning hours are 1,200 for the programme (200 per 20 credits), with 675 of those being practice learning hours. Each module is supported through a virtual learning environment (VLE), and BU provides an established infrastructure for delivery. Staff are trained in the use of the VLE, and there are ongoing training opportunities available through the university's IT and Digital Services and the Centre for Enhanced Learning and Teaching (CELT) which ensures staff are able to make effective use of the platform's evolving functionality. Due to the nature of the programmes, simulated learning is not utilised.
15. In considering Standard 2.10, the visitor team reviewed the BU Welsh Language Policy and confirmed that the programmes fully comply with legislation which supports the use of the Welsh language. The university ensures that students and applicants can engage in Welsh or English across all aspects of the programme, including applications, interviews, academic support, personal tutoring, assignment submission, and access to module resources in a bilingual format. While lectures are delivered in English, the broader bilingual provision supports accessibility and compliance with Welsh language legislation and policy and this standard is met.
16. In considering Standard 2.11, the programme planners confirm that the programmes are of suitable length to support student achievement of all proficiencies and the programme outcomes, and include 45 programmed weeks of theory and practice learning.

17. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that BU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 2: Curriculum to enable the NMC standards to be met subject to meeting **condition (C3)**.

3: Practice learning

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable
3.1	Ensure that suitable and effective arrangements and governance for practice learning are in place for all students, including arrangements specifically tailored to those applicants who are self-employed and/or self-funded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	Ensure that students work in partnership with the education provider and their practice learning partners to arrange supervision and assessment that complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Provide practice learning opportunities that allow students to develop, progress and meet all the standards of proficiency for their: 3.3.1 intended field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse or, 3.3.2 SCPHN public health nurse 3.3.3 intended community nursing SPQ: these may be within the fields of community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing or, 3.3.4 in other specified field(s) of community nursing in health and social care nursing.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4	Ensure that practice learning complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Take account of students' individual learning needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning, including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.6	Ensure learning experiences are tailored to the student's stage of learning, proficiencies and programme outcomes culminating in a period of practice learning. This is dependent on the individual learning needs of the student to demonstrate overall proficiency and achieve the programme learning outcomes for their: 3.6.1 intended field of SCPHN practice, SCPHN PHN practice or, 3.6.2 their intended field of community nursing SPQ practice or community nursing SPQ in health and social care practice.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Practice learning requirements and simulated learning hours

All students are part-time and will undertake one practice learning experience day per week (7.5 hours), for 45 weeks resulting in 675 placement learning hours across the two years. There are no simulated learning hours as part of the SPQ programmes.

Findings

18. The visitor team considered a range of evidence in relation to practice learning such as the All Wales SSSA Guidelines, PS, PA and AA handbooks, PADs, programme specifications, student handbooks and programme planners. The visitor team also met with the programme team, who provided an informative presentation outlining practice learning expectations and arrangements, and with representatives from PLPs.
19. In considering Standard 3.1, the visitor team noted the role of the All Wales Placement Reference Group in providing strategic oversight of placement capacity and quality, developing national guidance and procedures, facilitating the sharing of best practice, and producing exemplar models of innovative placement learning. The documents provided in relation to this, including the LLA document, All Wales SSSA Guidelines, PS, PA and AA handbooks, suggest that there are suitable and effective governance arrangements for practice learning generally. However, as noted in Standard 1.4 the current arrangements do not allow non-NHS, self-employed or self-funded applicants to apply for entry onto the NMC approved community nursing SPQ programmes and therefore it was not possible to confirm that the arrangement and governance for practice learning would be the same for this group of students. This resulted in **condition (C4)** stating that BU must ensure that governance structures provide suitable and effective arrangements for practice learning that are specifically tailored to students who are self-employed and/or self-funded.
20. In relation to Standard 3.2, students are expected to identify a PS during the application stage to ensure they have access to a suitably qualified individual. PSs and PAs then complete training as set out in the All Wales SSSA Guidelines. The PADs and tripartite meetings demonstrate mechanisms for collaboration and shared decision-making in identifying student development needs and assessing progress, and the student handbooks provide clear guidance on how students can raise concerns about their learning experiences in both theory and practice learning settings through module evaluations, end-of-year evaluations and course representatives. Collectively this ensures there are mechanisms for students to work in partnership with BU and PLPs to arrange supervision and assessment. Additionally, review of documentary evidence also highlights that students have access to the HEIW All Wales Escalating Concerns Toolkit which offers a safe and confidential route for raising concerns.
21. In relation to Standard 3.3, the visitor team confirmed that the evidence provided through various documents such as the All Wales Placement Reference Group materials, All Wales SSSA Guidelines, PADs, SPQ programme materials, AA Handbook, and programme planners, demonstrates that practice learning opportunities are intended to support students in developing, progressing, and meeting all standards of proficiency across their intended fields of practice. During the visit, the visitor team heard that practice learning opportunities are organised and structured, with BU working collaboratively with PSs and PAs in clinical areas such as general practice to support student learning. The visitor team confirmed that, where individual practice settings are not able to facilitate students achieving all

required proficiencies, arrangements are in place across wider stakeholders in Wales to provide access to alternative learning environments, ensuring that opportunities to achieve all proficiencies are provided. This was corroborated with discussions with PLPs at the visit.

22. In considering Standard 3.4, the visitor team reviewed the practice learning documentation, including the All Wales SSSA Guidelines, information from the All Wales Placement Reference Group, the PADs, the student handbooks and the programme specifications and confirmed that collectively these documents provide a comprehensive framework that aligns with regulatory requirements and supports consistent, high-quality student supervision and assessment across practice settings. As noted in Standard 1.5, discussion during the visit identified potential tensions between clinical priorities and protected student learning time. In particular, there was reference to situations where students may be expected to forfeit self-directed learning time in order to meet clinical service demands. Whilst there are processes and agreements in place to ensure this protected learning time, the visitor team **recommends (R1)** that BU ensures it monitors protected learning time and ensures that strategies are in place to manage potential conflicts with clinical service demands.
23. In relation to Standard 3.5, the visitor team reviewed the Code of Practice on Inclusive Provision for Disabled Students and the Code of Practice for Pastoral Support alongside the Admissions Policy and confirmed that there are clear processes in place to ensure inclusive education and reasonable adjustments which are addressed through tailored development and action planning. Where possible these are identified during the admissions process; however, other mechanisms are in place to identify additional support needs such as the PADs which include a section called 'Orientation to Practice Learning'. This section prompts consideration of reasonable adjustments if necessary, and the visitor team confirmed that this is a positive step towards recognising students' individual learning needs and personal circumstances, and ensuring that PSs and PAs are aware of their roles within this. Discussion with the programme staff provided further assurance of robust support for students requiring reasonable adjustments.
24. In relation to Standard 3.6, the programme specifications, handbooks and planners set out the programme content and structure which are designed to enable students to develop, progress and meet the requirements for their field of practice. Practice learning hours are undertaken throughout the year and the PADs include self-assessment of learning needs and provide a clear structure to ensure that practice learning opportunities are tailored to the individual needs of students. The PA, PS and AA handbooks, alongside the PADs, ensure that all individuals are aware of their role and that there are opportunities to raise any concerns in relation to the ability to demonstrate proficiency and achieve the programme learning outcomes. Discussions with representatives from PLPs and programme staff during the visit confirmed a commitment to supporting students and awareness of their role within this.
25. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that BU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 3: Practice learning to enable the NMC standards to be met subject to meeting **condition (C4)**.

4: Supervision and assessment

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable
4.1	Ensure student support, supervision, learning, and assessment 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	Liaise, collaborate, and agree the necessary approach to the preparation, education, training, ongoing learning, support and expertise necessary for practice supervisors, practice and academic assessors that support SCPHN and community nursing SPQ student learning and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3	Ensure practice supervision, the assessment of practice and academic assessment complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4	Ensure practice supervisors: 4.4.1 have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the NMC principles for preceptorship as SCPHN or community nursing SPQ qualified professionals or 4.4.2 can evidence prior learning and relevant practice supervisor experience that enables them to facilitate effective evidence-based learning opportunities for post-registration SCPHN or community nursing SPQ students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	Ensure practice and academic assessors: 4.5.1 have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the NMC principles for preceptorship as SCPHNs or community nurses with a SPQ or, 4.5.2 can evidence prior learning and relevant practice assessor experience that enables them to engage in fair, reliable and valid assessment processes in the context of SCPHN and/or community nursing SPQ .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.6	Ensure the student is assigned to a practice assessor who is an experienced registered SCPHN or community SPQ nurse for the programme the student is undertaking. 4.6.1 in exceptional circumstances, the same person may fulfil the role of practice supervisor and practice assessor for a part of the programme where the SCPHN /community nursing SPQ student is undergoing education and training in a practice learning setting. In such instances, the student, practice supervisor/ assessor and the AEI will need to evidence why it was necessary for the practice supervisor and practice assessor roles to be carried out by the same person.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.7	Provide constructive feedback to students throughout the programme to support their learning and development for meeting the standards of proficiency and programme learning outcomes for:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>4.7.1 their intended field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse,</p> <p>4.7.2 SCPHN public health nurse,</p> <p>4.7.3 their intended SPQ in the field of: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing, or</p> <p>4.7.4 other specified field(s) of community nursing SPQ in health and social care.</p>				
4.8	Ensure all SCPHN proficiencies and/or community nursing SPQ proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which confirms SCPHN and/or community nursing SPQ proficiencies have been met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.9	<p>Assess the student's suitability for award and confirm overall proficiency based on the successful completion of all practice learning relevant to:</p> <p>4.9.1 their intended field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse,</p> <p>4.9.2 SCPHN public health nurse practice,</p> <p>4.9.3 their intended SPQ in the field of: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing, and/or</p> <p>4.9.4 other specified field(s) of practice for the community nursing SPQ in health and social care.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Findings

26. The visitor team considered a range of evidence in relation to supervision and assessment such as the All Wales SSSA Guidelines, PS, PA and AA handbooks, PADs, student handbooks and the SPQ Assessment Handbook. The visitor team also met with the programme team, who provided an informative presentation outlining the programme structure and practice learning arrangements, and with representatives from PLPs.
27. In relation to Standards 4.1 and 4.2, the visitor team confirms that the PADs, the All Wales SSSA Guidelines, the PS, PA and AA handbooks collectively demonstrate that support, supervision, learning, and assessment are fully aligned with the SFNME. These documents provide clear guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the AA, PS and PA, ensuring consistent, accountable and compliant support for student learning and assessment in practice. The All Wales Placement Reference Group has a key role in developing national guidance and procedures and facilitating the sharing of best practice to ensure that there is an agreed approach to the preparation, education, training, ongoing learning, support and expertise necessary for PSs, PAs and AAs. Assessors and supervisors are required to undertake preparation training before the programme begins in order to ensure they are fully equipped to support learning, provide constructive feedback, manage concerns and specific models of supervision and assessment for the SPQ nurse. Due to the timing of the approval the representatives from PLPs were unable to confirm training specific to the SPQ and therefore the visitor team **recommends (R3)** that BU

ensures PSs and PAs are prepared to support SPQ students specifically and have been introduced to the associated PAD.

28. In relation to Standard 4.3, the visitor team reviewed a variety of evidence including the PADs, the PS and PA handbook, the AA handbook, and the SPQ Assessment Handbook and concluded that practice supervision, assessment in practice, and academic assessment are compliant with the SSSA. It was noted that this framework is further supported by programme plans, handbooks and PADs, agreeing that collectively, these documents demonstrate clear alignment with regulatory requirements and provide consistent, robust support for effective supervision and assessment across both practice and academic settings. The visitor team explored the use of the non-credit bearing assessment that has been designed to support professional development, demonstrate proficiency and ensure readiness for practice. The assessment includes the PAD, reflective accounts, observations, PA and PS evaluations and feedback from PSCs. Completion of this non-credit bearing assessment is required as part of the programme and provides evidence that the student meets the required proficiencies for specialist community practice.
29. In considering Standards 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6, the All Wales SSSA Guidance and the PS and PA handbook and the AA handbook make it clear that there is an expectation that PSs, PAs and AAs have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the NMC principles for preceptorship as community nursing SPQ qualified professionals or that they can evidence prior learning and relevant PS and/or PA experience that enables them to facilitate effective, evidence-based learning opportunities for post-registration community nursing SPQ students. PAs and PSs are expected to complete a form identifying relevant qualification or experience prior to undertaking the role. The All Wales SSSA Guidance also clearly states the requirement that the PA is an experienced registered community SPQ nurse for the programme the student is undertaking, noting that only in exceptional circumstances the same person could fulfil the role of PA and PS. Discussion at the visit did suggest that there was some concern in relation to ensuring sufficient PAs would be available who were experienced registered community SPQ nurses for the specific programme that the students would be undertaking and therefore the visitor team **recommends (R2)** that BU monitor capacity closely in order to ensure that students are assigned to a PA who is an experienced registered community SPQ nurse for the programme the student is undertaking.
30. In considering Standard 4.7, the visitor team reviewed the programme handbooks, PADs, All Wales SSSA Guideline and the relevant PS, PS and AA handbooks and confirmed that there are clear schedules for student assessment and feedback, including key points such as initial interviews and development planning. The visitor team noted that the PADs and supporting guidance clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the student, PS, PA, and AA in facilitating the achievement of proficiencies and providing feedback. The visitor team concluded that this structured framework helps ensure that students receive timely and constructive feedback throughout the programme, supporting their learning and development in line with the required standards of proficiency and programme learning outcomes.
31. In considering Standards 4.8 and 4.9, the visitor team confirmed that the PADs are robust documents that ensure all community nursing SPQ proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which confirms community nursing SPQ proficiencies have been met. The PAD is a pass/fail element where all students have to have achieved a 'competent' level of practice in all proficiencies to pass. Whilst this assessment is non-credit bearing, documentation makes it clear that it has to be passed in order to complete the programme. This assures the visitor team that BU

effectively assesses the student's suitability for award and confirms overall proficiency based on successful completion of all practice learning relevant to their intended SPQ.

32. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that BU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 4: Supervision and assessment to enable the NMC standards to be met.

5: Qualification to be awarded

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable
5.1	Ensure that the minimum academic level for SCPHN and community nursing SPQ is at postgraduate masters' level.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Inform the student that the SCPHN award must be registered with us within five years of successfully completing the programme and if they fail to do so they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in NMC standards for the award to be registered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.3	Inform the student that the community nursing SPQ award must be registered with us within five years of successfully completing the programme and if they fail to do so they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in NMC standards for the award to be added as an annotation to their professional registration.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.4	Inform the SCPHN and/or community nursing SPQ student that following successful completion of an NMC approved programme of preparation for SCPHN or community nursing SPQ , which included an NMC approved independent/supplementary prescribing qualification, the V300 award must be registered with us within five years of successfully completing the prescribing programme. If they fail to do so they will have to retake and successfully complete the programme in order to qualify as a prescriber.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.5	Inform the SCPHN and/or community nursing SPQ student that they may only prescribe once their prescribing qualification has been annotated on the NMC register and they may only prescribe from the formulary they are qualified to prescribe from and within their competence and scope of practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Findings

33. The visitor team reviewed the relevant programme specifications, programme handbooks and the BU Academic Regulations as well as meeting with programme staff during the visit.
34. Standards 5.2, 5.4 and 5.5 are not applicable as BU is not seeking approval for an SCPHN or a programme that includes an NMC-approved independent/supplementary prescribing qualification.
35. In considering Standard 5.1, the programme specifications and handbooks clearly document that the SPQ programmes are at postgraduate master's level requiring 120 credits at Level 7. The visitor team and BU panel did note that some of the wording of the programme outcomes could be further strengthened and therefore the visitor team **recommends (R4)** that programme learning outcomes are reviewed to ensure they fully reflect Level 7 expectations.

36. In relation to Standard 5.3, students are clearly informed through the programme handbooks and during their completion lecture that the community nursing SPQ award must be registered with the NMC within five years of successfully completing the programme. This information also informed students that failure to do so will result in additional education and training being required or gaining experience as specified in the NMC standards for the award to be added as an annotation to the professional registration.
37. Based on the information made available, the visitor team considers that BU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded to enable the NMC standards to be met.

QAA3008 – R14926 – October 25

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