

FAQs for Standards to support learning and assessment in practice

Background

In August 2006, the NMC published *Standards to support learning and assessment in practice* (SLAiP), replacing previously published *Standards for the preparation of teachers of nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses* (NMC, 2004). The 2006 edition included new standards for mentors and practice teachers. Following an assessment of the impact of the 2006 edition, we published a second edition in 2008 which you can view at www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Standards/nmcStandardsToSupportLearningAndAssessmentInPractice.pdf

In response to questions we regularly receive, this document replaces previously published FAQs and aims to clarify the requirements which will apply to all NMC approved programmes. It includes:

- new information on **recording an NMC teacher qualification**, including FAQs regarding:
 - NMC approved teacher programmes
 - Non NMC approved teacher programmes
 - required documentary evidence
 - references
 - application processing time
- updated FAQs on **triennial review and annual updating for mentors and practice teachers**
- updated FAQs on **applying due regard in learning and assessment of students**.

When the new *Standards for pre-registration nursing education* (NMC, 2010) are implemented, SLAiP will generally apply to the new programmes in the same way as for existing programmes. However there are some aspects of the new standards where there is a degree of flexibility, for example in relation to assessment with due regard. Where this is the case, it is clearly stated in the new standards which changes apply only to the programmes approved to meet the new standards.

There is a further information list at the end of these FAQs.

Recording a teacher qualification on the NMC register

An NMC teacher is a nurse or midwife who is registered with us who, following successful completion of an NMC approved teacher programme, has achieved the knowledge, skills and competence required to meet the NMC defined outcomes for teachers, and has recorded the teacher qualification on the NMC register.

The NMC teacher standard is mandatory for nurses and midwives who are teachers based in higher education, and who support learning and assessment of students on NMC approved programmes in practice settings.

We have agreed two routes for teacher preparation. Nurses and midwives may either:

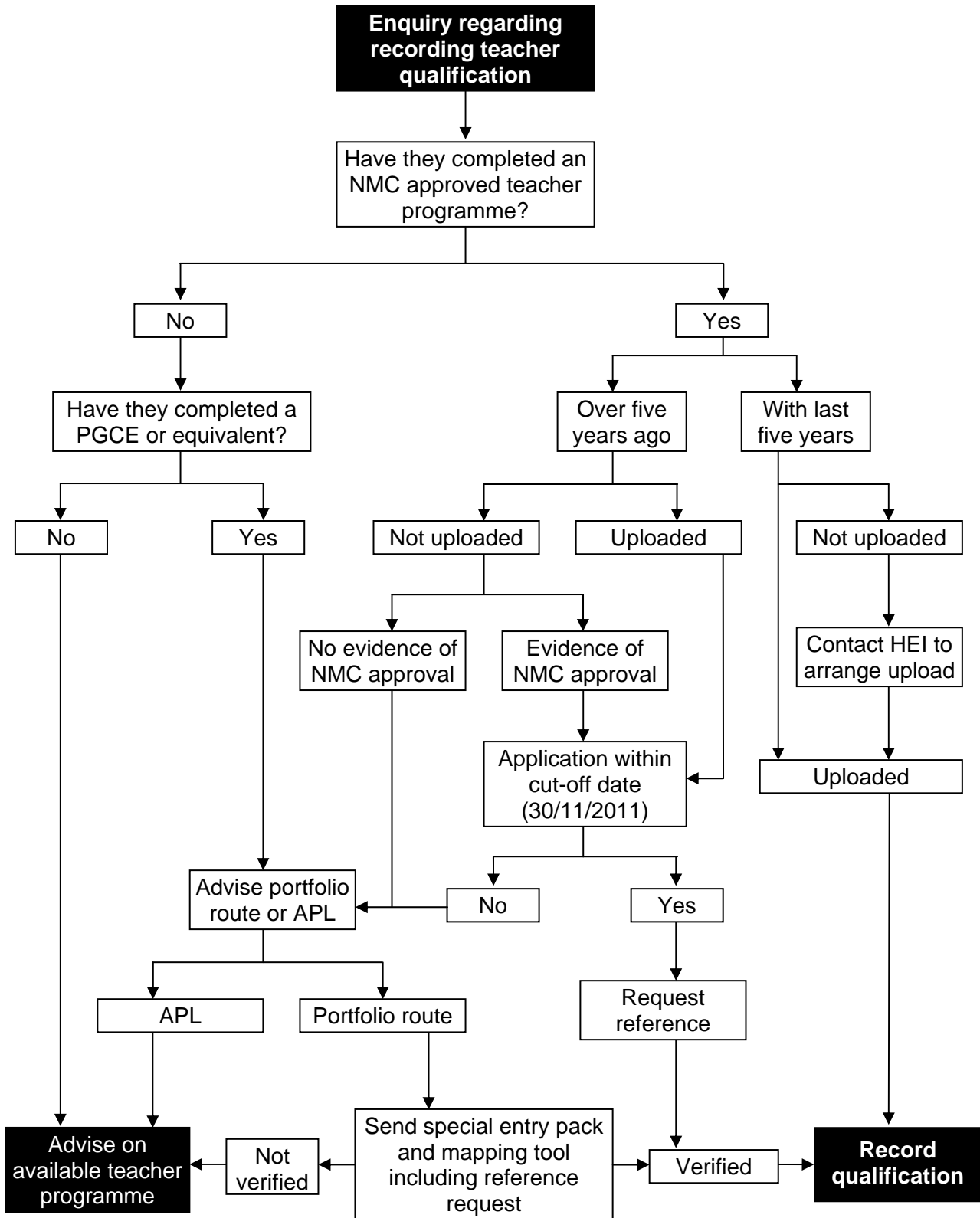
- 1 undertake an NMC approved teacher preparation programme at an approved education institution (AEI), or
- 2 complete a teaching qualification comparable to the NMC approved programme in nature and content.

In either circumstance, evidence of assessed teaching activity with students studying an NMC approved programme in both academic and practice settings is required, at least equivalent to a minimum of 12 weeks (or 360 hours).

We monitor whether nurses and midwives applying to record the teacher qualification have produced the relevant evidence to demonstrate the outcomes. Such evidence must first be verified by a nurse, midwife or specialist community public health nurse teacher who has a recorded teacher qualification on the NMC register.

On the following page you will find a flow chart outlining the process for recording teacher qualifications.

Flow chart for recording teacher qualifications



Frequently asked questions

Recording a teacher qualification on the NMC register

NMC approved teacher programmes

- 1 I have completed an NMC approved teacher programme within the last five years, what do I need to do to record my qualification?**

Although the AEI will inform us of your successful completion of the programme, you will need to email our Registrations team on heiinfo@nmc-uk.org to ask for a recordable teacher qualification application pack. This will provide you with further details of the next steps and a fee request. We will then contact you with further instructions.

- 2 I have completed an NMC approved teacher programme more than five years ago from an NMC AEI. My completion details were then sent to the NMC, but I failed to record my qualification. What do I need to do next?**

The Nursing and Midwifery Order (2001) requires nurse or midwife teachers to record their qualification within a five year period. As a result of our quality assurance monitoring of UK nurse and midwife education, we have become aware that a number of nurses and midwives have not met this requirement. Since many of those affected were unaware of the five year cut off period, we are offering a limited opportunity to record qualifications now. If you should have recorded your qualification and haven't done so, email us on heiinfo@nmc-uk.org for advice on how to proceed.

This opportunity will be available **until 31 December 2011**. If you haven't recorded your teacher qualification by then, you will be required to provide additional portfolio evidence of your professional development in teaching in order to record it.

All AEIs and lead midwives for education were informed of this process by letter in December 2009. To view this letter, please visit www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/EdandQA/RecordingOfTeachingQualification2009.pdf

Non NMC approved teacher preparation programmes

- 3 I have completed a teacher preparation programme within the last five years but prior to the AEI being approved by the NMC to run the course, what do I need to do to record my teacher qualification?**

You will need to apply the standards that allow for nurses and midwives to record a teacher qualification deemed comparable to the NMC standard for preparation of teachers. This will include mapping your learning and experience to demonstrate that you meet the **current** NMC requirements, regardless of the date you completed the qualification.

In order to apply to record your teacher qualification on the NMC register you will need to demonstrate that you have achieved the knowledge, skills, and

competence required to meet the outcomes of stage 4 of an NMC approved post-graduate education programme in *Standards to support learning and assessment in practice* (NMC, 2006 – revised 2008).

You will need to submit supporting evidence in the required format, set out in the special entry pack, available upon request from mtrequests@nmc-uk.org. Your evidence should include that of assessed teaching activity with students studying an NMC approved programme in both academic and practice settings, for a period equivalent to a minimum of 12 weeks or 360 hours. The evidence should be brief whilst ensuring enough information is provided to clearly demonstrate achievement of the stage 4 (teacher) outcomes.

The evidence you submit must have already been verified by a nurse or midwife who has recorded their teacher qualification on the NMC register and who is employed at an NMC approved education institution.

We will review the documents you submit, and we will notify you of the decision.

4 I have completed a non NMC approved teacher qualification more than five years ago from a non NMC AEI. Can I still apply to have this recorded?

Yes you can. However, the five year rule will be applied as above, and you will need to submit a mapping tool as part of the application to have this recorded. Each application will be assessed individually. You will need to provide evidence that you are meeting the Prep requirements, and midwives rules where applicable, and of your ability to support learning and assessment in both practice and academic environments.

5 I've completed a non NMC approved community practice teacher (CPT), or ENB 997/998 or similar course. Am I eligible to record a teacher qualification?

No. The *NMC Standards to support learning and assessment in practice* set three levels for supporting learning and assessment in practice. They are mentor, practice teacher, and teacher. Of these **only the teacher qualification is recordable** on the NMC register. Neither the practice teacher nor the mentor standard are equivalent to the teacher standard, and do not lead to a recordable qualification. The CPT programme was previously recordable, but ceased to be in 1999.

Mentors and practice teacher qualifications are now recorded on a local register held by placement providers. They can no longer be entered on local registers by virtue of previous qualifications or experience. New mentors and practice teachers must undertake an NMC approved programme of preparation. The CPT qualification is generally recognised as meeting the practice teacher standard, and the ENB 997/998 generally recognised as the mentor standard. If using either of these qualifications they may be transferred to the local register but only after assessment through accreditation of prior experience and learning (APL) by an AEI.

6 I've completed a certificate in education. Am I eligible to apply? What further evidence do I need to provide?

To be eligible to apply, you need to meet all the requirements of the NMC teacher standard. The teacher preparation programme needs to be at a minimum academic level of post-graduate study (level 7). This means a post-graduate certificate, diploma or degree (masters level), according to the requirements of programme providers. You will need to provide an authenticated copy conferring the post graduate award of the certificate. If the certificate in education was not post-graduate, but you have studied something comparable at post-graduate level, you may submit a transcript of the programme outlining the content and level of study for consideration. However, submitting evidence does not guarantee approval as each application is assessed on its own merits.

7 I've already provided a Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) certificate. Do I need to provide a post graduate certificate of education?

Yes. Evidence is required of both academic and experiential learning for each of the domains within stage 4 of the framework set out in *Standards to support learning and assessment in practice*. Whilst it is acceptable to include supplementary evidence of any formal learning, the evidence needs to predominantly consist of the content and learning outcomes of the teacher preparation programme.

Required documentary evidence

8 Apart from completing the NMC special entry pack and mapping tool, what other documents do I need to provide?

This will vary depending on your particular experience. You will be asked for authenticated certificates of your academic qualifications, and may be asked for further information such as a transcript of any relevant programmes of study. If this is not available, you may be asked for a letter from the programme provider outlining the programme content, level of study and objectives.

9 Do I need to complete a mapping tool? Who needs to assess my mapping tool?

You will need to complete a mapping tool specific to the NMC teacher outcomes. Before submitting the mapping tool to us it needs to be signed off by the assessor at the AEI, who is a registered nurse or midwife who has a recorded teacher qualification on the NMC register.

As part of our quality assurance processes, we continue to sample applications. Individuals may occasionally be asked to provide us with further evidence directly.

References

10 I don't have a clinical referee. Who else can I nominate?

You can ask a registered nurse or midwife in a senior position employed within a practice environment in which you support and assess learning to comment upon your ability to effectively teach, assess and act as a role model to enable students to learn professional responsibilities and be accountable for their own practice.

Your nominated clinical referee must be able to confirm that you have been in clinical practice within the past three years and you have supported learning and assessment in practice settings during this period. This can take any of the following forms:

- Acting as a link tutor
- Supporting mentor development and updating
- Having an active clinical role for part of your employment
- Supporting clinical staff in their professional development in practice
- Being involved in practice development to support the evidence-base from which students draw and contributing to practice-based research

11 Can both my teaching and clinical referees be the same person?

No. You are required to submit a reference from two people. One who is able to comment on your competence as a teacher within the practice environment and one who is able to comment on your competence as a teacher within the education institution.

12 Does the person providing the teaching reference need to be recorded on the NMC register as a teacher and does it need to be the same person who assessed my completed mapping tool?

Yes. The teaching reference needs to be completed by a nurse or midwife with an NMC recordable teacher qualification, and should be the same person who has assessed your completed mapping tool.

Application processing time

13 How long does the application process take?

We will contact you within 28 calendar days .This may be with a final decision or a request for further information.

Triennial review and annual updating of mentors and practice teachers

14 How does triennial review fit with annual appraisal?

It is not an NMC requirement that triennial review of mentors or practice teachers should form part of the annual personal development appraisal process. It is up to practice learning providers to determine how the requirement for triennial review is met. One way of achieving this may be through employer-led personal development appraisal.

15 How do placement providers decide on whether to remove a mentor or practice teacher from the local register?

It is for the providers of practice learning to have procedures in place for this to be managed. Nurses and midwives are added to the register either in recognition of prior learning that has enabled them to meet the outcomes of stage 2 or stage 3 of the framework, or because they have successfully completed an NMC approved preparation programme. We require providers of practice learning to undertake triennial review of mentors and practice teachers taking account of minimum criteria to be met. This includes the requirement for annual updating. If they become aware at any time, or during review, that a mentor or practice teacher is not meeting the outcomes for the role then they should consider whether they may remain on the local register.

16 How will triennial review be achieved in the independent sector?

The standards for triennial review apply to all sectors and will be achieved in the same way. Where it has been agreed that the approved education institution delivering the programme will maintain a register of mentors and of practice teachers in the independent sector the mentor and practice teacher must provide evidence to the AEI that triennial review has taken place.

(See circular 28/07 – Guidance for small-scale service providers in applying the NMC's *Standards to support learning and assessment in practice*.)

17 Do annual updates for mentors and practice teachers have to be face to face?

Yes. All mentors must undertake some face to face activity as part of their annual update. The face to face element may be just one aspect of a series of activities which comprise the annual update. These activities might vary year on year, although the requirement for inclusion of a face to face activity is a consistent requirement. This face to face activity must provide a group of mentors the opportunity to discuss challenging assessment and supervision issues. How the face to face element is organised can be determined locally and may involve an informal meeting between three or more mentors or practice teachers within the practice learning environment. All aspects which make up an annual update must be recorded so that there is evidence of them having taken place to support triennial review.

Applying due regard to learning and assessment of students

18 What does the term due regard mean?

The term due regard is used to differentiate between the parts of the register as well as specific fields of practice which may be represented by marks on the register. Mentors and practice teachers normally assess others with due regard to the parts on which they are registered and to the marks which relate to their field of practice.

19 Why do some programmes require due regard to be applied to practice assessment and others do not?

Our position on whether due regard needs to be applied, and if so to which degree, will have been made when we confirm and issue the standards for education for a particular programme. The decision would have been taken on the basis of needing to ensure that the person making the assessment could confirm that the nurse or midwife was safe and effective in practice at the point of registration within the context of their chosen field where appropriate. This question is sometimes revisited in the light of a change in anticipated programme structure or the nature of the competencies to be achieved. The general principles for applying due regard can be found in the standards to support learning and assessment in practice.

20 Do the changes which relate to assessment with due regard for programmes approved against the new *Standards for education for pre-registration nursing education (2010)* apply to existing programmes approved against the previous (2004) standards?

No, there are no changes to the ways in which assessment with due regard applies to programmes approved to meet the *Standards of proficiency for pre-registration nursing education (2004)*. The requirements are set out in the standards and respective Circulars and the *Standards to support learning and assessment in practice (2008)* must be fully complied with.

21 When does due regard not apply in programmes approved to meet the standards of proficiency for pre-registration nursing education (2004)?

There are two circumstances where due regard may not apply.

- In the common foundation programme within the pre-registration nursing programme where the placement is not branch (field) specific. In these circumstances a mentor from any part of the nursing register may confirm that outcomes have been achieved.
- In formative placements where proficiencies or learning outcomes are not being assessed.

22 Can another registered professional act as a mentor to students on NMC approved programmes?

No, only registered nurses and midwives can be mentors. Mentors may delegate the day to day supervision and assessment of component skills to other suitable prepared professionals but a mentor would still be responsible overall for the students learning and assessment. The only exceptions are:

- on prescribing programmes where students are required to be mentored by a designated medical practitioner, and
- in relation to sign off assessment at the end of part one of the pre-registration nursing programme approved under the new standards for pre-registration nursing education (2010).

23 Do the Standards for learning and assessment in practice (SLAiP) apply to the new standards?

Yes. Generally the SLAiP standards will continue to apply in the same way as for existing programmes. However there are some aspects of the new standards where there is a degree of flexibility, for example in relation to assessment with due regard. Where this is the case this is clearly stated in the new standards. These changes apply only to those programmes approved to meet the new standards for pre-registration nursing education (2010).

Further information

Advice and supporting information for implementing NMC Standards for pre-registration nursing education (NMC, 2010) standards.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Advice_supporting_information_index_09092010.pdf

Standards for pre-registration midwifery education (NMC, 2009) www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Standards/nmcStandardsforPre_RegistrationMidwiferyEducation.pdf

Standards for pre-registration nursing education (NMC, 2010) standards.nmc-uk.org/PublishedDocuments/Standards%20for%20pre-registration%20nursing%20education%2016082010.pdf

Standards of proficiency for pre-registration nursing education (NMC, 2004) www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Standards/nmcStandardsofProficiencyForPre_RegistrationNursingEducation.pdf

Standards to support learning and assessment in practice (NMC, 2008) standards.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Advice_supporting_information_index_09092010.pdf

FAQs for implementing the standards for pre-registration nursing education (NMC, 2010) standards.nmc-uk.org/PreRegNursing/Pages/FAQs.aspx