What can ‘support’ mean?

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Support for assessors can take a number of different forms, such as access to student documentation, knowing what the student is expected to achieve, recognising and prioritising all training needs, and supporting them in raising concerns. It can also involve physical access to student learning space and those who have been involved in the learning of students. They should be supported to manage their time to carry out their role, including the completion of student records. What support is proportionate will depend on the individual assessor and what is needed for them to perform their role, to enable them to carry out an evidenced based and reliable assessment and uphold public protection.

The assessor role is crucial to the safe, effective and kind learning of nursing and midwifery students, on pre- and post-registration programmes. They are key in helping to ensure that students achieve the required outcomes of their chosen programme and are capable of safe, effective and kind practice. The assessor should be given all the necessary information, time and support by the university and/or their employer to enable them to carry out the role effectively.

This includes being adequately prepared for taking on the role. They also need to be given the time to carry out the role effectively, including completing the necessary paperwork and spending time receiving and giving constructive feedback to students, but also to liaise effectively with those in other supervision and assessment roles for students. Reasonable adjustments must be in place for assessors who need them, so that they can perform their assessment role successfully.

For instance, an assessor who is deaf may need to use a combination of written notes and reflections, direct observations and interactions via a British Sign language (BSL) interpreter to assess a student.

Assessors need to be given time to reflect, and also to keep themselves up to date with what students are being taught, including the learning and practice teaching methods being used. This will involve further learning and continuing professional development activities for themselves, which may then be recorded via revalidation.