

Practice Assessors: Role description, preparation and maintenance of competence

Role Description

“practice assessors conduct assessments to confirm student achievement of proficiencies and programme outcomes for practice learning....assessment decisions by practice assessors are informed by feedback sought and received from practice supervisors” (NMC, 2018 7.1 & 7.2)

Principles underpinning the preparation of Practice Assessors, Practice Supervisors and Academic Assessors

1. All core learning outcomes and preparation will meet the requirements of the NMC Realising professionalism: Standards for education and training part 2 Standards for student supervision and assessment (NMC, 2018).
2. All core learning outcomes and preparation will be agreed between practice learning partners and Oxford Brookes University including those developed in partnership
3. Local preparation will be delivered using agreed resources and guidance agreed in partnership with Brookes, including models of supervision and assessment.
4. Safe and effective learning experiences that uphold public protection and the safety of people will be central to preparation
5. Practice Assessors serve as role models for safe and effective practice in line with professional codes of conduct.
6. Oxford Brookes University, with its practice learning partners, will identify which professionals may be suitable Practice Assessors and Practice Supervisors for nursing and midwifery students in a practice learning environment.
7. Oxford Brookes University will identify Academic Assessors.
8. A record of Practice Assessors will be maintained by NHS Trust practice learning partners
9. A record of Practice Supervisors will be maintained by NHS Trust practice learning partners
10. A register/record of Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector Practice Assessors will be maintained by Oxford Brookes University
11. A register/record of Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector Practice Supervisors will be maintained by Oxford Brookes University
12. An annual update for Practice Assessors/ Practice Supervisors/Academic Assessors is desirable.

Practice Assessors Preparation

Suitability for the role of Practice Assessor

The following preparation meets the NMC (2018) requirements for Registered Nurses, Midwives, Nursing Associates and Specialist Community Public Health Practitioners to become Practice Assessors. Existing mentors and sign off mentors and Practice Teachers will require preparation to transition to this role.

Registrants must have current clinical knowledge and expertise relevant for the proficiencies and programme outcomes they are assessing.

Required preparation (or evidence prior learning and experience) before undertaking Practice Assessor role

	Required Preparation
Registrant with no previous preparation	Up to 7 hours Practice Assessor preparation
Registrant who has completed practice supervision preparation during their pre-registration programme.	Up to 3 hours Practice Assessor preparation
Registrants with NMC Standards for Learning and Assessment in Practice (SLAiP) (2008) approved course.	Up to 3 hours preparation which includes information about new roles and responsibilities, and models of supervision, and reviewing evidence to inform assessment decisions

Content

The following topics are essential for preparation for this role:

- Creating an inclusive culture of learning in practice, including different models of supervision, (including the framework of coaching)
- Differences between NMC SLAiP 2008 and NMC 2018 supervision and assessment roles
- Professional accountability for all aspects of student assessment
- Practice Assessor role and responsibilities (including use of the Practice Assessment Document)
- Practice Supervisor role and responsibilities
- Academic Assessor role and responsibilities
- How to give reflective feedback and feed forward
- Utilising the role to inform own CPD and practice

- i) Decision making in assessment (including confidence to fail and confirmation of achievement of proficiency)
- j) Reviewing and assessing evidence from a range of sources/ Practice Supervisors including developing efficient systems of supervisor feedback to the Practice Assessor.
- k) Sound knowledge of the assessment process – and student PAD

Process

- All students on an NMC approved programmes are assigned to a nominated Practice Assessor for a practice placement or a series of practice placements, in line with local and national policies.
- Nursing students are assigned to Practice and Academic Assessors who are registered nurses
- Midwifery students are assigned to Practice and Academic Assessors who are registered midwives.
- Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SCPHN) students are assigned to Practice and Academic Assessors who are registered SCPHNs with appropriate experience for the student's programme outcomes
- Nursing Associate students are assigned to Practice and Academic Assessors who are either a registered nursing associate or a registered nurse.
- Students studying for an NMC approved post-registration qualification are assigned to Practice and Academic Assessors in accordance with relevant programme standards.

Example Delivery Plan (N.B. Online delivery may be provided due to COVID 19)

Flexible approach, multi-mode delivery, scenarios, videos covering agreed content

<p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Discuss and identify how to create a culture of learning in practice, including different models of supervision and utilising the framework of coaching. 2) Describe the differences between the NMC SLAiP (2008) and current roles in the 2018 Standards (during transition). 3) Define and explain the Practice Supervisor, Practice Assessor and Academic Assessor role and responsibilities (including use of the Practice Assessment Document and those AELs that use grading) 4) Identify learning opportunities, across professions and other practice colleagues in your workplace 5) Plan the student learning experience including reasonable adjustments or equality and diversity considerations that may need to be met 6) Describe how you make decisions in assessment (including confidence to fail and confirmation of achievement of proficiency) 7) Review and assess evidence from a range of sources including from Practice Supervisors and others 8) Illustrate how you could develop efficient systems of feedback to the Practice Supervisor and Academic Assessor. 9) Explain the process of appropriately raising and responding to student conduct and proficiency concerns and describe how to gain support in doing so using the University's Standards of Conduct; Fitness to Practice procedures and guidelines Freedom to Speak Up (insert link), describe how to gain support in doing so 10) Illustrate ways in which the role can be used for your own CPD/revalidation 	<p>Session 1</p> <p>Introduction to the new standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining terminology • Programme detail • Assessment process • Recording and providing feedback • Roles and responsibilities • Support and information mechanisms <p>Session 2</p> <p>Promoting learner autonomy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models of supervision and assessment (including the principles of coaching) • Team supervision • Identifying learning opportunities across professions • Reasonable adjustment/equality and diversity needs <p>Session 3</p> <p>Evaluating Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading assessment • Recording decisions • Supporting Practice Supervisors • Team coordination <p>Session 4</p> <p>Managing Concerns and Informing own CPD/revalidation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes of raising concerns about student proficiency • Action planning • Supporting students • Utilise the role to inform revalidation
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Maintenance of competence

The Practice Assessor will be facilitated to undertake continuing professional development opportunities in keeping with the requirements and competencies associated with their role and the delivery of the programme. Practice Assessors will be provided with ongoing support and development that enables them to reflect and develop to continue to meet the responsibilities of their role.

This will be achieved in a variety of ways, for example:

- The practice learning partner appraisal cycle
- Role-updating resources produced by Practice Education Group (PEG) such as: updates on NMC standards and annexes in relation to the role, peer learning, reflective discussion with other registrants and others in similar roles, support for developing evidence of how practice assessment meets NMC revalidation requirements, and sharing best practice.

References

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2018) NMC Realising professionalism: Standards for education and training Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment, Available at:

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards-for-education-and-training/standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/> accessed on 09/10/2018

South Central Area Placement Partnership (2018) Discussion paper: Implementation of the Education Framework: Standards for Education and Training (Nursing and Midwifery Council) 2018 (draft) Annexe 1: Requirements for Learning and Assessment SCAPP Oxford Unpublished