

Return to practice standards

Published 20 May 2019

Updated December 2019

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Our Registration and revalidation standards set out the minimum number of practice hours that a nurse, midwife or nursing associate must undertake to remain on, or rejoin, our register. People unable to meet these practice hours requirements who wish to remain on, or rejoin, our register must successfully complete an NMC approved return to practice programme, or, pass the NMC test of competence.

1. Readmission standards¹

In order to be eligible for readmission to the register you must have:

- completed 750 hours of practice in the previous five years, or
- completed 450 hours of practice in the previous three years, or
- completed the equivalent number of registered practice hours while registered with the relevant regulator overseas, or
- successfully completed a UK approved pre-registration qualification within five years, or
- successfully completed an NMC approved return to practice programme within five years, or
- passed the NMC test of competence within five years.

2. Revalidation standards

For those who have not completed minimum practice hours

If you have practised for fewer than the required number of hours in the three year period since your registration was last renewed (or you joined the register) then before the date of your application for renewal of registration you must:

- successfully complete an NMC approved return to practice programme
- pass the NMC test of competence.

¹ These standards are set under Article 19(3) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 (the Order) Rule 3(4) of the Education, Registration and Registration Appeals Rules 2004.

Practice hours

Registration	Minimum total practice hours required
Nurse	450
Midwife	450
Nurse and SChPN (Nurse/SChPN)	450
Midwife and SChPN (Midwife/SChPN)	450
Nurse and midwife (including Nurse/SChPN and Midwife/SChPN)	900 (to include 450 hours for nursing, 450 hours for midwifery)
Nursing associate	450
Nursing associate and nurse*	900 (to include 450 hours for nursing, 450 hours for nursing)
Nursing associate and midwife*	900 (to include 450 hours for nursing associate and 450 hours for midwifery)

*Triple registration for nurse, midwife and nursing associate is also possible; this would require 1,350 practice hours.

The role of the Nursing and Midwifery Council

What we do

We're the independent regulator for nurses, midwives and nursing associates. We hold a register of around 700,000 nurses, midwives and nursing associates who can practise in the UK.

Better and safer care for people is at the heart of what we do, supporting the healthcare professionals on our register to deliver the highest standards of care.

We make sure nurses, midwives and nursing associates have the skills they need to care for people safely, with integrity, expertise, respect and compassion, from the moment they step into their first job.

Learning does not stop the day nurses, midwives and nursing associates qualify. To promote safety and public trust, we require professionals to demonstrate throughout their career that they are committed to learning and developing to keep their skills up to date and improve as practitioners.

We want to encourage openness and learning among healthcare professions to improve care and keep the public safe. On the occasions when something goes wrong and people are at risk, we can step in to investigate and take action, giving patients and families a voice as we do so.

These standards were approved by Council at their meeting on 27 March 2019.