

Education QA Monitoring Visit Report Summary

Approved Education Institution	Birmingham City University
Programme(s) monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-registration nursing: • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) – Nursing Degree Apprenticeship • MSc Adult Nursing (pre-registration) • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Child) • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Child) – Nursing Degree Apprenticeship • MSc Child Nursing (pre-registration) • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Learning Disabilities) • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Learning Disabilities) – Nursing Degree Apprenticeship • MSc Learning Disabilities Nursing (pre-registration) • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health) • BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health) – Nursing Degree Apprenticeship • MSc Mental Health Nursing (pre-registration) • MSci Nursing (Adult/Child – Dual Award) • MSci Nursing (Adult/Learning Disabilities – Dual Award) • MSci Nursing (Adult/Mental Health – Dual Award) • MSci Nursing (Learning Disabilities/Child – Dual Award) • MSci Nursing (Mental Health/Child – Dual Award) • MSci Nursing (Mental Health/Learning Disabilities – Dual Award) • Pre-registration midwifery: • BSc (Hons) Midwifery • MSci Midwifery with Public Health • MSc Midwifery • Nursing associate:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FdSc Nursing Associate (Higher Apprenticeship) • FdSc Nursing Associate
Practice learning partner (PLP)/ employer partner (EP) organisation visits undertaken during the review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Oleaster Centre, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (BSMHFT) • Heartlands Hospital, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHBFT) • Good Hope Hospital, UHBFT • The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, UHBFT
Date of monitoring visit	4-7 June 2024
Date of report publication	08 December 2025

Introduction

This document is a summary explaining our Quality Assurance (QA) process for monitoring education institutions and their practice learning partners. We also explain why we commissioned an extraordinary review, the independent visitors, its findings and the action plan we have since put in place. For the full independent report please [click here](#). Throughout this period, we have welcomed the cooperation of Birmingham City University (BCU) and practice partners, The Oleaster Centre, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (BSMHFT), University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHBFT).

BCU are an approved education institution (AEI) in the Midlands region, approved to deliver pre-registration nursing, nursing associate, pre-registration midwifery and post-reg provision.

Background

In March 2023, a section 29A warning notice was issued to UHBFT which described that the regulated activity required significant improvement. Significant risk was identified in relation to safety concerns in parts of the maternity service estate including the antenatal clinic and maternity triage area at Heartlands Hospital. BCU subsequently submitted an exception report in response to the section 29A warning notice.

BCU is the largest provider of nursing and midwifery education within the UK, and places large numbers of students, both direct entry and apprenticeship, across nursing, nursing associate and midwifery within the UHBFT. Concerns were identified in relation to students placed at UHBFT, and their support and supervision.

As part of our critical concerns process, assurance was not gained through ongoing meetings with BCU, and action plans developed did not address the seriousness of the risks identified.

In November 2023 a meeting was held between BCU and the NMC following intelligence that BCU may have adopted a 2:1 ratio for simulated practice hours. Further issues were raised at this meeting and the submission of the simulation report in January 2024 as requested by the NMC did not provide assurance.

In February 2024, due to the scale of risks identified regarding simulated practice learning and the lack of assurance gained, the NMC Quality Assurance (QA) board agreed an extraordinary review of BCU by independent visitors to seek assurance that our standards are being met and that students are being appropriately supported in a safe and appropriate learning environment.

The NMC

As the professional regulator of nurses and midwives in the UK, and nursing associates in England, we work to ensure these professionals have the knowledge and skills to deliver consistent, quality care that keeps people safe.

We set the education standards professionals must achieve to practise in the United Kingdom. When they have shown both clinical excellence and a commitment to kindness, compassion and respect, we welcome them onto our register of more than 853,000 professionals.

Once registered, nurses, midwives and nursing associates must uphold the standards and behaviours set out in our Code so that people can have confidence that they will consistently receive quality, safe care wherever they're treated. We promote lifelong learning through revalidation, encouraging professionals to reflect on their practice and how The Code applies in their day-to-day work.

Our role in the quality assurance of education

We set the standards of education and training that enable students to achieve our standards of proficiency before joining the register. We approve education institutions to deliver nursing, nursing associate or midwifery programmes. As part of our ongoing educational quality assurance (QA), we monitor all of our approved education institutions (AEIs) and their practice learning partners (PLPs) to ensure they continue to meet our standards.

Our QA framework provides detail on the QA process and the evidence education institutions need to demonstrate to satisfy us that they meet our standards for education and training.

Where we have concerns that an approved education institution may not be meeting our standards, we may carry out a monitoring visit or an extraordinary review. These are undertaken by independent QA visitors who report their findings to the NMC. Where we have serious concerns that our standards are not being, or will not be met, we can also withdraw approval of the programme and/or an institution. Internally we have a QA Board which provides oversight of our ongoing education QA activity, and our Professional Practice directorate provides regular updates to our Council in relation to our QA activities

The monitoring review process

The NMC provided the independent QA visit team with a monitoring review plan, which identified the NMC requirements for monitoring, under the five themes of the Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (SFNME) (NMC, 2018 updated 2023):

1. Learning culture
2. Educational governance and quality
3. Student empowerment
4. Educators and assessors
5. Curricula and assessment

The review plan indicated specific requirements within the Standards framework for the QA visitors to scrutinise and triangulate evidence from findings during the visit.

The QA monitoring visit team included a lead QA visitor; three lay visitors and three registrant visitors selected with due regard for the programmes under review. The QA visit team used the review plan to direct their focus for triangulating the evidence in academic and practice learning settings.

The QA visit team concluded their findings verbally to BCU on the final day of the visit (07 June 2024) and then provided a full a report, mapped against the NMC standards and requirements.

Findings

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (SFNME) (NMC 2018, updated 2023)		
Theme	Risk Indicator	Outcome
1. Learning culture	1.1 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners are unable to evidence that the learning culture prioritises the safety of people, including carers, students and educators, and enables the values of The Code (NMC, 2018) to be upheld.	Standard 1.1 is met for NA Standard 1.1 is not met for nursing and midwifery
	1.2 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners are unable to evidence that education and training is valued in all learning environments.	Standard 1.2 is met for nursing and NA Standard 1.2 is not met for midwifery
2. Educational governance and quality	2.1 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners are unable to evidence there are effective governance systems that ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements, differentiating where appropriate between the devolved legislatures of the UK with clear lines of accountability for meeting those requirements and responding when standards are not met, in all learning environments.	Standard 2.1 is met for NA and midwifery Standard 2.1 is not met for nursing
	2.2 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners is unable to ensure all learning environments optimise safety and quality, taking account of the diverse needs of, and working in partnership with, people who use services and carers, students and all other stakeholders.	Standard 2.2 is met for nursing, NA and midwifery
3. Student empowerment	3.1 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners is unable to ensure all students are provided with a variety of learning opportunities and appropriate resources which enable them to achieve proficiencies and programme outcomes and be capable of demonstrating the professional behaviours in The Code (NMC, 2018).	Standard 3.1 is met for NA and midwifery Standard 3.1 is not met for nursing
	3.2 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners is unable to ensure all students are empowered and supported to become resilient, caring, reflective and lifelong learners who are capable of working in inter-professional and inter-agency teams.	Standard 3.2 is met for NA and midwifery Standard 3.2 is not met for nursing
4. Educators and assessors	4.1 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners is unable to ensure theory and practice learning and assessment are facilitated effectively and objectively by appropriately qualified and experienced professionals with	Standard 4.1 is met for NA and midwifery

	necessary expertise for their educational and assessor roles.	Standard 4.1 is not met for nursing
5. Curricula and assessment	5.1 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners is unable to ensure that curricula and assessments are designed, developed, delivered and evaluated to ensure that students achieve the proficiencies and outcomes for their approved programme.	Standard 5.1 is met for NA and midwifery Standard 5.1 is not met for nursing

Standard is met	Standard is not met
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Next steps and action planning

In June 2024, the extraordinary review visit reported was shared with BCU for factual accuracy checking. Following this period factual accuracy amendments were made to the report, and in July 2024 the final report was submitted to the NMC. BCU were then offered one calendar month to make any observations on the report before recommendations were reviewed at our QA board.

As a response to the identified risks, BCU were required to develop and implement an action plan to address the key risks identified to ensure that their pre-registration nursing, midwifery and nursing associate programmes meet all NMC standards and requirements. An action plan was developed and refined by BCU supported by the lead QA visitor. The agreed action plan was submitted to the NMC.

As agreed by the QA board, BCU would be supported through a critical concern for education process. The NMC EdQA Team met with BCU to agree a schedule of meetings to discuss the action plan and seek evidence of their progress against each of the NMC Standards. Progress was overseen by the EdQA team to ensure appropriate, robust, and timely action is being taken to address the concerns.

In December 2024, the QA Board met and reviewed the progress BCU had made, and the decision was made at QA board to deescalate the Midwifery programme at BCU from a critical concern for education, as the extraordinary review action plan outcomes for midwifery had been met.

Update - June 2025

BCU worked in collaboration with the NMC to evidence that the actions set out in the extraordinary review visit action plan had been met. Additional evidence was submitted to demonstrate and was subsequently reviewed by the NMC in June 2025. Following this review, it was confirmed that BCU's pre-registration nursing, nursing associate, and

midwifery programmes meet all the required NMC standards, and the university was formally informed of this outcome, and the QA Board made the decision to deescalate the programme from a critical concern for education.

The QA board recognised and acknowledged the work undertaken during this process by BCU, and the collaboration with stakeholders that has contributed to the achievement of this positive outcome.