What do practice assessors do?

Reference: PA3 Last Updated: 19/12/2018

Practice assessors assess and confirm the student's achievement of practice learning objectives within practice learning experiences.

Practice assessors do not need to be physically based or employed in the setting where the student is placed. This is because their assessment is expected to be done in an evidence-based way drawing upon multiple sources of information, including discussions with practice supervisors.

The practice assessor assesses the student's overall performance for their practice learning, taking account of whether or not the relevant proficiencies and programmes outcomes have been met, and if they display the required values of their professional role. Direct observations by the assessor can provide invaluable insights for the assessor so they must have sufficient opportunities to observe the student in practice to inform their assessment decisions.

A nominated practice assessor will also work with the nominated academic assessor to make a recommendation for student progression. Practice assessors, at specific points in the student's programme, will be required to work with the academic assessor to discuss student progress.

Relevant NMC standards for this section

Standards for student supervision and assessment
S.2: all 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

S.8: practice and academic assessors receive ongoing support to fulfil their roles

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education
R1.4: ensure educators and others involved in supervision, learning and assessment understand their role in preserving public safety

R4.2: act as professional role models at all times

R4.5: respond effectively to the learning needs of individuals

R4.6: are supportive and objective in their approach to student supervision and assessment

R4.7: liaise and collaborate with colleagues and partner organisations in their approach to supervision and assessment

R4.8: are expected to respond effectively to concerns and complaints about public protection and student performance in learning environments and are supported in doing so

R4.9: receive and act upon constructive feedback from students and the people they engage with to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching, supervision and assessment

R4.10: share effective practice and learn from others, and

R4.11: appropriately share and use evidence to make decisions on student assessment and progression

R5.7: curricula are structured and sequenced to enable students to manage their theory and practice learning experience effectively

R5.8: assessment is fair, reliable and valid to enable students to demonstrate they have achieved the proficiencies for their programme

R5.9: adjustments are provided in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation for assessments in theory and practice

R5.10: students are assessed across practice settings and learning environments as required by their programme

R5.11: assessment is mapped to the curriculum and occurs throughout the programme to determine student progression

R5.12: practice assessment is facilitated and evidenced by observations and other appropriate methods

R5.13: students' self-reflections contribute to, and are evidenced in, assessments

R5.14: a range of people including people who use services contribute to student assessment

R5.15: assessment of practice and theory is weighted appropriately to the programme, and

R5.16: there is no compensation in assessments across theory and practice.

Standards for prescribing programmes

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

4.8: assess 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

Standards for post-registration programmes

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

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

4.7.2: SCPHN public health nurse,

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

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

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

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

4.9.2: SCPHN public health nurse practice,

4.9.3: their 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

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

Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes:

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

4.5: ensure throughout the programme that students meet the Standards of proficiency for registered nurses and programme outcomes for their fields of nursing practice: adult, mental health, learning disabilities and children's nursing

4.7: ensure that students meet all communication and relationship management skills and nursing procedures within their fields of nursing practice: adult, mental health, learning disabilities and children's nursing

4.8: assess students to confirm proficiency in preparation for professional practice as a registered nurse

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