Table of Contents

Standards for post-registration programmes 2
About our standards 3
Introduction 4
The student journey 6
1. Selection, admission and progression 7
2. Curriculum 8
3. Practice learning 10
4. Supervision and assessment 11
5. Qualification to be awarded 13
Glossary 14
Standards for prescribing programmes 15
Introduction 16
About our standards 17
The Royal Pharmaceutical Society Competency Framework 18
Titles, qualifications and formularies 19
The student journey 21
1. Selection, admission and progression 22
2. Curriculum 23
3. Practice learning 24
4. Supervision and assessment 25
5. Qualification to be awarded 26
Glossary 27
Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education 28
About our standards 29
Introduction 30
Learning culture 32
Educational governance and quality 33
Student empowerment 35
Educators and assessors 37
Curricula and assessment 38
Glossary 39
Standards for student supervision and assessment 40
About our standards 41
Introduction 42
Effective practice learning 44
Supervision of students 45
Assessment of students and confirmation of proficiency 47
Glossary 50
Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes 51
About our standards 52
Introduction 53
Selection, admission and progression 55
Curriculum 56
Practice learning 57
Supervision and assessment 58
Qualification to be awarded 59
Glossary 60

Standards for post-registration programmes

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

About our standards

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Our standards for education and training include the Standards framework for nursing[1] and midwifery education, Standards for student supervision and assessment, and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

Our standards for education and training are set out in three parts:

Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment

Part 3: Programme standards:

- Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes
- Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes
- Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes
- Standards for prescribing programmes
- Standards for post-registration programmes: programmes leading to specialist community public health nurse qualifications and programmes leading to community nursing specialist practice qualifications
- Standards for return to practice programmes

Supporting information for our Standards for student supervision and assessment is on our website.

These standards help nursing and midwifery students achieve NMC proficiencies and programme outcomes. All nursing and midwifery professionals must practise in line with the requirements of the Code, the professional standards of practice, values and behaviours that nurses, midwives and nursing associates are expected to uphold.

1 We have used the phrase 'nursing' in this document to apply to the work of nurses and nursing associates. Nursing associates are a distinct profession in England with their own part of our register, but they are part of the nursing team.

ntroduction

ast Updated: 29/10/2026

n this guide

- Legislative framework

ur standards for specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN) and community nursing specialist practice ualification (SPQ) programmes set out the legal requirements, entry requirements, requirements for the curriculum and ractice learning, requirements for supervision and assessment, and information on the awards for these post-egistration programmes.

ublic safety is central to our standards. Registered nurses and midwives undertaking these programmes are post-egistration students in this context. They will be in contact with people throughout their education. It's important they row in confidence, and further develop their knowledge and skills in a safe, supportive and effective way.

hese programme standards must be read with our Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education and tandards for student supervision and assessment, both of which apply to all NMC approved programmes. NMC pproved Education Institutions (AEIs) intending to deliver post-registration education programmes must comply with all hese standards to run an approved programme.

ducation providers structure their programmes to comply with our programme standards. They design their curricula round the proficiencies we set. Proficiencies are the knowledge, skills and behaviours that nurses and midwives need n order to practise.

e also publish standards of proficiency for nursing and midwifery professions, including Standards of proficiency for pecialist community public health nurses and Standards of proficiency for community nursing SPQs.

ur standards for education and training highlight the need for programmes to adopt an inclusive approach to ecruitment, selection and progression, ensuring admissions and all other academic processes are open, fair, ransparent and demonstrate an understanding of and take measures to address underrepresentation.

urricula for specialist community public health nurses and community nursing specialist practice qualifications may be lexible to accommodate opportunities for shared learning, including between post-registration programmes and the iffering fields of SCPHN and community nursing SPQ practice that reflect the range of learning opportunities and eeds and in recognising prior experience as registered professionals. Students will learn and be assessed in theory, imulation and practice environments and settings.

tudents are assessed against proficiencies for their intended field of SCPHN practice or SCPHN public health nurse ractice.

he awards are as follows:

- SCPHN: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse
- SCPHN: public health nurse[2]

tudents are assessed against proficiencies for their intended community nursing SPQ practice.

he awards are as follows:

- Community nursing SPQ: in the field of community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing
- Community nursing in health and social care SPQ: for which other fields of community nursing may be specified[3].

e believe that involving people who use services and members of the public in the planning and delivery of curricula ill promote public confidence in the education of nursing and midwifery professionals. We encourage the use of upportive evidence and engagement from people who have experienced care.

uccessful completion of the programme confirms the student is capable of providing safe, effective and kind care that mproves health and wellbeing.

Students will learn and be assessed in theory, simulation and practice environments and settings in a specific field of practice SCPHN role, a SCPHN public health nurse role, in a specific field of practice community nursing SPQ role or in a community nursing in health and social care SPQ role.

Through our quality assurance processes we check that education programmes meet all of our standards, that the programme outcomes relate to the proficiencies for particular qualifications and that AEIs and practice learning partners are managing risks effectively. We monitor risks to quality in education and training using internal and external intelligence. This intelligence gathering includes analysis of system regulators' reports.

Before any programme can be run, we make sure it meets our standards. We do this through an approvals process, in accordance with our quality assurance framework.

Overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the quality of any educational programme lies with the AEI in partnership with its practice learning partners.

Legislative framework

Article 5(2) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 ('the Order') requires the NMC to establish the standards of proficiency necessary to be admitted to each part of the register and for safe and effective practice under that part of the register. This article applies to SCPHN standards of proficiency.

Article 15(1) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 requires the NMC to establish the standards for education and training which are necessary to achieve the standards of proficiency for admission to any part of the register. This article applies to SCPHN programme standards.

Article 19(6) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 allows the NMC to establish standards of education and training for any additional qualifications that may be recorded on the register. Articles 15(3) to (9) and articles 16 to 18 shall apply in respect of those standards as if they were standards established under article 15(1)(a). This means the NMC may establish standards of education and training and may approve a course of education or qualification in relation to SPQs.

These post-registration programme standards are established under these provisions.

[1] The SCPHN public health nurse qualification (PHN) qualification does not have a predetermined field of SCPHN practice

[2] The community nursing SPQ in health and social care field of practice is not predetermined by the NMC. However the field of practice must be specified by the AEI as part of the NMC programme approval process.

The student journey

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In conjunction with Parts 1 and 2 as outlined above, standards for specialist community public health nurses and community nursing specialist practice qualification programmes follow the student journey and are grouped under the following five headings:

1.Selection, admission and progression

Standards about an applicant's suitability and continued participation in a specialist community public health nurse programme or community nursing specialist practice qualification programme

2.Curriculum

Standards for the content, delivery and evaluation of programmes for specialist community public health nurse and community nursing specialist practice qualifications

3.Practice learning

Standards specific to learning that takes place in practice settings for students undertaking programmes leading to specialist community public health nurse and community nursing specialist practice qualifications

4.Supervision and assessment

Standards for safe and effective supervision and assessment for specialist community public health nurse and community nursing specialist practice qualification programmes

5.Qualification to be awarded

Standards which state the award and information for:

- Specialist community public health nurse in the field of: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse
- Specialist community public health nurse (public health nursing)
- Community nursing specialist practice qualifications: community children's nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing
- Community nursing in health and social care specialist practice qualification (for those in other identified field(s) of community nursing practice).

1. Selection, admission and progression

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- Selection, admission and progression

Selection, admission and progression

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

1.1ensure that on entry to the programme the applicant is an:

1.1.1NMC 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

1.1.2NMC 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

1.2confirm 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

1.3provide opportunities that enable eligible[4] 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

1.4provide 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

1.5confirm 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

1.6consider recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the:

1.6.1programme learning outcomes and standards of proficiency for the applicant's intended field of SCPHN practice or SCPHN public health nurse practice

1.6.2programme 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

1.7where 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 is capable of being mapped to the RPS Competency Framework for all Prescribers[5] for applicants, and

1.8where 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.

[4] SCPHN applicants must be RN1, midwife or both. SPQ applicants must be RN1

[5] Royal College of Pharmacy Competency Framework for All Prescribers

2. Curriculum

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

2.1ensure 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[6] for:

2.1.1all selected fields of SCPHN practice and/or SCPHN PHN practice and/or for

2.1.2all selected fields of community nursing SPQ practice and/or in other specified fields of community nursing SPQ in health and social care practice

2.2comply with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

2.3confirm SCPHN and/or community nursing SPQ programmes comply with the NMC Standards for prescribing programmes[7]

2.4state routes within the programme for:

2.4.1students to enter the SCPHN register in a specific field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse

2.4.2students to enter the SCPHN register for the public health nurse qualification

2.4.3students 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

2.4.4students to annotate their registration in community nursing SPQ practice in health and social care

2.5ensure programme learning outcomes reflect the:

2.5.1core and field specific standards of proficiency for SCPHN and for the intended field(s) of SCPHN practice: health visiting, school nursing, occupational health nursing

2.5.2core standards of proficiency for SCPHN that are tailored to SCPHN public health nursing

2.5.3standards 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

2.6set out the general and professional content necessary to meet the:

2.6.1core and field specific standards of proficiency for each intended field of SCPHN practice: health visiting, school nursing, occupational health nursing,

2.6.2core standards of proficiency for SCPHN public health nurse qualification

2.6.3standards 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

2.7set out the content necessary to meet the programme outcomes for each intended field of:

2.7.1SCPHN practice: health visiting, school nursing, occupational health nursing and/or SCPHN public health nursing,

2.7.2community 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

2.8ensure that the curriculum provides a balance of theory and practice learning opportunities, using a range of learning and teaching strategies

2.9ensure technology and simulation opportunities are used effectively and proportionately across the curriculum to support supervision, learning and assessment

2.10ensure programmes delivered in Wales comply with legislation which supports use of the Welsh language, and

2.11ensure programmes are:

2.11.1of suitable length to support student achievement of all proficiencies and programme outcomes for their intended SCPHN or community nursing SPQ award

2.11.2no less than 45 programmed weeks of theory and practice learning for full-time programmes/pro rata for part time programmes.

See Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education 2.15, 2.19 and 5.4

See: Standards for prescribing programmes

3. Practice learning

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved education institutions must:

3.1ensure 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

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

3.2ensure 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

3.3provide practice learning opportunities that allow students to develop, progress and meet all the standards of proficiency for their:

3.3.1intended field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse or,

3.3.2SCPHN public health nurse

3.3.3intended 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,

3.3.4in other specified field(s) of community nursing in health and social care nursing

3.4ensure that practice learning complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

3.5take account of students' individual learning needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning, including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, and

3.6ensure 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:

3.6.1intended field of SCPHN practice, SCPHN PHN practice or,

3.6.2their intended field of community nursing SPQ practice or community nursing SPQ in health and social care practice.

4. Supervision and assessment

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

4.1ensure student support, supervision, learning and assessment complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

4.2liaise, 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[8]

4.3ensure practice supervision, the assessment of practice and academic assessment complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

4.4ensure practice supervisors:

4.4.1have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the NMC principles for preceptorship as SCPHN or community nursing SPQ qualified professionals or

4.4.2can 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

4.5ensure practice and academic assessors:

4.5.1have undertaken a period of preceptorship in line with the NMC principles for preceptorship as SCPHNs or community nurses with a SPQ or,

4.5.2can 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

4.6ensure 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

4.6.1in 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

4.7provide constructive feedback to students throughout the programme to support their learning and development for meeting the standards of proficiency and programme learning outcomes for:

4.7.1their intended field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse,

4.7.2SCPHN public health nurse,

4.7.3their intended SPQ in the field of: community children’s nursing, community learning disabilities nursing, community mental health nursing, district nursing, general practice nursing, or

4.7.4other specified field(s) of community nursing SPQ in health and social care

4.8ensure 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, and

4.9assess the student’s suitability for award and confirm overall proficiency based on the successful completion of all practice learning relevant to:

4.9.1their intended field of SCPHN practice: health visitor, school nurse, occupational health nurse,

4.9.2SCPHN public health nurse practice,

4.9.3their 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

4.9.4other specified field(s) of practice for the community nursing SPQ in health and social care.

This links directly to Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education and in particular requirement 4.7

5. Qualification to be awarded

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- Qualification to be awarded

Qualification to be awarded

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

5.1ensure that the minimum academic level for SCPHN and community nursing SPQ is at postgraduate masters' level

5.2inform the student that the SCPHN award[9] 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

5.3inform the student that the community nursing SPQ award[10] 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

5.4inform 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, and

5.5inform 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.

9 SCPHN registration
10 Recordable qualifications

Glossary

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved Education Institutions (AEIs): the status awarded by the NMC to an institution, or part of an institution, or combination of institutions that work in partnership with practice placement and work placed learning providers. AEIs will have provided us with assurance that they are accountable and capable of delivering NMC approved education programmes.

Community nursing: care provided by nurses in the community including but not limited to nursing care provided where people live, at home or close to home, in adult social care settings, educational settings, primary care, community clinics, outreach centres, health and justice and other community settings or establishments.

Educators: in the context of the NMC standards for education and training, educators are those who deliver, support, supervise and assess theory, practice and/or work placed learning.

Other specified field(s) of community nursing in health and social care: this is including but not limited to nurses practicing in the context of offender health, the social care sector, hospice sector, as determined by the AEI and their learning practice partner.

People: individuals or groups who receive services from nurses and midwives, healthy and sick people, parents, children, families, carers, representatives, including educators, students and others within and outside the learning environment.

Practice learning partners: organisations that provide practice learning necessary for supporting pre-registration and post-registration students in meeting proficiencies and programme outcomes.

Protected learning time: time in a health, care or other setting during which students are learning and are supported to learn. Students must be supervised during protected learning time. The level of supervision required is a matter of professional judgment and will depend on the competence and confidence of the student, and the risks associated with the intervention being delivered.

Quality assurance: NMC processes for making sure all AEIs and their approved education programmes comply with our standards.

Reasonable adjustments: where a student requires a reasonable adjustment related to a disability. We also use it to mean adjustment relating to any protected characteristics as set out in the equalities and human rights legislation.

Recognition of prior learning: a process that enables previous certificated or experiential learning to be recognised and accepted as meeting some programme outcomes. This means it includes both theory and practice achievement.

Simulation: an educational method which uses a variety of modalities to support students in developing their knowledge, behaviours and skills, with the opportunity for repetition, feedback, evaluation and reflection to achieve their programme outcomes and be confirmed as capable of safe and effective practice.

Student: any individual enrolled onto an NMC approved education programme whether full-time or less than full-time.

Standards for prescribing programmes

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Our standards for education and training include the Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education, Standards for student supervision and assessment, and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

- Introduction
- About our standards
- The Royal Pharmaceutical Society Competency Framework
- Titles, qualifications and formularies
- The student journey
- Selection, admission and progression
- Curriculum
- Practice learning
- Supervision and assessment
- Qualification to be awarded
- Glossary for standards for prescribing programme

ntroduction

ast Updated: 29/10/2026

Our Standards for prescribing programmes sets out the legal requirements, entry requirements, availability of ecognition of prior learning, requirements for supervision and assessment and information on the award for all NMC pproved prescribing programmes.

Student nurse and midwife prescribers in the UK must successfully complete an NMC approved post-registration prescribing programme in order to meet the standards of proficiency necessary for an annotation to be made against an entry on the NMC register as a nurse or midwife prescriber.

Public safety is central to our standards. Students will be in contact with people throughout their education and it's mportant that they learn in a safe and effective way.

These programme standards should be read with the NMC's Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education and Standards for student supervision and assessment, both of which apply to all NMC approved programmes. NMC Approved Education Institutions (AEIs) intending to deliver our prescribing programmes must comply with all these standards to run an approved programme.

Education providers structure their educational programmes to comply with our programme standards. They also design their curricula around the published proficiencies for a particular programme and students are assessed against hese proficiencies to make sure they are capable of providing safe, effective and kind care that improves health and wellbeing.

Proficiencies are the knowledge, skills and behaviours that nurses andmidwives need in order to practise. We publish standards of proficiency for the nursing and midwifery professions as well as proficiencies for NMC pproved post-registration qualifications.

Our standards for education and training highlight the need for programmes to adopt an inclusive approach to ecruitment, selection and progression, ensuring admissions and all other academic processes are open, fair, ransparent and demonstrate an understanding of and take measures to address underrepresentation.

Through our quality assurance processes we check that education programmes meet all of our standards regarding the structure and delivery of educational programmes, that the programme outcomes relate to the expected proficiencies for particular qualifications and that AEIs and practice learning partners are managing risks effectively. Using internal and external intelligence we monitor risks to quality in education and training;
his intelligence gathering includes analysis of system regulator reports.

We believe that involving people who use services and members of the public in the planning and delivery of curricula will promote public confidence in the education of nursing and midwifery professionals. We expect the use of supportive evidence and engagement from people who have experienced care.

Before any programme can be run, we make sure it meets our standards. We do this through an approvals process, in accordance with our quality assurance framework.

AEIs, their practice learning partners, and employers all have ownership and accountability for the development, delivery and management of nurse and midwife prescriber programmes, including curricula and assessment, in line with our standards.

egislative framework

Article 19(6) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 ('the Order') allows the NMC to establish standards for education and training that lead to additional qualifications which may be recorded on the NMC register.
The Standards for prescribing programmes are made under this provision.

About our standards

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Our standards for education and training include the Standards framework for nursing[1] and midwifery education, Standards for student supervision and assessment, and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

Our standards for education and training are set out in three parts:

Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment

Part 3: Programme standards:

- Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes
- Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes
- Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes
- Standards for prescribing programmes
- Standards for post-registration programmes: programmes leading to specialist community public health nurse qualifications and programmes leading to community nursing specialist practice qualifications
- Standards for return to practice programmes

Supporting information for our Standards for student supervision and assessment is on our website.

These standards help nursing and midwifery students achieve NMC proficiencies and programme outcomes. All nursing and midwifery professionals must practise in line with the requirements of the Code, the professional standards of practice, values and behaviours that nurses, midwives and nursing associates are expected to uphold.

1 We have used the phrase 'nursing' in this document to apply to the work of nurses and nursing associates. Nursing associates are a distinct profession in England with their own part of our register, but they are part of the nursing team.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society Competency Framework

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

As part of our commitment to inter-professional learning and in recognition of the emphasis now being placed on adopting interdisciplinary approaches to prescribing proficiency, we have decided that in future all NMC approved prescribing programmes must deliver outcomes which meet the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's (RPS) Competency Framework for all Prescribers[2].

For all categories of prescriber, the RPS Competency Framework applies in full and demonstration of all those competencies contained within it must be achieved in order to be awarded prescriber status.

They must also be maintained thereafter throughout subsequent prescribing practice. The category of award determines the formulary a qualified prescriber may prescribe from.

[2] This and subsequent references in these standards to the RPS Competency Framework apply to the version of that document that was in place when these standards came into effect and to any subsequent revisions to it or any documents that replace it.

Titles, qualifications and formularies

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- 1. Community practitioner nurse or midwife prescriber
- 2. Nurse or midwife independent prescriber
- 3. Supplementary prescriber

The following three titles apply to registered nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses (SCPHNs) who are able to prescribe.

1. Community practitioner nurse or midwife prescriber

This refers to a registered nurse (level 1), midwife or SCPHN who has an annotation next to their name on our register confirming that they are qualified to prescribe drugs, medicines and appliances from the Nurse Prescribers' Formulary for Community Practitioners[3] in the current edition of the British National Formulary[4].

To obtain community practitioner nurse or midwife prescriber status, a registered nurse, midwife or SCPHN must successfully complete either:

1.1A community practitioner nurse prescribing course as part of an existing approved SCPHN or district nursing specialist practitioner qualification (SPQ) education programme. This is sometimes known as a 'V100 course' from the code that is used to enter the annotation onto the NMC register indicating that a registrant has successfully completed a prescribing course as part of a SCPHN or district nursing SPQ programme and can prescribe from the limited community formulary; or

1.2A stand-alone prescribing course for nurse or midwives who have not undertaken the community practitioner nurse (V100) qualification as part of an integrated programme of education, for example as part of a specialist practice qualification in district nursing or a SCPHN health visiting programme but who wish to be able to prescribe from the Nurse Prescribers' Formulary for Community Practitioners in the current edition of the British National Formulary. This is sometimes known as a 'V150 course' from the code that is used to enter the annotation onto the NMC register indicating that a nurse or midwife (who is not a SCPHN and has not completed an SPQ as, for example, a district nurse that includes a prescribing qualification) has successfully completed an approved NMC prescribing programme and can prescribe from the limited community formulary.

2. Nurse or midwife independent prescriber

This refers to a registered nurse (level 1), midwife or SCPHN who has an annotation next to their name on our register confirming that they may prescribe any medicine for any medical condition within their competence (with the exception of certain controlled drugs).

3. Supplementary prescriber

This refers to a registered nurse (level 1), midwife or SCPHN who has an annotation next to their name on our register confirming that they are able to work in partnership with an independent prescriber (such as a doctor or dentist) to implement an agreed patient/client-specific clinical management plan with the patient/client's agreement.

To obtain independent/supplementary prescriber status, a registered nurse, midwife or SCPHN must successfully complete an independent/supplementary prescriber preparation programme. This is sometimes known as a 'V300 course', from the code that is used to enter the annotation onto the NMC register indicating that a nurse or midwife has successfully completed an NMC approved prescribing programme that gives them independent/supplementary prescriber status, allowing them to prescribe any drugs (except certain controlled drugs) appropriate to their scope of practice.

Stand-alone extended formulary prescriber status was previously available by way of successfully completing the now discontinued V200 prescribing programme, before supplementary prescribing was introduced in 2003.

The above titles are set out in law[5] and in NMC legislation[6].

- Nurse Prescribers' Formulary
- British National Formulary
- Human Medicines Regulations SI 2012/1916, regulations 214(3)(c), 214(3)(d) and 214(4).
- The Nurses and Midwives (Parts of and Entries in the Register) Order of Council 2004 ("the Parts and Entries Order") SI 2004/1765, Article 7(2).

The student journey

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- The student journey

The student journey

Standards for prescribing programmes follow the student prescriber's journey and are grouped under the following five headings:

1. Selection, admission and progression

Standards about an applicant's suitability and continued participation in a prescribing programme

2. Curriculum

Standards for the content, delivery and evaluation of prescribing programmes

3. Practice learning

Standards specific to learning for student prescribers that takes place in practice settings

4. Supervision and assessment

Standards for safe and effective supervision and assessment for prescribing programmes

5. Qualification to be awarded

Standards which state the award and information for annotation onto the NMC register

1. Selection, admission and progression

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved education institutions together with practice learning partners must:

1.1ensure that on entry to the programme the applicant is a registered nurse (level 1), a registered midwife or a SCPHN

1.2provide opportunities that enable all nurse (level 1), midwife or SCPHN registrants (including NHS, self-employed or non-NHS employed registrants) to apply for entry onto an NMC approved prescribing programme

1.3confirm that the necessary governance structures are in place (including clinical support, access to protected learning time and employer support where appropriate) to enable students to undertake, and be adequately supported throughout, the programme

1.4consider recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the RPS Competency Framework for all Prescribers

1.5confirm on entry that any applicant selected to undertake a prescribing programme has the competence, experience and academic ability to study at the level required for that programme

1.6confirm that the applicant is capable of safe and effective practice at a level of proficiency appropriate to the programme to be undertaken and their intended area of prescribing practice in the following areas:

1.6.1Clinical/health assessment

1.6.2Diagnostics/care management

1.6.3Planning and evaluation of care, and

1.7ensure that applicants for V300 supplementary/independent prescribing programmes have been registered with the NMC for a minimum of one year prior to application for entry onto the programme.

2. Curriculum

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved educations institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

2.1ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

2.2ensure that all prescribing programmes are designed to fully deliver the competencies set out in the RPS Competency Framework for all Prescribers, as necessary for safe and effective prescribing practice

2.3state the learning and teaching strategies that will be used to support achievement of those competencies

2.4develop programme outcomes that inform learning in relation to the formulary relevant to the individual's intended scope of prescribing practice:

2.4.1stating the general and professional content necessary to meet the programme outcomes

2.4.2stating the prescribing specific content necessary to meet the programme outcomes

2.4.3confirming that the programme outcomes can be applied to all parts of the NMC register: the four fields of nursing practice (adult, mental health, learning disabilities and children's nursing); midwifery; and specialist community public health nursing;

2.5ensure that the curriculum provides a balance of theory and practice learning, using a range of learning and teaching strategies

2.6ensure technology and simulation opportunities are used effectively and proportionately across the curriculum to support supervision, learning and assessment, and

2.7ensure that programmes delivered in Wales comply with any legislation which supports the use of the Welsh language.

3. Practice learning

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved education institutions must:

3.1ensure that suitable and effective arrangements and governance for practice learning are in place for all applicants including arrangements specifically tailored to those applicants who are self-employed.

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

3.2ensure that practice learning complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment, and

3.3ensure 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.

4. Supervision and assessment

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

4.1ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

4.2ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

4.3appoint a programme leader in accordance with the requirements of the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education. The programme leader of a prescribing programme may be any registered healthcare professional with appropriate knowledge, skills and experience

4.4ensure the programme leader works in conjunction with the Lead Midwife for Education (LME) and the practice assessor to ensure adequate support for any midwives undertaking prescribing programmes

4.5ensure the student is assigned to a practice assessor who is a registered healthcare professional and an experienced prescriber with suitable equivalent qualifications for the programme the student is undertaking

4.5.1In exceptional circumstances, the same person may fulfil the role of practice supervisor and practice assessor for that part of the programme where the prescribing student is undergoing 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 assessor roles to be carried out by the same person

4.6ensure the student is assigned to an academic assessor who is a registered healthcare professional with suitable equivalent qualifications for the programme the student is undertaking

4.7provide constructive feedback to students throughout the programme to support their development as necessary for meeting the RPS competencies and programme outcomes

4.8assess the student's suitability for award based on the successful completion of a period of practice based learning relevant to their field of prescribing practice

4.9ensure that all programme learning outcomes are met, addressing all areas necessary to meet the RPS competencies. This includes all students:

4.9.1successfully passing a pharmacology exam (the pharmacology exam must be passed with a minimum score of 80 percent), and

4.9.2successfully passing a numeracy assessment related to prescribing and calculation of medicines (the numeracy assessment must be passed with a score of 100 percent).

5. Qualification to be awarded

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- 5 Qualification to be awarded

5 Qualification to be awarded

Approved Education Institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

5.1following successful completion of an NMC approved programme of preparation, confirm that the registered nurse (level 1), midwife or SCPHN is eligible to be recorded as a prescriber, in either or both categories of:

5.1.1a community practitioner nurse or midwife prescriber (V100/V150), or

5.1.2a nurse or midwife independent/supplementary prescriber (V300)

5.2ensure that participation in and successful completion of an NMC approved prescribing programme leads to accreditation at a level equivalent to a bachelor's degree[7] as a minimum award

5.3inform the student that the 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 retake and successfully complete the programme in order to qualify and register their award as a prescriber[8], and

5.4inform the 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.

[7] Level 6 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Level 9 in Scotland.
[8] The requirement to undertake the qualification again is a standard made by Council under its powers contained at Article 19(3) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 as amended)

Glossary

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved Education Institutions (AEIs): the status awarded by the NMC to an institution, or part of an institution, or combination of institutions that work in partnership with practice placement and work placed learning providers. AEIs will have provided us with assurance that they are accountable and capable of delivering NMC approved education programmes.

Educators: in the context of the NMC standards for education and training, educators are those who deliver, support, supervise and assess theory, practice and/or work placed learning.

Formulary: an official list giving details of prescribable medicines. The main function of a nursing and midwifery prescription formulary is to specify those particular medications that are approved to be prescribed by nurses and midwives, depending on the level of qualification they have obtained.

Nurse and midwife prescribers: the collective title for those nurses and midwives who have successfully completed an NMC approved prescribing programme and had that qualification added as an annotation to their entry on the NMC register.

Pharmacology: the study of medicinal drugs and their effect on the body. This includes both pharmacokinetics (the effect of the body on drugs) and pharmacodynamics (the effect of drugs on the body).

Practice learning partners: organisations that provide practice learning necessary for supporting pre-registration and post-registration students in meeting proficiencies and programme outcomes.

Quality assurance: NMC processes for making sure all AEIs and their approved education programmes comply with our standards.

Recognition of prior learning: a process that enables previous certificated or experiential learning to be recognised and accepted as meeting some programme outcomes and requirements; this means it includes both theory and practice achievement.

Simulation: an educational method which uses a variety of modalities to support students in developing their knowledge, behaviours and skills, with the opportunity for repetition, feedback, evaluation and reflection to achieve their programme outcomes and be confirmed as capable of safe and effective practice.

Student: any individual enrolled onto an NMC approved programme at pre-registration or post-registration level, whether full-time or less than full-time.

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Our standards for education and training include the Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education, Standards for student supervision and assessment, and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

About our standards

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Our standards for education and training include the Standards framework for nursing[1] and midwifery education, Standards for student supervision and assessment, and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

Our standards for education and training are set out in three parts:

Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment

Part 3: Programme standards:

- Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes
- Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes
- Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes
- Standards for prescribing programmes
- Standards for post-registration programmes: programmes leading to specialist community public health nurse qualifications and programmes leading to community nursing specialist practice qualifications
- Standards for return to practice programmes

Supporting information for our Standards for student supervision and assessment is on our website.

These standards help nursing and midwifery students achieve NMC proficiencies and programme outcomes. All nursing and midwifery professionals must practise in line with the requirements of the Code, the professional standards of practice, values and behaviours that nurses, midwives and nursing associates are expected to uphold.

1 We have used the phrase 'nursing' in this document to apply to the work of nurses and nursing associates. Nursing associates are a distinct profession in England with their own part of our register, but they are part of the nursing team.

ntroduction

ast Updated: 29/10/2026

ur Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education applies to all Approved Education Institutions (AEIs) and heir practice learning partners that are running NMC approved programmes.

rticle 15(1) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 ('the Order')[2] requires the Council to establish standards for ducation and training which are necessary to achieve the standards of proficiency for admission to the register, as equired by Article 5(2) of the Order. The Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education is established nder the provision of Article 15(1) of the Order.

hese standards aim to provide AEIs and practice learning partners with the flexibility to develop innovative approaches o all education for nurses, midwives and nursing associates, while being accountable for the local delivery and anagement of approved programmes in line with our standards. Pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes nd post-registration programmes may offer various academic and flexible routes to registration and annotation when eeking approval in line with our standards.

hese standards should be read with the Standards for student supervision and assessment, and the programme tandards which are specific for each pre-registration and post-registration educational programme. Together these are he NMC standards for education and training for the nursing and midwifery professions. Education institutions must be pproved against these standards to run any NMC approved programmes.

EIs are responsible for working with practice learning partners to manage the quality of their educational programmes. verall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the quality of any educational programme lies with an AEI in artnership with practice learning partners who provide opportunities for practice experience to nursing and midwifery tudents. Before a programme can be run, an approval process takes place through which we check that the proposed rogramme meets our standards.

ublic safety is central to our standards. Students will be in contact with people throughout their education and it's mportant that they learn in a safe and effective way.

hrough our quality assurance processes we check that education programmes meet our standards, and that ducation institutions and practice learning partners are managing risks effectively. Using internal and external ntelligence we monitor risks to quality in education and training; this intelligence gathering includes analysis of system egulator reports.

pproved education providers are monitored and we have processes for collecting, analysing and responding to any isk intelligence we receive regarding educational programmes, including concerns raised with us directly by students. pproved education providers are also required to self-report any risks or concerns that could affect the quality of rogramme delivery and, therefore, public protection.

e strongly encourage people to take part in quality assurance events, where they will be asked to share experiences f nurse and midwifery education and suggest improvements.

EIs must seek permission for approval for programme endorsement for programmes approved in the UK, to be elivered in a specified location outside the UK. This must be done in line with the NMC quality assurance framework.

ur Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education is set out under the following five headings:

. Learning culture

e will only approve programmes where the learning culture is ethical, open and honest, is conducive to safe and ffective learning that respects the principles of equality and diversity, and where innovation, inter-professional learning nd team working are embedded

2. Educational governance and quality

e expect education providers to comply with all legal and regulatory requirements

3. Student empowerment

We want students to be empowered and provided with the learning opportunities they need to achieve the desired proficiencies and programme outcomes

4. Educators and assessors

We will seek assurance that those who support, supervise and assess students are suitably qualified, prepared and skilled, and receive the necessary support for their role

5. Curricula and assessment

We set standards for curricula and assessment that enable students to achieve the outcomes required to practise safely and effectively in their chosen area

We use these standards to assess the safety and effectiveness of all learning environments.

2 SI 2002/253

SI 2002/253

Learning culture

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- Standards
- Requirements

Standards

1.1The learning culture prioritises the safety of people, including carers, students and educators, and enables the values of the Code to be upheld.

1.2Education and training is valued in all learning environments.

Requirements

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

1.1demonstrate that the safety of people is a primary consideration in all learning environments

1.2prioritise the wellbeing of people promoting critical self-reflection and safe practice in accordance with the Code

1.3ensure people have the opportunity to give and if required, withdraw, their informed consent to students being involved in their care

1.4ensure educators and others involved in supervision, learning and assessment understand their role in preserving public safety

1.5ensure students and educators understand how to raise concerns or complaints and are encouraged and supported to do so in line with local and national policies without fear of adverse consequences

1.6ensure any concerns or complaints are investigated and dealt with effectively

1.7ensure concerns or complaints affecting the wellbeing of people are addressed immediately and effectively

1.8ensure mistakes and incidents are fully investigated and learning reflections and actions are recorded and disseminated

1.9ensure students are supported and supervised in being open and honest with people in accordance with the professional duty of candour

1.10ensure the learning culture is fair, impartial, transparent, fosters good relations between individuals and diverse groups, and is compliant with equalities and human rights legislation

1.11promote programme improvement and advance equality of opportunity through effective use of information and data

1.12ensure programmes are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and co-produced with people who use services and other stakeholders

1.13work with service providers to demonstrate and promote inter-professional learning and working, and

1.14support opportunities for research collaboration and evidence-based improvement in education and service provision.

Educational governance and quality

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- Standards
- Requirements

Standards

2.1There are effective governance systems that ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements, differentiating where appropriate between the devolved legislatures of the United Kingdom, with clear lines of responsibility and accountability for meeting those requirements and responding when standards are not met, in all learning environments.

2.2All learning environments optimise safety and quality, taking account of the diverse needs of, and working in partnership with, service users, students and all other stakeholders.

Requirements

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

2.1comply with all relevant legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements

2.2ensure programmes are designed to meet proficiencies and outcomes relevant to the programme

2.3comply with NMC programme standards specific to the programme being delivered

2.4comply with NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

2.5adopt a partnership approach with shared responsibility for theory and practice supervision, learning and assessment, including clear lines of communication and accountability for the development, delivery, quality assurance and evaluation of their programmes

2.6ensure that recruitment and selection of students is open, fair and transparent and includes measures to understand and address underrepresentation

2.7ensure that people who use services and representatives from relevant stakeholder groups are engaged in partnership in student recruitment and selection

2.8ensure that for students below the age of 18 on admission to their intended programme, appropriate safeguarding measures and any necessary programme adjustments are in place to support them and the people in their care

2.9demonstrate a robust process for recognition of prior learning and how it has been mapped to the programme learning outcomes and proficiencies

2.10provide students with the information and support they require in all learning environments to enable them to understand and comply with relevant local and national governance processes and policies

2.11have robust, effective, fair, impartial and lawful fitness to practise procedures to swiftly address concerns about the conduct of students that might compromise public safety and protection

2.12confirm that students meet the required proficiencies and programme outcomes in full, demonstrating their fitness for practice and eligibility for academic and professional award

2.13provide all information and evidence required by regulators

2.14regularly review all learning environments and provide assurance that they are safe and effective

2.15have the capacity, facilities and resources in place to deliver safe and effective learning opportunities and practical

xperiences for students as required by their programme learning outcomes

2.16be compliant with the NMC standards for education and training[3] for all periods of learning undertaken outside the JK

2.17improve quality, manage risk and disseminate effective practice through the proactive seeking and appropriate haring of information and data

2.18proactively identify and act on any areas for improvement, regularly measuring programme performance and utcomes against the NMC standards and requirements, and other recognised quality frameworks in education

2.19appoint appropriately qualified and experienced people for programme delivery

2.20identify programme leaders to confirm that all proficiencies have been met by each student by the end of their rogramme, and

2.21ensure appropriately qualified and experienced external examiners consider and report on the quality of theory and ractice learning.

NMC standards for education and training, standards established by NMC Council as necessary to achieve the standards of proficiency for admission to the egister. Includes parts 1, 2 and relevant standards in part 3 and proficiencies.

Student empowerment

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- Standards
- Requirements

Standards

3.1Students 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.

3.2Students are empowered and supported to become resilient, caring, reflective and lifelong learners who are capable of working in inter-professional and inter-agency teams.

Requirements

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that all students:

3.1have access to the resources they need to achieve the proficiencies and programme outcomes required for their professional role

3.2are provided with timely and accurate information about curriculum, approaches to teaching, supervision, assessment, practice placements and other information relevant to their programme

3.3have opportunities throughout their programme to work with and learn from a range of people in a variety of practice placements, preparing them to provide care to people with diverse needs

3.4are enabled to learn and are assessed using a range of methods, including technology enhanced and simulation learning appropriate for their programme as necessary for safe and effective practice

3.5are supervised and supported in practice learning in accordance with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

3.6are supervised according to their individual learning needs, proficiency and confidence

3.7are allocated and can make use of supported learning time when in practice

3.8are assigned and have access to a nominated practice assessor for a practice placement or a series of practice placements in addition to a nominated academic assessor for each part of the education programme, in accordance with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

3.9have the necessary support and information to manage any interruptions to the study of programmes for any reason

3.10are provided with timely and accurate information regarding entry to NMC registration or annotation of their award

3.11have their diverse needs respected and taken into account across all learning environments, with support and adjustments provided in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice

3.12are protected from discrimination, harassment and other behaviour that undermines their performance or confidence

3.13are provided with information and support which encourages them to take responsibility for their own mental and physical health and wellbeing

3.14are provided with the learning and pastoral support necessary to empower them to prepare for independent, reflective professional practice

3.15are well prepared for learning in theory and practice having received relevant inductions

3.16have opportunities throughout their programme to collaborate and learn with and from other professionals, to learn with and from peers, and to develop supervision and leadership skills

3.17receive constructive feedback throughout the programme from stakeholders with experience of the programme to promote and encourage reflective learning, and

3.18have opportunities throughout their programme to give feedback on the quality of all aspects of their support and supervision in both theory and practice.

Educators and assessors

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- Standard
- Requirements

Standard

4.1Theory 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.

Requirements

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that all educators and assessors:

4.1comply with all standards and requirements in the NMC standards for education and training

4.2act as professional role models at all times

4.3receive relevant induction, ongoing support and access to education and training which includes training in equality and diversity

4.4have supported time and resources to enable them to fulfil their roles in addition to their other professional responsibilities

4.5respond effectively to the learning needs of individuals

4.6are supportive and objective in their approach to student supervision and assessment

4.7liaise and collaborate with colleagues and partner organisations in their approach to supervision and assessment

4.8are expected to respond effectively to concerns and complaints about public protection and student performance in learning environments and are supported in doing so

4.9receive and act upon constructive feedback from students and the people they engage with to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching, supervision and assessment

4.10share effective practice and learn from others, and

4.11appropriately share and use evidence to make decisions on student assessment and progression.

Curricula and assessment

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- Standard
- Requirements

Standard

5.1Curricula and assessments are designed, developed, delivered and evaluated to ensure that students achieve the proficiencies and outcomes for their approved programme.

Requirements

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure:

5.1curricula fulfil NMC programme standards, providing learning opportunities that equip students to meet the proficiencies and programme outcomes[4]

5.2curricula remain relevant in respect of the contemporary health and social care agenda

5.3curricula weigh theory and practice learning appropriately to the programme

5.4curricula are developed and evaluated by suitably experienced and qualified educators and practitioners who are accountable for ensuring that the curriculum incorporates relevant programme outcomes

5.5curricula are co-produced with stakeholders who have experience relevant to the programme

5.6curricula provide appropriate structure and sequencing that integrates theory and practice at increasing levels of complexity

5.7curricula are structured and sequenced to enable students to manage their theory and practice learning experience effectively

5.8assessment is fair, reliable and valid to enable students to demonstrate they have achieved the proficiencies for their programme

5.9adjustments are provided in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation for assessments in theory and practice

5.10students are assessed across practice settings and learning environments as required by their programme

5.11assessment is mapped to the curriculum and occurs throughout the programme to determine student progression

5.12practice assessment is facilitated and evidenced by observations and other appropriate methods

5.13students' self-reflections contribute to, and are evidenced in, assessments

5.14a range of people including people who use services contribute to student assessment

5.15assessment of practice and theory is weighted appropriately to the programme, and

5.16there is no compensation in assessments across theory and practice.

4 Applies equally to all programmes whether delivered as full time or less than full time.

Glossary

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved Education Institutions (AEIs): the status awarded by the NMC to an institution, or part of an institution, or combination of institutions that works in partnership with practice placement and work placed learning providers. AEIs will have provided us with assurance that they are accountable and capable of delivering NMC approved education programmes.

Co-produced: when an individual influences the support and services received, or when groups of people get together to influence the way that services are designed, commissioned and delivered, acknowledging that people who use social care and health services (and their families) have knowledge and experience that can be used to help make services better. Co-production is one of the principles of the Care Act 2014.

Educators: in the context of the NMC standards for education and training educators are those who deliver, support, supervise and assess theory, practice and/or work placed learning.

Equalities and human rights legislation: prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and other characteristics. Anti-discrimination laws can be country specific and there are some legally binding international protections.

Learning environments: includes any environment in terms of physical location where learning takes place as well as the system of shared values, beliefs and behaviours within these places.

People: individuals or groups who receive services from nurses and midwives, healthy and sick people, parents, children, families, carers, representatives, also including educators and students and others within and outside the learning environment.

Practice learning partners: organisations that provide practice learning opportunities necessary for supporting pre registration and post-registration students in meeting proficiencies and programme outcomes.

Standards for student supervision and assessment

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

About our standards

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Our standards for education and training include the Standards framework for nursing[1] and midwifery education, Standards for student supervision and assessment, and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

Our standards for education and training are set out in three parts:

Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment

Part 3: Programme standards:

- Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes
- Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes
- Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes
- Standards for prescribing programmes
- Standards for post-registration programmes: programmes leading to specialist community public health nurse qualifications and programmes leading to community nursing specialist practice qualifications
- Standards for return to practice programmes

Supporting information for our Standards for student supervision and assessment is on our website.

These standards help nursing and midwifery students achieve NMC proficiencies and programme outcomes. All nursing and midwifery professionals must practise in line with the requirements of the Code, the professional standards of practice, values and behaviours that nurses, midwives and nursing associates are expected to uphold.

[1] We have used the phrase 'nursing' in this document to apply to the work of nurses and nursing associates. Nursing associates are a distinct profession in England with their own part of our register, but they are part of the nursing team.

ntroduction

ast Updated: 29/10/2026

Our Standards for student supervision and assessment set out our expectations for the learning, support and supervision of students in the practice environment. They also set out how students are assessed for theory and practice.

rticle 15(1) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 ('the Order') requires the Council to establish standards for education and training which are necessary to achieve the standards of proficiency for admission to the register, as required by Article 5(2) of the Order. The Standards for student supervision and assessment are established under the provision of Article
5(1) of the Order.

hese standards aim to provide Approved Education Institutions (AEIs) and practice learning partners with the flexibility o develop innovative approaches to nursing and midwifery education, while being accountable for the local delivery nd management of approved programmes in line with our standards. Public safety is central to our standards. tudents will be in contact with people throughout their education and it's important that they learn in a safe and ffective way.

he Standards for student supervision and assessment apply to all NMC approved programmes and should be read ith the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education and the programme standards specific to the rogramme that is being delivered. There must be compliance with all these standards for an education institution to be pproved and run NMC approved programmes.

Our Standards for student supervision and assessment are set out under the following three headings:

ffective practice learning (section 1)

hese standards describe what needs to be in place to deliver safe and effective learning experiences for nursing and midwifery students in practice.

upervision of students (sections 2 to 5)

ere we describe the principles of student supervision in the practice environment, and the role of the practice upervisor.

ssessment of students and confirmation of proficiency
sections 6 to 10)

n these standards we set out what we require from educators who are assessing and confirming students' practice and cademic achievement.

e describe the role and responsibilities of the practice assessor and the academic assessor.

ach of the described roles must be in place for education institutions and practice learning partners to meet our tandards. Additional roles may be introduced in line with local or national requirements. Programme leaders will onfirm the achievement of proficiencies by each student on a programme as set out in the Standards framework for ursing and midwifery education and the programme standards specific to the programme.

he Standards for student supervision and assessment are outcome-focused and allow for local innovation in rogramme delivery; they are designed to work across all programmes and in all settings. Student supervision and ssessment can be flexible, provided the education institutions and practice learning partners meet our standards. tudents in practice or work-placed learning must be supported to learn. This may include being supernumerary, eaning that they are not counted as part of the staffing required for safe and effective care in that setting. The ecision on the level of supervision provided for students should be based on the needs of the individual student. The evel of supervision can decrease with the student's increasing proficiency and confidence. Students must be provided

with adjustments in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation in all learning environments and or supervision and assessment.

Effective practice learning

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- 1. Organisation of practice learning

All students are provided with safe, effective and inclusive learning experiences. Each learning environment has the governance and resources needed to deliver education and training. Students actively participate in their own education,
learning from a range of people across a variety of settings.

1. Organisation of practice learning

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:

1.1practice learning complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

1.2practice learning complies with specific programme standards

1.3practice learning is designed to meet proficiencies and outcomes relevant to the programme

1.4there are suitable systems, processes, resources and individuals in place to ensure safe and effective coordination of learning within practice learning environments

1.5there is a nominated person for each practice setting to actively support students and address student concerns

1.6students are made aware of the support and opportunities available to them within all learning environments

1.7students are empowered to be proactive and to take responsibility for their learning

1.8students have opportunities to learn from a range of relevant people in practice learning environments, including users of services, registered and non-registered individuals, and other students as appropriate

1.9learning experiences are inclusive and support the diverse needs of individual students

1.10learning experiences are tailored to the student's stage of learning, proficiencies and programme outcomes, and

1.11all nurses, midwives and nursing associates contribute to practice learning in accordance with the Code.

Supervision of students

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- 2. Expectations of practice supervision
- 3. Practice supervisors: role and responsibilities
- 4. Practice supervisors: contribution to assessment and progression
- 5. Practice supervisors: preparation

Practice supervision enables students to learn and safely achieve proficiency and autonomy in their professional role. All NMC registered nurses, midwives and nursing associates are capable of supervising students, serving as role models for safe and effective practice. Students may be supervised by other registered health and social care professionals.

2. Expectations of practice supervision

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:

2.1all students on an NMC approved programme are supervised while learning in practice

2.2there is support and oversight of practice supervision to ensure safe and effective learning

2.3the level of supervision provided to students reflects their learning needs and stage of learning

2.4practice supervision ensures safe and effective learning experiences that uphold public protection and the safety of people

2.5there is sufficient coordination and continuity of support and supervision of students to ensure safe and effective learning experiences

2.6practice supervision facilitates independent learning, and

2.7all students on an NMC approved programme are supervised in practice by NMC registered nurses, midwives, nursing associates, and other registered health and social care professionals.

3. Practice supervisors: role and responsibilities

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that practice supervisors:

3.1serve as role models for safe and effective practice in line with their code of conduct

3.2support learning in line with their scope of practice to enable the student to meet their proficiencies and programme outcomes

3.3support and supervise students, providing feedback on their progress towards, and achievement of, proficiencies and skills

3.4have current knowledge and experience of the area in which they are providing support, supervision and feedback, and

3.5receive ongoing support to participate in the practice learning of students.

4. Practice supervisors: contribution to assessment and progression

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that practice supervisors:

4.1contribute to the student's record of achievement by periodically recording relevant observations on the conduct, proficiency and achievement of the students they are supervising

4.2contribute to student assessments to inform decisions for progression

4.3have sufficient opportunities to engage with practice assessors and academic assessors to share relevant observations on the conduct, proficiency and achievement of the students they are supervising, and

4.4are expected to appropriately raise and respond to student conduct and competence concerns and are supported in doing so.

5. Practice supervisors: preparation

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that practice supervisors:

5.1receive ongoing support to prepare, reflect and develop for effective supervision and contribution to student learning and assessment, and

5.2have understanding of the proficiencies and programme outcomes they are supporting students to achieve.

Assessment of students and confirmation of proficiency

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

In this guide

- 6. Assessor roles
- 7. Practice assessors: responsibilities
- 8. Practice assessors: preparation
- 9. Academic assessors: responsibilities
- 10. Academic assessors: preparation

Student assessments are evidence based, robust and objective. Assessments and confirmation of proficiency are based on an understanding of student achievements across theory and practice. Assessments and confirmation of proficiency are timely, providing assurance of student achievements and competence.

6. Assessor roles

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:

6.1all students on an NMC approved programme are assigned to a different nominated academic assessor for each part of the education programme

6.2all students on an NMC approved programme are assigned to a nominated practice assessor for a practice placement or a series of practice placements, in line with local and national policies

6.3nursing students are assigned to practice and academic assessors who are NMC registered nurses with appropriate equivalent experience for the student's field of practice

6.4midwifery students are assigned to practice and academic assessors who are NMC registered midwives

6.5specialist community public health nurse (SCPHN) students are assigned to practice and academic assessors who are NMC registered SCPHNs with appropriate equivalent experience for the student's field of practice

6.6nursing associate students are assigned to practice and academic assessors who are either an NMC registered nursing associate or an NMC registered nurse

6.7students studying for an NMC approved post-registration qualification are assigned to practice and academic assessors in accordance with relevant programme standards

6.8practice and academic assessors receive ongoing support to fulfil their roles, and

6.9practice and academic assessors are expected to appropriately raise and respond to concerns regarding student conduct, competence and achievement, and are supported in doing so.

7. Practice assessors: responsibilities

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:

7.1practice assessors conduct assessments to confirm student achievement of proficiencies and programme outcomes for practice learning

7.2assessment decisions by practice assessors are informed by feedback sought and received from practice supervisors

7.3practice assessors make and record objective, evidenced-based assessments on conduct, proficiency and achievement, drawing on student records, direct observations, student self-reflection, and other resources

7.4practice assessors maintain current knowledge and expertise relevant for the proficiencies and programme

outcomes they are assessing

7.5a nominated practice assessor works in partnership with the nominated academic assessor to evaluate and recommend the student for progression for each part of the programme, in line with programme standards and local and national policies

7.6there are sufficient opportunities for the practice assessor to periodically observe the student across environments in order to inform decisions for assessment and progression

7.7there are sufficient opportunities for the practice assessor to gather and coordinate feedback from practice supervisors, any other practice assessors, and relevant people, in order to be assured about their decisions for assessment and progression

7.8practice assessors have an understanding of the student's learning and achievement in theory

7.9communication and collaboration between practice and academic assessors is scheduled for relevant points in programme structure and student progression

7.10practice assessors are not simultaneously the practice supervisor and academic assessor for the same student, and

7.11practice assessors for students on NMC approved prescribing programmes support learning in line with the NMC Standards for prescribing programmes.

8. Practice assessors: preparation

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that practice assessors:

8.1undertake preparation or evidence prior learning and experience that enables them to demonstrate achievement of the following minimum outcomes:

8.1.1interpersonal communication skills, relevant to student learning and assessment

8.1.2conducting objective, evidence based assessments of students

8.1.3providing constructive feedback to facilitate professional development in others, and knowledge of the assessment process and their role within it

8.2receive ongoing support and training to reflect and develop in their role

8.3continue to proactively develop their professional practice and knowledge in order to fulfil their role, and

8.4have an understanding of the proficiencies and programme outcomes that the student they assess is aiming to achieve.

9. Academic assessors: responsibilities

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that:

9.1academic assessors collate and confirm student achievement of proficiencies and programme outcomes in the academic environment for each part of the programme

9.2academic assessors make and record objective, evidence-based decisions on conduct, proficiency and achievement, and recommendations for progression, drawing on student records and other resources

9.3academic assessors maintain current knowledge and expertise relevant for the proficiencies and programme outcomes they are assessing and confirming

9.4the nominated academic assessor works in partnership with a nominated practice assessor to evaluate and recommend the student for progression for each part of the programme, in line with programme standards and local and national policies

9.5academic assessors have an understanding of the student's learning and achievement in practice

9.6communication and collaboration between academic and practice assessors is scheduled for relevant points in programme structure and student progression, and

9.7academic assessors are not simultaneously the practice supervisor and practice assessor for the same student.

10. Academic assessors: preparation

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must ensure that academic assessors:

10.1are working towards or hold relevant qualifications as required by their academic institution and local and national policies

10.2demonstrate that they have achieved the following minimum outcomes:

10.2.1interpersonal communication skills, relevant to student learning and assessment

10.2.2conducting objective, evidence based assessments of students

10.2.3providing constructive feedback to facilitate professional development in others, and

10.2.4knowledge of the assessment process and their role within it

10.3receive ongoing support and training to reflect and develop in their role

10.4continue to proactively develop their professional practice and knowledge in order to fulfil their role, and

10.5have an understanding of the proficiencies and programme outcomes that the student they confirm is aiming to achieve.

Glossary

Last Updated: 29/10/2026

Approved Education Institutions (AEIs): the status awarded by the NMC to an institution, or part of an institution, or combination of institutions that works in partnership with practice placement and work placed learning providers. AEIs will have provided us with assurance that they are accountable and capable of delivering NMC approved education programmes.

Co-produced: when an individual influences the support and services received, or when groups of people get together to influence the way that services are designed, commissioned and delivered, acknowledging that people who use social care and health services (and their families) have knowledge and experience that can be used to help make services better. Co-production is one of the principles of the Care Act 2014.

Educators: in the context of the NMC standards for education and training educators are those who deliver, support, supervise and assess theory, practice and/or work placed learning.

Equalities and human rights legislation: prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and other characteristics. Anti-discrimination laws can be country specific and there are some legally binding international protections.

Learning environments: includes any environment in terms of physical location where learning takes place as well as the system of shared values, beliefs and behaviours within these places.

People: individuals or groups who receive services from nurses and midwives, healthy and sick people, parents, children, families, carers, representatives, also including educators and students and others within and outside the learning environment.

Practice learning partners: organisations that provide practice learning opportunities necessary for supporting pre-registration and post-registration students in meeting proficiencies and programme outcomes.

Quality assurance: NMC processes for making sure all AEIs and their approved education programmes comply with our standards.

Reasonable adjustments: changes in the way services are offered to prevent students with disabilities from being placed at a substantial disadvantage, ensuring a fair and equal chance of accessing services as set out in equalities and human rights legislation.

Supernumerary: see Standards for student supervision and assessment and specific programme standards.

Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

These standards set out the entry and practice learning requirements, curriculum, length of programme, methods of assessment and the level of award for NMC-approved nursing associate programmes. They have been designed so that students can get the most out of their education and learn the skills they need to become safe, effective and kind professionals.

We updated the standards for nursing associate programmes in April 2023 following the change of the simulation standard and definition within all programme standards.

Download the Standard (English)

Download or read the full English version PDF of the Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes.

- About our standards
- Introduction
- Selection, admission and progression
- Curriculum
- Practice learning
- Supervision and assessment
- Qualification to be awarded
- Glossary

About our standards

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

Our standards for education and training include the Standards framework for nursing[1] and midwifery education, Standards for student supervision and assessment, and programme standards specific to each approved programme.

Our standards for education and training are set out in three parts:

Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment

Part 3: Programme standards:

- Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes
- Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes
- Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes
- Standards for prescribing programmes
- Standards for post-registration programmes: programmes leading to specialist community public health nurse qualifications and programmes leading to community nursing specialist practice qualifications
- Standards for return to practice programmes

Supporting information for our Standards for student supervision and assessment is on our website.

These standards help nursing and midwifery students achieve NMC proficiencies and programme outcomes. All nursing and midwifery professionals must practise in line with the requirements of the Code, the professional standards of practice, values and behaviours that nurses, midwives and nursing associates are expected to uphold.

1 We have used the phrase 'nursing' in this document to apply to the work of nurses and nursing associates. Nursing associates are a distinct profession in England with their own part of our register, but they are part of the nursing team.

ntroduction

ast Updated: 05/11/2026

Our Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes set out the legal requirements, entry requirements, availability of recognition of prior learning, length of programme, requirements for supervision and assessment and information on the award for all pre-registration nursing associate education programmes.

Student nursing associates must successfully complete an NMC approved pre-registration programme in order to meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and be eligible to apply for entry to the NMC register. Public safety is central to our standards. Students will be in contact with people throughout their education and it's important that they learn in a safe and effective way.

These programme standards should be read with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education and Standards for student supervision and assessment both of which apply to all NMC approved programmes. NMC Approved Education Institutions (AEIs) intending to deliver pre-registration nursing associate programmes must comply with all these standards to run an approved programme.

AEIs and educators structure their educational programmes to comply with our programme standards. They also design their curricula around the published proficiencies for a particular programme and students are assessed against these proficiencies to make sure they are capable of providing safe, effective and kind care that improves health and wellbeing. Nursing associate students will learn and be assessed in theory, simulation and practice environments and settings.

Proficiencies are the knowledge, skills and behaviours that nurses, midwives and nursing associates need in order to practise. We publish standards of proficiency for the nursing and midwifery professions as well as proficiencies for NMC approved post-registration qualifications.

Our standards for education and training highlight the need for programmes to adopt an inclusive approach to recruitment, selection and progression, ensuring admissions and all other academic processes are open, fair, transparent and demonstrate an understanding of and take measures to address underrepresentation.

We believe that involving people who use services and members of the public in the planning and delivery of curricula will promote public confidence in the education of nurses. We expect the use of supportive evidence and engagement from people who have experienced care.

Through our quality assurance processes we check that education programmes meet all of our standards regarding the structure and delivery of educational programmes, that the programme outcomes relate to the expected proficiencies for particular qualifications and that AEIs and practice learning partners are managing risks effectively. Using internal and external intelligence we monitor risks to quality in education and training, this intelligence gathering includes analysis of system regulator reports.

Before any programme can be run, we make sure it meets our standards. We do this through an approvals process, in accordance with our quality assurance framework.

Overall responsibility for the day to day management of the quality of any educational programme lies with the AEI in partnership with its practice learning partners.

Legislative framework

Article 15(1) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 ('the Order') requires the Council to establish standards for education and training which are necessary to achieve the standards of proficiency for admission to the register, as required by Article 5(2) of the Order. The Standards for pre registration nursing associate programmes are established under the provision of Article 15(1) of the Order.

The student journey

Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes follow the student journey and are grouped under the following five headings:

1. Selection, admission and progression

Standards about an applicant's suitability for, and continued participation in, a pre-registration nursing associate programme;

2. Curriculum

Standards for the content, delivery and evaluation of the pre-registration nursing associate education programme;

3. Practice learning

Standards specific to pre-registration learning for nursing associates that takes place in practice settings;

4. Supervision and assessment

Standards for safe and effective supervision and assessment for pre-registration nursing associate education programmes;

5. Qualification to be awarded

Standards which state the award and information for the NMC register.

Selection, admission and progression

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

Approved education institutions together with practice learning partners must:

1.1confirm on entry to the programme that students:

1.1.1meet the entry criteria for the programme as set out by the AEI and are suitable for nursing associate practice

1.1.2demonstrate values in accordance with the Code

1.1.3have capability to learn behaviours in accordance with the Code

1.1.4have capability to develop numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes

1.1.5can demonstrate proficiency in English language

1.1.6have capability in literacy to meet programme outcomes

1.1.7have capability for digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes

1.2ensure students' health and character allows for safe and effective practice on entering the programme, throughout the programme and when submitting the supporting declaration of health and good character in line with the NMC's health and character decision-making guidance. This includes satisfactory occupational health assessment and criminal record checks

1.3ensure students are fully informed of the requirement to declare immediately any police charges, cautions, convictions or conditional discharges, or determinations that their fitness to practise is impaired made by other regulators, professional bodies and educational establishments, and ensure that any declarations are dealt with promptly, fairly and lawfully

1.4ensure that the registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the educational programme or their designated registered nurse substitute or designated registered nursing associate substitute, are able to provide supporting declarations of health and character for students who have completed a pre-registration nursing associate programme

1.5permit recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes, up to a maximum of 50 percent of the programme. This maximum limit of 50 percent does not apply to applicants to pre-registration nursing associate programmes who are currently a NMC registered nurse without restrictions on their practice, and

1.6provide support where required to students throughout the programme in continuously developing their abilities in numeracy, literacy and digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes.

Guidance on health and character

Curriculum

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

Approved education institutions together with practice learning partners must:

2.1ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

2.2comply with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

2.3ensure that all programme learning outcomes reflect the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates

2.4design and deliver a programme that supports students and provides an appropriate breadth of experience for a non-field specific nursing associate programme, across the lifespan and in a variety of settings

2.5set out the general and professional content necessary to meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes

2.6ensure that the programme hours and programme length are:

2.6.1sufficient to allow the students to be able to meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates,

2.6.2no less than 50 percent of the minimum programme hours required of nursing degree programmes

2.6.3consonant with the award of a Foundation degree (typically 2 years)

2.7ensure the curriculum provides an equal balance of 50 percent theory and 50 percent practice learning using a range of learning and teaching strategies

2.8ensure technology and simulation opportunities are used effectively and proportionately across the curriculum to support supervision, learning and assessment, and

2.9ensure nursing associate programmes which form part of an integrated programme meet the nursing associate requirements and nursing associate proficiencies

Programme hours are hours protected for learning, in theory and practice. Hours which are not protected for learning, in which students are in effect working in their substantive place of work, do not count towards programme hours

Practice learning

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

Approved education institutions together with practice learning partners must:

3.1provide practice learning opportunities that allow students to develop and meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates to deliver safe and effective care to a diverse range of people across the lifespan and in a variety of settings

3.2ensure that students experience the variety of practice expected of nursing associates to meet the holistic needs of people of all ages

3.3take account of students' individual needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, and

3.4ensure that nursing associate students have protected learning time in line with one of the following two options:

3.4.1Option A: nursing associate students are supernumerary when they are learning in practice

3.4.2Option B: nursing associate students, via work-placed learning routes:

3.4.2.1are released for a minimum of 20 per cent of the programme for academic study

3.4.2.2are released for a minimum of 20 per cent of the programme time, which is assured protected learning time in external practice placements, enabling them to develop the breadth of experience required for a generic role, and

3.4.2.3for the remainder of the required programme hours, protected learning time must be assured.

- Nursing associate students are not required to have placements in each field of nursing, but should, through their education programme, benefit from experience of children and adults, and people who use services/patients with mental health conditions and learning disabilities, and understand the most significant factors to be aware of when providing care to different people who use services
- Protected learning time is designated time in which students are supported to learn. All students are appropriately supervised until they have demonstrated proficiency in aspects of care. Supernumerary status is one approach to protected learning time
- The 20 percent specified here is not the total sum of theoretical learning students will need to undertake, please see standard 2.7 which requires equal weighting of theory and practice in the curriculum.

Supervision and assessment

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

Approved education institutions together with practice learning partners must:

4.1ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

4.2ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

4.3ensure they inform the NMC of the name of the registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the education programme

4.4provide students with constructive feedback throughout the programme to support their development

4.5ensure throughout the programme that students meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates

4.6ensure that all programmes include a health numeracy assessment related to nursing associate proficiencies and calculation of medicines which must be passed with a score of 100 percent

4.7assess students to confirm proficiency in preparation for professional practice as a nursing associate

4.8ensure that there is equal weighting in the assessment of theory and practice, and

4.9ensure that all proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which must demonstrate the achievement of proficiencies and skills as set out in Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.

Qualification to be awarded

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

Approved education institutions together with practice learning partners must:

5.1ensure that the minimum award for a nursing associate programme is a Foundation Degree of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (England), which is typically two years in length, and

5.2notify students during the programme that they have five years in which to register their award with the NMC. In the event of a student failing to register their qualification within five years they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as is specified in our standards to register their award.

Glossary

Last Updated: 05/11/2026

Approved Education Institutions (AEIs): the status awarded by the NMC to an institution, or part of an institution, or combination of institutions that works in partnership with practice placement and work placed learning providers. AEIs will have provided us with assurance that they are accountable and capable of delivering NMC approved education programmes.

Educators: in the context of the NMC standards for education and training educators are those who deliver, support, supervise and assess theory, practice and/or work placed learning.

Equalities and human rights legislation prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and other characteristics. Anti-discrimination laws can be country specific and there are some legally binding international protections.

Health and character requirements: as stipulated in NMC legislation (Articles 9(2)(b) and 5(2)(b) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001) 'good health' means that the applicant is capable of safe and effective practice either with or without reasonable adjustments. It does not mean the absence of a health condition or disability. Each applicant seeking admission to the register or to renew registration, whether or not they have been registered before, is required to declare any pending charges, convictions, police cautions and determinations made by other regulatory bodies.

People: individuals or groups who receive services from nurses, midwives and nursing associates, healthy and sick people, parents, children, families, carers, representatives, also including educators and students and others within and outside the learning environment.

Practice learning partners: organisations that provide practice learning necessary for supporting pre-registration and post-registration students in meeting proficiencies and programme outcomes.

Quality assurance: NMC processes for making sure all AEIs and their approved education programmes comply with our standards.

Reasonable adjustments: where a student requires reasonable adjustment related to a disability or adjustment relating to any protected characteristics as set out in equalities and human rights legislation.

Recognition of prior learning: a process that enables previous certificated or experiential learning to be recognised and accepted as meeting some programme outcomes, this means it includes both theory and practice achievement.

Simulation: an educational method which uses a variety of modalities to support students in developing their knowledge, behaviours and skills, with the opportunity for repetition, feedback, evaluation and reflection to achieve their programme outcomes and be confirmed as capable of safe and effective practice.

Student: any individual enrolled onto an NMC approved education programme whether full-time or less than full-time.