

Education QA Monitoring Visit Report Summary

Approved Education Institution	University of Brighton
Programme(s) monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSc (Hons) Nursing Adult • BSc (Hons) Nursing Mental Health • BSc (Hons) Nursing Child • BSc (Hons) Midwifery • Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (Adult) Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (Mental Health) • Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (Child) • FdSc in Health and Social Care (Nursing Associate) Apprenticeship
Practice learning partner (PLP)/ employer partner (EP) organisation visits undertaken during the review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH), maternity services • RSCH, A8 east, C10 • Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital • Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) • Meadowfield Hospital
Date of monitoring visit	19-22 March 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 University of Brighton (UoB).

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

Background

A thematic review was undertaken of all approval and major modification reports relating to the University's NMC approved programmes. This review highlighted a consistent theme within the conditions being applied at the point of prospective approval. The themes related to the involvement of people who use services, and their carers. These themes were discussed with the University of Brighton (UoB) in September 2023, and November 2023 to ensure that the university was aware that these conditions required continued monitoring.

In September 2023, a meeting was held between the NMC and the UoB. At this meeting it was noted that the UoB had only submitted two exception reports to date. Following a meeting between the NMC and NHSE WTE Southeast in June 2023, NHSE WTE noted that the University of Brighton had reported nine incidences to them where students had raised concerns about placements. These concerns were not exceptionally reported to the NMC.

In November 2023, a meeting was held between the NMC and UoB. An update was provided on potential risk to suitable staffing for midwifery team by UoB. In January 2023 an exception report was submitted to advise that the executive board announced that a voluntary severance scheme would be opened up for academic staff. UoB has confirmed they will ensure skill mix to deliver the courses is maintained and where the person applying for VSS has a skill set that is operationally critical and cannot be replaced, the application will not be approved.

An anonymous concern was sent to the NMC, via email, in November 2023 regarding the amount of simulation, pre and post learning and reflection that was being counted toward practice hours. Further information in relation to this concern was sent to the NMC in January 2024.

Due to the scale of risks identified, the NMC Quality Assurance (QA) board commissioned an extraordinary review by independent visitors. The extraordinary review was to seek assurance in relation to the delivery of the approved pre-registration midwifery, nursing associate and nursing programmes.

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 UoB on the final day of the visit (19 April 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
	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
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 not met
	2.2 The AEI, together with their practice learning partners is unable to ensure all learning environments optimise	Standard 2.2 is not met

	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.	
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 not met
	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 not met
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 necessary expertise for their educational and assessor roles.	Standard 4.1 is not met

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

In April 2024, the extraordinary review visit reported was shared with UoB for factual accuracy checking. Following this period factual accuracy amendments were made to the report, and in May 2024 the final report was submitted to the NMC. UoB 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 outcomes, UoB were required to develop and implement an action plan to address the key risks identified to ensure that their pre-registration nursing programmes meet all NMC standards and requirements. An action plan was developed and refined by UoB, supported by the lead QA visitor. The agreed action plan was submitted to the NMC

As agreed by the QA board, UoB would be supported as part the NMC's critical concern for education process. The NMC QA Team met with UoB 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.

Update – June 2025

The UoB worked in collaboration with the NMC to evidence that the actions set out in the extraordinary review visit action plan had been met. Supporting documentation was submitted to demonstrate how the action plan requirements, and how the NMC education

standards had been addressed. This was subsequently reviewed by the NMC in June 2025. Following this review, it was confirmed that UoB pre-registration nursing programmes met all the required NMC standards and that assurance was provided, and the university was formally informed of this outcome. On this basis, 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 UoB, and the collaboration with stakeholders that has contributed to the achievement of this outcome.