

PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS
NURSING

Section 3

Requirements for the Approval of Education Bodies, Associated Health Care Providers and Educational Programmes Leading to Registration



Bord Altranais agus
Cnámhseachais na hÉireann
Nursing and Midwifery
Board of Ireland

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This is the fifth edition of Nurse Registration Programmes Standards and Requirements 2022.

This document replaces the Nurse Registration Programmes Standards and Requirements (Fourth Edition 2016)

Introduction

NMBI is the regulatory body for the professions of nursing and midwifery in Ireland. Our vision is to provide leadership to registered nurses and midwives in delivering safe care to patients, their families and society. Our mission is to protect the public and the integrity of the professions of nursing and midwifery through the promotion of high standards of education, training and professional conduct.

We do this by:

- maintaining a Register of Nurses and Midwives
- promoting high standards of professional education, training and practice
- promoting high standards of professional conduct amongst nurses and midwives, and
- investigating and considering complaints against nurses and midwives.

NMBI sets the standards and requirements for registration in any division of the register and specialist nursing and midwifery qualifications. NMBI sets the criteria for the approval of a body seeking to deliver an education and training programme and monitors adherence to these criteria to ensure ongoing compliance.

The approval and monitoring of nursing and midwifery education and training programmes is based on the standards and requirements developed for the programmes. The standards and requirements provide guidance for education bodies and the AHCPs in relation to the development, approval, delivery, assessment and monitoring of education and training programmes. They are developed and updated in consultation with registrants, education providers and a wide range of stakeholders including public representative groups.

This section sets out the requirements for education bodies and the AHCPs delivering nursing registration programmes. Approved programmes are required to meet all the relevant standards and requirements. Once a programme has been approved it moves to the programme monitoring phase.

Programme Monitoring

Programme monitoring commences once a programme has been approved by the Board. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure ongoing compliance with the standards and requirements. There are three elements involved in the monitoring of programmes:

Site inspections

The Board will inspect bodies approved to deliver education and training programmes, at intervals not exceeding five years, to ensure ongoing compliance with the relevant standards and requirements. The site inspection involves the completion of a self-assessment audit by the education body, a visit by a site inspection team to the education body and a review of all programmes leading to registration in any division of the register and specialist programmes not leading to registration. The site inspection also includes a visit by a site inspection team to a sample of the AHCPs associated with the education programmes. Site inspections can be in-person, virtual or a combination of in-person and virtual.

The site inspection team, having carried out the inspection, will prepare a written report setting out its findings and recommendations for the Education, Training and Standards Committee (ETS). Where more than one programme is being reviewed, in the course of an inspection, separate reports will be prepared in relation to each programme. The ETS, the power having been delegated by the Board, can decide to continue to approve an education and training programme and the decision to continue to approve a programme will be noted by the Board. Where the ETS recommends continued approval with certain specified conditions, deferral of the decision on continued approval pending the resolution of specified issues of concern or withdrawal of approval of an education and training programme the ETS will escalate the decision to the Board. Site inspection reports are published on the Board's website.

Annual reports

All education bodies, in association with their partner AHCPs, are required to submit a report to NMBI in June each year in relation to the continued compliance of their programme/s with the standards and requirements and an update on any conditions the Board may have imposed. A template for the Annual Report is available on the NMBI website. Annual reports are not published, however, compliance with conditions imposed at initial approval or as an outcome of a site inspection will be published on the website as an update/addendum to the previously published site inspection report which set out the conditions to be met.

Notification of proposed material changes

An education body approved to deliver an education and training programme is required to notify the Board of any proposed material changes to the programme and receive approval for the changes in advance of implementing the change.

The requirements have been broken down into the following categories:

- **Education Body Requirements**
 - Category 1: Student Admission and Progression
 - Category 2: Governance and Management
 - Category 3: Practice Placements
- **Programme Requirements**
 - Category 4: Curriculum
 - Category 5: Assessment
- **Associated Health Care Provider Requirements**
 - Category 6: Clinical Learning Environments
 - Category 7: New Provider/New Programme Requirements
- **New Providers/New Programme Specific Requirements**
 - Category 7: New Provider/New Programme Requirements

Please note: The Education Body (EB) is required to provide the evidence for each requirement, or in the case where both the Education Body and Associated Health Care Provider (AHCP) are noted it is a joint responsibility.

Education Body Requirements	
1	Student admission and progression
1.1	Clear and comprehensive information about the programme is available for prospective students.
1.2	Admission requirements are in line with those specified by NMBI and detail procedures for recognition of prior learning and other inclusion mechanisms.
1.3	The criteria for students' progression through and successful completion of the programme are explicit and made known to students at the beginning of the programme.
1.4	Attendance requirements for students are specified and procedures are in place to monitor students' attendance. Procedures to address non-compliance with attendance requirements are available. (EB & AHCP)
1.5	Supports for students in relation to academic or personal guidance or practical supports are available and made known to students at the outset of the programme.
1.6	Learning supports including reasonable accommodations are available to students who require them. (EB & AHCP)
1.7	There are documented procedures for students transferring to or from another education body to ensure that the student meets all the requirements of the programme. These procedures ensure collaboration between the education bodies.
1.8	Procedures for a student exiting a programme before completion are explicit, including exit awards if appropriate.
1.9	Procedures are in place to inform NMBI, in writing, annually of student/s who exit a programme prior to completion.
1.10	Records of student retention, progression and completion rates, conferment of academic awards and graduate first destinations are maintained and reviewed.

2	Governance and management
2.1	There is a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the education body and each of its Associated Health Care Providers. (EB & AHCP)
2.2	The school of nursing/department and individual programmes are subject to periodic quality reviews.
2.3	Programmes are subject to annual monitoring through the external examiners process.
2.4	An Annual Report, inclusive of all NMBI approved programmes and prepared in partnership with the AHCPs, is submitted to NMBI by 30 June each year. (EB & AHCP)
2.5	The management structure supporting the delivery of the programme/s is explicit. It includes the named person with lead responsibility who holds appropriate academic and professional nursing qualifications and experience.
2.6	The education body demonstrates financial planning and resource allocation to support the delivery of the programmes for a rolling 5-year period.
2.7	Staffing allocations to support the delivery of the programme are maintained, at the following staff to student ratios: academic staff 1:20, allocations liaison officer 1:50, nurse practice development coordinator (minimum of 1), and clinical placement coordinator 1:30. (EB & AHCP)
2.8	Teaching and learning resources and facilities support the delivery of the programme.
2.9	A Local Joint Working Group including representatives of the key stakeholders from the education body and AHCPs, from acute and community settings, is in operation. (EB & AHCP)
2.10	Staff are provided with opportunities to develop their teaching and learning skills and deepen their knowledge of their areas of expertise. (EB & AHCP)
2.11	Formal grievance, complaints, and appeals policies are available and made known to students.
2.12	Arrangements are in place with Erasmus and international host institutions that comply with NMBI standards and requirements, and do not exceed 13 weeks placement duration.
2.13	There is public and patient involvement in the review and evaluation of programmes by the education body.
2.14	The education body and AHCP operate a fitness to practise mechanism for the protection of the public. (EB & AHCP)
2.15	The education body and AHCP have processes in place to support students with health problems. (EB & AHCP)

3	Practice placements
3.1	New practice placement sites are audited for their suitability as a quality learning environment, that will support the achievement of the learning outcomes, in advance of students' commencing placements. Notification is included in the Annual Report submitted to NMBI. (EB & AHCP)
3.2	Existing practice placement sites are subject to 5-year cyclical audits, or when significant clinical changes occur, to ensure their continued suitability as a quality learning environment for students. (EB & AHCP)
3.3	There are processes in place for students to evaluate and provide feedback on practice placements. (EB & AHCP)
3.4	There are procedures in place for students to raise concerns about the perceived safety of a practice placement and follow up with relevant clinical partners. (EB & AHCP)
3.5	Fair and transparent systems are in place for the allocation of students to practice placements. (EB & AHCP)
3.6	Where a student is being supervised by health and social care professionals, the setting and achievement of learning outcomes is monitored by a registered nurse.

Programme Requirements

4	Curriculum
4.1	Curriculum development processes ensure that the programme meets all statutory and regulatory requirements of NMBI and the European Directives for nurse registration education programmes. (2013/55/Recognition of Professional Qualifications).
4.2	The programme meets the requirements of the relevant award on the National Framework of Qualifications. (NFQ).
4.3	Safety of the person and protection of the public is a fundamental, explicit, and continuing component of the programme.
4.4	The curriculum model chosen is dynamic, flexible, and evidence-based and utilises a range of teaching and learning strategies.
4.5	The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented and in line with the programme learning outcomes and domains of competence specified in Section 2 of the relevant Programme Standards and Requirements.
4.6	Clinical placements are integral to the programme.
4.7	The curriculum embeds a culture of professionalism and ensures that students understand the implications of professional regulation including adherence to NMBI's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

4.8	Module descriptors identify the aims, learning outcomes, ECTS credits, indicative content, student contact hours, student effort/self-directed learning hours and assessment strategy.
4.9	The curriculum demonstrates a balance between theory and practice leading to the development of reflective practitioners.
4.10	The curriculum development team is led by academic staff who are Registered Nurses in the relevant division of the register and comprises representative members of key academic and clinical stakeholders.
4.11	Registered nurses with appropriate professional and academic qualifications and teaching experience deliver the nursing modules.
4.12	The curriculum articulates opportunities for intentional, shared, interprofessional learning that is designed to enhance collaborative practice with other health care professionals.

5	Assessment
5.1	The assessment strategy is designed to ensure the student meets all the required theoretical and clinical learning outcomes before they can progress to the next stage or complete the programme.
5.2	The selection of assessment techniques assesses achievement of learning outcomes at both module and programme level.
5.3	Students are informed about the assessments employed for their programme and about the requirements for progression, including the grading criteria.
5.4	Policies governing absence, failure to submit assessment work, non-attendance at examinations, mitigating circumstances, repeat arrangements, appeals procedures are explicit and available to students and staff.
5.5	Processes are in place for early detection and feedback on student performance and supports are available for students at risk of not progressing.
5.6	The assessment strategy for the programme makes clear that compensation between theoretical and clinical practice components is not allowed.
5.7	External examiners appointed to the programme are appropriately qualified and experienced.

Associated Health Care Provider (AHCP) Requirements	
6	Clinical Learning Environments
6.1	The Clinical Learning Environment (CLE) Audit is completed and available for review. (EB & AHCP)
6.2	Learning outcomes are specific to the practice placement environment and developed collaboratively by clinical and academic staff. Learning outcomes are aligned to the stage of the programme. (EB & AHCP)
6.3	Each student is allocated a named preceptor and associate preceptor while on practice placement. The preceptor or associate preceptor is available to supervise and assess the student for two thirds of the student's time on placement.
6.4	The number of preceptors/associate preceptors/registered nurses in a clinical placement available to students meet the requirements set by NMBI.
6.5	Practice based learning is supported by preceptors from the relevant division of the nursing register and/or have suitable experience.
6.6	Preceptors have completed a competency assessment programme that has been approved by NMBI. Preceptors engage in continuing professional development. (EB & AHCP)
6.7	Arrangements are in place for protected time to facilitate practice placement assessments by preceptors.
6.8	Assessment of the achievement of learning outcomes and competence development is undertaken in accordance with the National Competence Assessment Document (NCAD).
6.9	The supernumerary status of the student is explicit for preceptors and students.
6.10	Internship practice placements provide experience of the 24-hour care cycle.
6.11	Students have a minimum of 4 hours protected time for reflection each week throughout the undergraduate programme or as specified in the relevant Standards and Requirements.
6.12	All placements, including specialist placements, are completed prior to the commencement of the 36-week internship placement. (EB & AHCP)
6.13	Evidence based policies, procedures and guidelines are available to support students in care delivery.
6.14	Practice placements implement relevant NMBI professional guidance documents.

Additional Requirements for New Providers or New Programmes

These requirements are only relevant to new providers who wish to offer programmes leading to nurse/midwife registration or to existing providers seeking first time approval for a new programme. These must be completed and evidenced in addition to the requirements in sections 1-6.

7.1	There is satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
7.2	The introduction of the programme is supported by the relevant stakeholders.

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