23 February 2023

Test of Competence
Social Care webinar

Pilar Alcocer
Contracts Manager Test of Competence
Professional Regulation
Housekeeping

- We will be recording the session and will send the link out by email after the webinar
- Attendees are automatically muted
- Please use the questions box to share feedback and to present your queries – we’ve allowed some time for Q&As
- We may not get to all questions, but everything will be reviewed after the session
- We live-caption our online events to make them more accessible
- Let us know if you’re having technical issues via the questions box
- Any follow up comments can be sent to TOC@nmc-uk.org
# Today’s agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timings</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14:00 - 14:05</td>
<td>Welcome, introduction to the team and objectives for the session&lt;br&gt;Pilar Alcocer, Contracts Manager Test of Competence, NMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:05 - 14:40</td>
<td>Overview of the Test of Competence and support materials&lt;br&gt;Dave Mellor, Director, AlphaPlus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:40 - 14:50</td>
<td>An outline of the International process and candidate journey&lt;br&gt;Vidhya Sankoorikkal, International Registrations Team Manager, NMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:50 - 15:00</td>
<td>Q&amp;A session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00 - 15:15</td>
<td>Comfort break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:15 - 15:45</td>
<td>An overview of the support available at our OSCE test centres&lt;br&gt;Barry Ricketts, Deputy Provision Lead, Oxford Brookes University&lt;br&gt;Michelle Thompson, Test Centre Manager, University of Northampton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:45 - 15:55</td>
<td>Q&amp;A session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:55 - 16:00</td>
<td>Summary of the session and closing&lt;br&gt;Pilar Alcocer, Contracts Manager Test of Competence, NMC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives for today’s session

- Provide further insight into the way the Test of Competence has been designed and developed, covering both the CBT and the OSCE
- Provide an overview of the various support and preparation materials available and where to find them
- Meet our OSCE delivery partners and hear from them on what good pastoral care and test preparation looks like
- Understand the support available and information available for candidates to maximize their chances of success
- Explore ways to support candidates through greater collaboration
An Introduction to the Test of Competence

AlphaPlus Consultancy Ltd.

23 February 2023

**Partnership**
We work in partnership with our clients. This is more than a cliché for us: we care about the services we provide and the impact they have on learners. Experience has shown us that the best impact our work can have is when it is undertaken alongside our clients so we make partnership a key feature of our project approach and management method.

**Expertise**
We ensure our teams consist of genuine sector experts with understanding in breadth and depth of both the theory and the practical complex everyday challenges faced by education providers.

**Quality**
We manage projects effectively and to the highest quality, freeing up experts to concentrate on their specialism, but ensuring that activities are managed to meet expectations. This means only making promises that we know we can keep, and remembering the promises we have made to make sure we deliver.

**Development**
We are committed to the improvement of our staff, both to promote the long-term development of our business and as an end in itself: we believe in the value of education for all.

**Educationalists**
We are educationalists with a strong commitment to improving teaching, learning and assessment, based on intellectual integrity, sound evidence and innovative approaches.
NMC Test of Competence

- Overview of CBT and OSCE design
- How the test specification and blueprint work together
- What support materials are available
- Where to find them
Overview of the CBT and OSCE design
# Format of the nursing test of competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBT</td>
<td>Part A: Numeracy</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part B: Clinical</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2 hours and 30 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>10 stations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 station ‘APIE’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Assessment</td>
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<td>• Planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Implementation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 skill stations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 practical skills</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 professional values (PV)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 evidence-based practice (EBP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variable by station according to task-specific criteria</td>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 2 hours and 45 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APIE stations:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assessment station: 20</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Planning station: 14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Implementation station: 15</td>
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<td>• Evaluation station: 8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Skills stations:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Practical skills: 6-12 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PVs: 10 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EBP: 10 minutes</td>
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Test specification and blueprint

What is the specification?
The test specification is the key document which defines the purposes of the Test of Competence, how the Test is designed, what it will assess and how, and how results will be produced and presented.

What is the blueprint?
The blueprint shows how the standards of proficiency and associated skills and procedures for nurses, midwives and nursing associates may be tested in either the CBT, OSCE or both parts. Applicants can use the blueprint to prepare for each part of the test.

The ToC specifications and blueprints for all fields can be found here on the NMC website:

- Test of Competence 2021: Nursing test specification
- Test of Competence 2021: Adult nursing blueprint
Support Materials
What support materials are available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NMC website</th>
<th>Delivery partners Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CBT</strong></td>
<td>CBT Information booklet for nurses</td>
<td>Practice CBTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="home.pearsonvue.com/nmc/practicetests">home.pearsonvue.com/nmc/practicetests</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OSCE</strong></td>
<td>OSCE Information booklet for nurses</td>
<td>• Glossary of technical terms</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Preparing for your OSCE</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Nursing Station Timings</td>
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<td>• Mock OSCEs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Marking criteria for live OSCE stations</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Reading lists</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Illustrated equipment list</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust](Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust)</td>
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<td>[Oxford Brookes University](Oxford Brookes University)</td>
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<td>[University of Northampton](University of Northampton)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[University of Northumbria](University of Northumbria)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Ulster University](Ulster University)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to access support materials:

Preparation materials
Test of Competence 2021 for nurses and midwives

Contents
- Overview
- CBT
- OSCE
- Preparation materials

Webinar recordings
We held some webinars covering different aspects of the new test. You can watch the recordings and download slides for each of the webinars.

Introduction to the new Test of Competence 2021
Introduction to the new CBT

Candidate information booklets
These booklets give an overview of the CBT and OSCE, what candidates should expect on the day and how they can prepare.

CBT
- Test of Competence 2021: CBT information booklet for nurses
- Test of Competence 2021: CBT information booklet for midwives

OSCE
- Test of Competence 2021: OSCE information booklet for nurses
- Test of Competence 2021: OSCE information booklet for midwives

Test specifications
Test specifications show how the test is designed, what it will assess and how, and how results will be produced and presented.

- Test of Competence 2021: Midwifery test specification
- Test of Competence 2021: Nursing test specification

Test blueprints
These blueprints show how the relevant standards of proficiency and associated skills and procedures may be tested in either the CBT, OSCE or both parts.

- Test of Competence 2021: Midwifery blueprint
- Test of Competence 2021: Adult nursing blueprint
How to access support materials:

Other support materials

CBT

You can find CBT practice tests on Pearson VUE’s website. They are accessible to all and do not need to be booked.

Taking these practice tests will help you check your understanding and readiness for the new CBT and learn more about the question format, style and level of difficulty.

OSCE

You can find a pack of OSCE support materials, including OSCE marking criteria, mock exams and resource lists, on our approved OSCE test provider websites:

- Oxford Brookes University
- University of Northampton
- Ulster University
- Northumbria University
- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
How to access support materials: CBT

Practice tests for the Test 2021

The NMC is introducing a new Test of Competence in August to help you check your understanding of the topic and prepare for the test.

The practice tests are designed to help you understand the assessment process and practice the types of questions you will encounter in the actual test.

Practice tests contain 15 questions and take approximately 1 hour to complete.

You can take the practice tests as many times as you want, but you will only receive feedback on your responses to each question at the end of the test.

Before you start the practice test, you will need to access the support materials provided by the NMC.

To access the support materials, please follow these steps:

1. Go to the NMC website at www.alphaplusconsultancy.co.uk
2. Click on the "Support Materials" link
3. Select the "Practice Tests" option
4. Choose the appropriate test for your level

Once you have accessed the practice tests, you will be able to practice the types of questions you will encounter in the actual test.
How to access support materials OSCE:
Candidate information booklets
CBT information booklet:

- Contains overview information about the ToC
- How to apply
- Specific information on sitting the CBT at Pearson Vue test centres
- What to expect on the day of the CBT
- Structure of the CBT
- Information about results, the passing standard, re-sits, exceptional circumstances and reasonable adjustments.
OSCE information booklet:

- Contains overview information about nursing/midwifery practice in the UK
- Specific information on taking the OSCEs at test centres
- What to expect on the day of the OSCE
- Information about results, appeals, complaints, mitigating circumstances and reasonable adjustments
- Annexes containing sample forms for candidates.
Preparing for your OSCE booklet:

- Contains overview information about the ToC and nursing/midwifery practice in the UK
- Specific information on how to prepare for the OSCEs
- What to expect in the test centre
- Guide to the stations (APIE, clinical skills and written stations)
- Guidance about common mistakes
- Information about marking, moderation, results and feedback
- General tips and advice.
Mock OSCEs and associated resources
Mock OSCE documentation

We have developed this mock OSCE to provide an outline of the performance we expect and the criteria that the test of competence will assess. This mock OSCE contains an APIE, one pair of linked clinical skills, one PV and one EBP station.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council’s code (2018) outlines professional standards of practice and behaviours, setting out the expected performance and standards that are assessed through the test of competence.

The code is structured around four themes: prioritise people, practise effectively, preserve safety and promote professionalism and trust. These statements are explained below as the expected performance and criteria. The criteria must be used to promote the standards of proficiency in respect of knowledge, skills and attitudes. They have been designed to be applied across all fields of nursing practice, irrespective of the clinical setting, and they should be applied to the care needs of all patients.

Please note: this is a mock OSCE example for education and training purposes only.

The marking criteria and expected performance apply only to this mock OSCE. They provide a guide to the level of performance we expect in relation to nursing care, knowledge and attitude. Other scenarios will have different assessment criteria appropriate to the scenario.
Implementing Care

Scenario

Ash Potter was admitted to the surgical assessment unit after presenting with an infected abdominal wound, mild pain and constipation following an uncomplicated laparoscopic hemicolecotomy to remove a small primary colorectal cancer.

- Talk to the person.
- Please verbalise what you are doing and why to the examiner.
- Read out the chart and explain what you are checking/giving/not giving and why.
- Complete all the required drug administration checks.
- Complete the documentation and use the correct codes.
- The correct codes for non-administration are on the chart.
- Check and complete the last page of the chart.
Drugs Chart
Professional values example

Scenario
You are just about to commence the lunchtime drug round, you enter the clinical room and one of your nursing colleagues is in the room already.

You witness the nurse take a 30 milligram Codeine Phosphate tablet from the drug cupboard. She puts it into her mouth and swallows it in front of you.

You ask if she is okay and she tells you she needs the tablet for a headache. As far as you are aware this is an isolated incident.

• Using your knowledge of NMC (2018) The Code: “Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates”, consider the professional, ethical and legal implications of this situation.

• Please summarise the actions you would take in a number of bullet points.

• This is a silent written station. Please write clearly and legibly.
Marking criteria for live OSCEs

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Supplementary Adult Nursing Reading List .......................................................... 6

Core Adult Nursing Reading List

The following titles are essential reading for anyone entering the NMC Test of Competence:

  (This is accessible through test centre learning platform on receipt of payment for OSCE – please check edition details with your test centre.)

  https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-nurses/standards-of-proficiency-for-registered-nurses/

  https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code/

## Equipment list for OSCEs

### Appendix 2.0 Range of Equipment Used

Below is a list of equipment likely to be used throughout the OSCEs. Care has been taken to ensure this list is accurate, however due to availability, sometimes different brands and variants are stocked. Please take some time to read about the equipment and their functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PPE &amp; Hygiene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non Sterile Gloves, Latex Free (XS, S, M, L, XL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand Sanitizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aprons</td>
</tr>
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</table>
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The International registration process and candidate journey

Vidhya Sankoorikkal
International Registrations Team Manager, NMC
International Registration: The application process

- Eligibility and qualification application
- Test of Competence (and identity check @ OSCE)
- Registration application
- NMC assessment
- Registration
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Valid passport</td>
<td>• Qualification certificate</td>
<td>• Applicant declaration</td>
<td>• Approved language test (currently IELTS &amp; OET)</td>
<td>• Applicant declaration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evidence of name changes if relevant</td>
<td>• Registration certificate if they’ve registered using their qualification</td>
<td>• Supporting declaration from medical practitioner or occupational health department</td>
<td>• Pre-registration programme taught and examined in English. Supporting Information from Employers(SIFE) as supplementary evidence</td>
<td>• Supporting declaration from third party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Electronic verification to confirm eligibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Recent practice in an majority English speaking country</td>
<td>• Police clearances/DBS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE 1</td>
<td>STAGE 2</td>
<td>STAGE 3</td>
<td>STAGE 4</td>
<td>STAGE 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-app. checklist</td>
<td>Eligibility and Qualification</td>
<td>Evaluate Qualification</td>
<td>Test of Competence and Registration Application</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Immediate**

- Applicants can use our [pre-application checklist](#) tool to get a personalised checklist of everything they need to provide in the registration application.
- Applicants start their application and registers an account through NMC Online.

**14 Days**

- Applicants complete the eligibility. As part of this, they will need to provide:
  - Identity documents
  - Qualification details
  - Registration details (if applicable)
- Applicants must pay the evaluation fee of £140 through our secure payment site.
- Once payment is made, an email will be sent to the nominated third party verifiers to confirm applicant’s registration eligibility.
- Applicants are prompted to contact their verifiers to confirm receipt of email.

**30 Days**

- The application will enter the evaluation queue only if there is a mismatch in the applicants identity details or third party response(s). If there is no mismatch, they will automatically move onto stage 4.
- If they do not meet our eligibility criteria then the application will be closed.

**Dependent on the applicant and third parties. No expiry date for applications**

**Test of Competence**

- We will email the applicants with a ‘Test of Competence’ invitation with booking instructions.
- Computer Based Test (CBT) and Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) will need to be taken within 2 years of each other.
- Applicants are granted a maximum of 3 CBT and OSCE attempts as part of one application. For resits, applicants must wait at least 10 days between each sitting.

**Registration Application**

- Applicants can complete this stage in any order:
  - Test of Competence
  - Registration Application
- Applicant’s can complete the following through their online account:
  - Health declaration
  - Character declaration
  - Police clearance(s) and/or UK DBS check (Disclosure & Barring Service)
  - English language evidence
  - Confirm professional indemnity arrangement

**Final declaration stage**

- Applicants will be required to complete a final declaration. This will include confirmation that they are of good character, health and that they will comply with the NMC Code.
Q&A session
15 minutes comfort break
An overview of the support available at our OSCE Test Centres

Michelle Thompson, Test Centre Manager, UON
Barry Ricketts, Deputy Provision Lead, OBU
Introduction to the Test Centres
Test Centres contact details

- **Oxford Brookes University:**
  Trustbookings@brookes.ac.uk  01865 48 8418

- **University of Northampton:**
  Trustbookings@northampton.ac.uk  01604 892 066

- **Ulster University:**
  Ctc@ulster.ac.uk  02871 675150

- **Northumbria University:**
  CTCTrustEnquiries@Northumbria.ac.uk  0191 300 2441

- **Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust:**
  Leedsth-tr.oscebookings@nhs.net  0113 392 0752
The Candidate Journey: The OSCE process
The Candidate Journey: The OSCE process
Enhancing the candidate experience: pastoral support

- Early contact with candidate in their own country
- Support: buddy system / named person to support new groups
- Transcultural awareness of language, and cultural events which may impact on exam preparation
- Welcome to the UK packs, photos and video online links
- Getting used to the climate, food, travel and living conditions
- Understanding the NHS and wider health care sector
- Understanding the NMC code and the links to exam procedures and regulations
Pastoral support: at the test centres

- Test centres have invigilators who welcome, guide, and support the candidates throughout their exam day
- Understanding anxiety and how this impacts on their performance is important
- Ensure candidates eat and drink before and after the exam
- Clinical assessors offer support and look out for their wellbeing while they undertake OSCE stations
- Test centres offer a spare room for timeout and prayer rooms
- Drinking water facilities, hospitality available
The importance of support to promote achievement:

- All candidates need support. It is a fundamental step in adult learning
- It is key to share the materials available and how to access them, so candidates are aware of the support available at NMC and test centres websites
- Support from the employers enhances candidates self belief, and improves their motivation
- In reference to the 6 Cs – care and compassion are key to place candidates in a better position for succession on their OSCE journey
Train the Trainer Workshops available at Competence Test Centres

Aims of the virtual and face to face workshops:

- Build on existing knowledge about the NMC ToC assessment processes
- Develop greater understanding about the candidate and the candidate assessment journey to build resilience
- Explore educational theory of Simulation Based Education and debriefing during an OSCE to support candidate preparation
Train the Trainer Workshops available at Competence Test Centres

How to book these workshops:

- The centres provide workshops virtually, and face to face. The programme vary in duration to support different organisations and sponsor needs.
- The Train The Trainer Workshops can be booked directly through all the Competence Test Centre:
  - OBU: nmc_ttt@brookes.ac.uk
  - UON: ctc@northampton.ac.uk
  - Northumbria: CTCTrustEnquiries@northumbria.ac.uk
  - UU: ctc@ulster.ac.uk
  - LTH: leedsth-tr.oscebookings@nhs.net
Early Preparation: Resilience and Engagement

- Exam conditions: timed and encompasses patient and simulated activities
- Reflection of previous competence
- May have to be adapted to the participant’s previous level of learning
- Previous knowledge, education, experience, length of practice and role
What is assessed and how this relates to the NMC Professional Standards

- Safe patient care – Preserve Safety
- Decision-making and knowledge – Practise Effectively
- Psychomotor skills – use of skills equipment and procedures – Practise Effectively
- Critical thinking – Practise Effectively-Professional Values and Evidence Based Practice
- Application and context – range of clinical settings and patient scenarios - Prioritise People
What Preparation is needed

The following provides an overview of the OSCE content and is outlined in the published support materials to assist in preparing candidates:

**Assessment:** Undertake an A to E assessment using a range of Health care Assessment Tools whilst recording physiological observations

**Planning:** Document a care plan that identifies the care needs of the patient and prescribes evidence based care, utilising best practice

**Implementation:** Administering medication correctly and safely using a range of common medications seen in a variety of healthcare settings, whilst respecting the needs of the patient to ensure they receive informed information

**Evaluation:** Provide a verbal handover using the SBAR tool to convey the key information that will permit ongoing care for the patient
Candidate preparation for Skills stations

- Use the marking criteria and expected clinical performance and objectives to guide the learning and rehearsal
- Must be achievable within the timeframe
- Include evidence based practice, this may mean directing participants to further reading, guidelines or standards
- The theme of safe practice remains essential - this can be achieved through professional and ethical behaviour using The Code
Evidence Based Practice

• How to make evidence based (EB) practice a reality: use EB as a method for implementing best practice and so use:
  
  • Local Policy, National Policy and Legislation that underpins the skills and exam criteria
Professional Values

- Nursing, its regulation and implications for legal and ethical preparedness
- Professional Code of Conduct
- Professional Standards, behaviour and ethics
- Learn the principles of The Code (2018)
Post results and feedback

- All candidates are offered the opportunity to consent for their OSCE results to be shared with their employers, at the time of release. Test centres and NMC actively encourage this.

- This provides a supportive culture for practitioners to reflect on their performance and ensures:
  - Transparency of the results
  - Clarity and understanding which can guide candidates to rehearse and prepare for resits and professional practice
  - Provide educators with feedback that can enhance future candidate support
  - Identifies where specific and individualised support can be offered to the candidate
The strengths of our candidates

- Compassion
- Motivation and excitement to be practicing in the UK
- Holistic patient care
- Individualised planning
- Communication and procedural knowledge
- Professionalism
- Knowledge and confidence
Some common errors that may lead to failure to demonstrate competence

- Lack of familiarity with the documentation and the support materials available which may lead to incomplete and inaccurate documentation
- Not enough simulation and rehearsal of skills to aid familiarity with the equipment used in OSCE stations
- Poor understanding of policy which may lead to poor application of standard precautions
- The need for reflective working and peer support to share interpretation of vital signs and clinical decision making
- Lack of opportunity to practice systematic checking of medications using a variety of routes not used in the social care sector
Summary of the session and closing

Pilar Alcocer
Contracts Manager, Test of Competence
Professional Regulation
Thank you

• We hope this session has provided a useful steer for candidates and those supporting them

• Collaboration across employers is key to support candidates during their OSCE experience and support the social care system

• Please explore the options to partner with other social care organisations or NHS trusts in your area to develop your local support and preparation programmes

• Do not rush candidates: candidates having the right time to prepare for their OSCE, and access to the support and preparation materials is crucial for their success

• Please contact test centres to join their Train the Trainer programme and reflect on feedback provided to candidates
Thank you

• It is important that candidates and those supporting them reflect on the feedback provided by the test centre

• More information about the TOC can be found here: [www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/toc/toc-2021/](http://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/toc/toc-2021/)

• Slides and recording will be uploaded on our website

• If you have any further questions, please contact the team via [toc@nmc-uk.org](mailto:toc@nmc-uk.org)
Thank you