RCN Education National Conference and Exhibition 2026

Criteria for abstract selection and top tips

Abstract categories and descriptors

Please note, for inclusion in the conference programme, the Education Forum Committee will ONLY consider abstracts under the following topics:

Celebrating success in nursing education and practice

Submissions in this area will be concerned with successful initiatives which underpin a nurturing learning environment to develop professional practice across all levels of nursing including apprenticeship, undergraduate and postgraduate provision. Examples may include initiatives focusing on building communities of practice; innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment; facilitating success; reducing attrition as well as addressing the learning experience and diverse needs of the learner population. Innovations which have been co-produced with learners or in partnership would be particularly welcome in this area.

Sustaining and developing the nursing workforce across health and social care

Submissions in this area should focus on innovations supporting the current health and social care workforce. Examples could include education partnerships that support staff development and career pathways from support workers through to advanced practitioner and nurse consultants; creative approaches to lifelong learning and continuing professional development; and evolving education models which address staff and student well-being, recruitment and retention. We would particularly welcome submissions from the third sector, private, independent, and voluntary organisations, as well as from our internationally educated nursing workforce.

Innovation and developments in inclusive education and practice for a global and diverse workforce

Within this theme, we invite submissions that demonstrate commitment to diversity and inclusion in nursing education and practice, and acknowledge the need to embrace a workforce that is representative of the diversity found in the communities that we serve. We know that a diverse and inclusive workforce can bring fresh perspectives, leading to improvement and innovation in the way we work. We particularly welcome submissions focused on supporting ethnic and cultural diversity, international nurses, nursing associates, neurodiversity, and widening participation in nurse education.

Use of technology in nursing education and practice

Education and leadership are essential for driving and shaping technological transformation across health and social care. Abstracts within this theme will focus on the use of technological advances to enhance nurse education, patient care and safety, and professional practice. Submissions may include the use of technology-enhanced learning, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality and simulation in nurse education.

We would also welcome submissions that explore approaches to enhancing digital literacy and technological confidence amongst learners.

Submission guidance and word limits

Please note: the word limit must be adhered to, the AMS will automatically limit entry.

For all presentation formats, the word limit for the abstract section of the submission form is 300 words. This also applies to individual papers that are submitted as part of a symposium.

When writing the 300-word abstract, authors should be careful not to include information which could identify the author/s, <u>as abstracts are reviewed anonymously</u>.

- Abstracts must clearly demonstrate an aspect of innovation, development or research in nursing education or practice.

- Abstracts should be a clear concise summary of the main points from your presentation.

- The abstract should be jargon-free, indicate clear aims and objectives and clearly demonstrate the impact on nursing education and practice.

- Acronyms - write in full at the first mention and include the abbreviation or acronym immediately after in brackets – Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

- Delegate learning outcomes – this section should clearly outline the learning outcomes for those attending your session. These outcomes should specify what participants will be able to do, know, or understand after attending the session, rather than describe the personal learnings from your own work.

- ViPERs – authors are required to specify the intended discussion points for the audience where requested on the abstract submission form.

- All accepted abstracts will be published 'as submitted'. It is therefore incumbent upon the author to ensure that the spelling, grammar and syntax is of an academic publishing standard.

Symposium guidance notes

- Each paper in a symposium will need to be submitted individually on the abstract management system. The 300-word limit for abstract section of the submission form applies to individual papers submitted as part of a symposium.

- Authors of all papers should agree a consistent overarching symposium title in addition to their paper title in advance of making a submission. This will ensure that papers can be easily identified by administrators and grouped together for reviews.

- The naming convention to follow when submitting papers for a symposium is *Symposium Title | Paper Title | Paper No*

  Example

  - ❖ Deep Space Explorations Symposium – Space Travel (1)
  - ❖ Deep Space Explorations Symposium – Food in space (2)
  - ❖ Deep Space Explorations Symposium – Sleeping in space (3)

Review and scoring

The Scientific Committee reserve the right to change the mode of presentation if a different format is felt to be more appropriate for an accepted abstract.

The Scientific Committee will include the RCN Education Forum Committee and a number of selected, experienced reviewers. Each abstract will be anonymously assessed by 2 reviewers against the following 4 main criteria:

- approach
- advancing the art and science of nursing research and/or practice
- relevance to conference theme
- clarity of text

When writing abstracts with these criteria in mind writers should consider:

- Does this abstract illustrate how this work has been rigorously undertaken and developed and where appropriate, illustrate how it is contemporary or innovative?
- Does this abstract report on work that can be used in practice?
- Is the abstract relevant to the conference themes?
- Does the abstract read clearly and without jargon?

Sponsored educational events

The RCN offers sponsorship opportunities to organisations wishing to host their own educational sessions. Abstract submissions that align to a commercial entity maybe subject to additional review and managed under the programme of sponsored activity.

To discuss the options for sponsored educational events please email our corporate relations team or call 020 7647 3940.

Top tips for submitting a quality abstract

Before you start, be clear what aspect of your work you want to present. What will appeal to your audience?

To maximise the chances of your abstract being selected for presentation, it may be helpful to consider these factors:

- In what way(s) is your work innovative?
- Does your work relate to a contemporary issue facing the nursing profession?
- How can your work and findings be linked to the wider context of the overarching conference theme?
- Does your work take into account equity, diversity and inclusion?
- Is your work relevant to the wider nursing / health and social care education and practice community? In what way?
- How is your work evidence-based and quality assured?
- Does your abstract clearly communicate the impact of your findings for nursing education and practice?
- Are there clear learning outcomes identified from your session that delegates will take away?
- If submitting for a concurrent or symposia session, are the aims and objectives of your session achievable within the time allocated?
- How will your event add value to the conference? What learning will delegates take away with them that can be used in practice?

And some more general advice includes:

Do's	Don'ts
Make sure you read and understand the abstract submitter guidelines.	Guess if you aren't clear what something means. If you have any queries or need clarification, contact education@rcn.org.uk
Make sure your abstract is well written. Keep language simple and clear. Your abstract should aim to be a condensed summary of your method and findings.	Submit an abstract that's too short, is too vague and doesn't make sense.
Make sure your abstract makes clear what your presentation is about: what was the subject of your project, what was discovered / the outcomes and how it was accomplished.	Submit an abstract that doesn't clearly communicate the aims and objectives of your work, methods and findings.
Use professional language making sure your information is easy to understand by a diverse audience.	Use abbreviations and jargon – remember abbreviations are not universal. Don't make any assumptions about your reader.

Ensure that there is a logical and coherent flow to the abstract.	Jump from one section to the next: your reader will not be familiar with your work so be methodical.
Review what you have written and carefully proofread before submitting. You could even ask a friend/colleague to do this.	Make basic spelling and grammar mistakes. If you haven't taken the time to read through it suggests you put through a last-minute submission.
Make sure you submit before the deadline: midnight on **Friday 24 October 2025**	Submit a panic abstract. A rushed submission put in at the last minute will not do your work justice.

If you have any queries or need guidance on submitting, please contact education@rcn.org.uk

We look forward to reviewing your submissions and welcoming you to the event.

RCN Education Conference Team.

Updated 17 July 2025