



Royal College
of Nursing
Students

Just About to Graduate

What you need to know

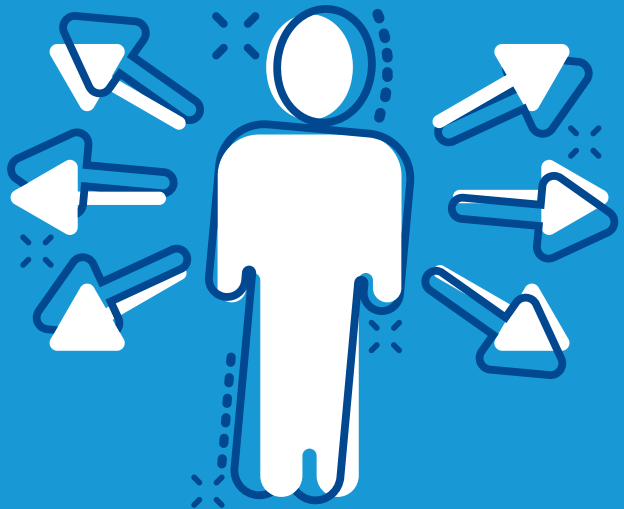


0345 772 6100
rcn.org.uk/students

A world without boundaries

On the day you join the register, you enter a world without boundaries. Your nursing qualification can take you many places, working with the young or the old, with the well and the dying, with individuals or whole communities, in hospitals or schools, in the NHS or independent sector, etc.

The RCN is here to help and support you during this time and in this booklet you will find some key information you will need as you are approaching registration. Our aim is to support you in your professional career and we welcome you to become part of our nursing voice.



How to get on the NMC register

Now that you've finished your nurse training, done all your practice placements and written all your essays, you probably just want to get on with being a nurse.

There are a few more hoops to jump through, however, not least registering with the NMC. If you're not registered, you're not a nurse – and remember that it is an offence to falsely represent yourself as being on the register.

If you have recently qualified as a nurse in the UK, you can register with the NMC by completing an application form and paying the subscription fee. You'll be sent an application pack once the NMC has received your course completion details from the higher education institute (HEI) where you were a nursing student. The HEI will also send the NMC a declaration of your good health and good character.

Things can go wrong if your HEI and the NMC end up with different details for you – your postal address, for example

– so make sure that both have the same information.

Your application pack will usually take seven to ten days to reach you by post and the NMC says that when you complete the application important things to check include:

- your student PIN is entered correctly
- your course details are entered correctly
- you've stated clearly which part of the register you are applying for.

Once the NMC has received all your details and payment has been received, it will complete your registration within two to ten working days. You'll receive a statement of entry seven to ten days after you are registered.

You can also register with the NMC online at [nmc.org.uk](https://www.nmc.org.uk)

Important information

Every year, you will need to make a payment to remain on the NMC register. You must pay your annual fee before your retention date or your registration will lapse and you will automatically be removed from the register. It is therefore vital you know when this date is. It will correspond with the month your application was submitted, so please check this. You will also receive emails from the NMC reminding you of your renewal. Please ensure these emails are not going into your spam and keep the NMC updated with your email address.



Preceptorship

What is preceptorship?

A period of quality preceptorship with a skilled mentor for several months at the start of your career can help you get off to the best possible start, enabling you to develop your confidence, skills and professionalism.

To some degree your learning starts here – your employer and your colleagues should not expect you to emerge from your training as the complete, fully rounded nursing package. What you need to develop now is the necessary insight, knowledge and experience that will help you to become a confident and innovative practitioner. At present, however, employers are not required to offer preceptorship to new registrants – the NMC has only “strongly recommended” it – but you might want to treat with caution any potential employer whose preceptorship arrangements are ambiguous or vague. The RCN has noted particular issues with preceptorship in community settings, exacerbated by the lone working aspect of many community nursing roles. The importance of preceptorship is also recognised in the Shape of Caring review report *Raising the bar* (2015).

The RCN believes that in order to ensure a smoother transition into the profession, a preceptorship period, or a

Newly Registered Nurse (NRN) period is essential. We recognise that any such period would ideally be clearly defined through a national framework or standards set.

So whether your first post as a registered nurse is to be hospital-based or in the community, within the NHS or beyond, preceptorship is a good topic to raise at a job interview.

Each of the four UK countries has undertaken work to help put into practice the NMC’s recommendations on preceptorship. For example, in 2010 the DH in England published a preceptorship framework and NHS Education for Scotland developed a *Scottish Preceptorship Framework* in 2020. For you, the newly registered practitioner, it can:

- improve confidence
- increase job satisfaction
- offer a sense of being valued and respected by your employing organisation
- build a commitment to the organisation’s corporate strategy and objectives.

For your employer, preceptorship enhances the quality of patient care, improves recruitment and retention

Preceptorship

of staff, boosts staff morale, and reduces the risk of complaints. All of the above may be useful arguments if your employer is proving slow to assign you a mentor. So what should you look

for in an effective mentor? The RCN Library has information on mentorship to support you with this topic area: rcn.org.uk/library/subject-guides

England

HEE has developed a multidisciplinary preceptorship toolkit, which provides working examples of best practice techniques.

See the following links for details: nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/plan/education-and-training/preceptorships-for-newly-qualified-staff

Scotland

Flying Start NHS® is the national development programme in NHS Scotland: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/735/flying-start-nhs>

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery has a microsite dedicated to preceptorship: nipec.hscni.net/resource-section/preceptorship

Wales

There is a published document called the *Core Principles for Preceptorship*. See: weds.wales.nhs.uk/aligning-nursing-skills-guidelines for further information.

The NMC Code of Conduct

All registered nurses must follow the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Code of conduct at all times, and other members of the team should also use it to guide their practice. The Code (2015) presents the professional standards that nurses and midwives must uphold in order to be registered to practise in the UK.

It reflects the world in which we live and work today, and changing roles and expectations of nurses and midwives. It is structured around four themes – prioritise people, practise effectively, preserve safety and promote professionalism and trust. Developed in collaboration with many who care about good nursing and midwifery, the Code can be used by nurses and midwives as a way of reinforcing their professionalism. Failure to comply with the Code may bring their fitness to practise into question.

A key addition to the Code is: 20.10 use all forms of spoken, written and digital communication (including social media and networking sites) responsibly, respecting the right to privacy of others at all times.

To familiarise yourself with the Code, visit: [nmc.org.uk/code](https://www.nmc.org.uk/code)

Time for reflection

You need to take some time to look at what you have achieved and where you are going and the only way to do that is to reflect. You need to take time to think about how you are progressing, make sure you learn from new experiences and be more invested in yourself than you have ever been. By making the time to routinely reflect, this will serve you all your working life.

Take time to reflect on your practice – link everything you do back to the four themes of the Code.



Revalidation: What you need to know

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) introduced revalidation in April 2016 for all staff registered with the NMC. As a newly registered nurse this won't affect you just yet but you should be aware that you will have to renew three years after your registration. It is important to note that you will need to pay your annual fee to the NMC to maintain your name on the register. This will be due on the anniversary of your first registration each year.

What is revalidation?

Revalidation is the method by which you will renew your registration every three years. It is the way in which nurses and midwives demonstrate to the NMC that they continue to practice safely and effectively, and can remain on the register. In order to revalidate, every nurse and midwife will have to declare to the NMC that they are meeting the standards of the NMC Code, have met the revalidation requirements and received confirmation from a third party that this is true. Furthermore, evidence which shows how the requirements have been achieved is needed.

The NMC Code is available on the NMC website: nmc.org.uk/code

You can also read up on revalidation on the NMC website:
revalidation.nmc.org.uk

What will this mean for you?

Revalidation is a continual process and your whole three year period is counted toward the evidence you provide. So it is a good idea to start collecting evidence as you go along and do not leave it until a few months before. Three years after you register with the NMC, you will need to show you comply with the revalidation requirements in order to renew your registration. Applications for revalidation must be completed through the NMC online.

How will we support you?

The RCN is here to support nurses and midwives with revalidation. We have extensive resources on our revalidation web pages to give you as much information as possible about the process and the requirements.

Many of you will already have a portfolio from your current studies. You need to decide how you are going to collect and store your evidence of your continuing professional development and keep it up to date in preparation for revalidation.

Visit: rcn.org.uk/library/subject-guides/revalidation-subject-guide and rcn.org.uk/professional-development/revalidation for further information.

Professional indemnity

As part of changes introduced in late 2013, when you first apply for registration with the NMC, and every time you undergo revalidation in the future, you will be asked to complete a declaration to confirm that you have in place, or will have in place when you practise, appropriate indemnity arrangements. The aim is to make sure that where a patient suffers harm through the negligent action of a nurse or midwife, the patient will be able to recover any compensation that is due.

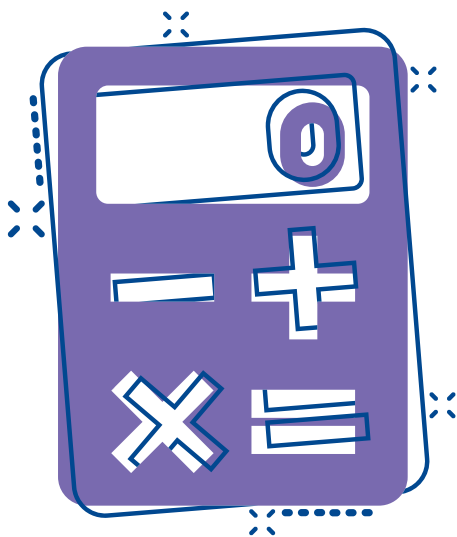
Previously, professional indemnity was only recommended in the NMC Code, but new legislation makes it a requirement so you can't afford to ignore it. However, it is likely that you are covered:

- through your employer if you already have a job lined up
- directly from a commercial provider
- as part of your membership of the RCN
- as a combination of the above.

Where indemnity is required, the RCN provides up to £3 million cover for members

For employed members, personal cover is not generally needed for work undertaken as part of your contract of employment - because your employer is liable and will have cover for you.

If you have any queries about indemnity, please contact:
RCN Customer Service Centre
0345 772 6100



Campaigns

The RCN runs a range of campaigns that promote nursing, champion high quality care, and fight against harmful cuts to health care.

As a member you can get involved in RCN campaigns and help us to promote nursing, champion great patient care, and shape the future of the profession.

A snapshot of some of our campaigns:

Fair Pay For Nursing

Recognising the complexity of skill, responsibility and experience demonstrated by nursing support workers, assistant practitioners, nursing associates, registered nurses and all members of the profession.

Safe Staffing

Without safe staffing levels in place, nursing staff are struggling to provide patients with the safe and effective care. We're calling for safe and effective care to be enshrined in law in each UK country.

Proud

Championing and improving equality, diversity, human rights and inclusion in the health and social care sector. Adding your voice to RCN campaigns makes them stronger and can help you grow as a leader too.

Getting involved can be as simple as writing to your local politician to get our voices heard by governments across the UK, completing a survey or sharing a film with friends and colleagues – and it will make a difference.

You can find out more by following us on Twitter **@theRCN**, on Facebook **facebook.com/royalcollegeofnursing** and on Instagram **@theRCN**. You can also keep updated on the latest campaigns by visiting: **rcn.org.uk/campaigns**

SAFE STAFFING SAVES LIVES

**FAIR PAY
FOR NURSING**



proud

Finding your feet

If you are planning on working in the **NHS in England**, it is important that you familiarise yourself with the *Leading Change, Adding Value* (NHS England, 2016) framework for all nursing, midwifery and care staff, wherever they work and whatever role they might have. It builds upon *Compassion in Practice* (DH, 2012) and is directly aligned with the *Five Year Forward View* (DH, 2014) and its vision to integrate health and social care services, improve the adoption of preventative measures and narrow three gaps in:

- **health and wellbeing:**
A greater focus on prevention is needed to enable health improvements to continue and to counter pressure on services
- **care and quality:**
Health needs will go unmet unless we reshape care, harness technology and address variations in quality and safety
- **funding and efficiency:**
Without efficiencies, a shortage of resources will hinder care services and progress.

If you are planning on working in the **NHS in Wales**, it is advisable that you familiarise yourself with Welsh Government strategies. The following link will act as a gateway for a better understanding of the context and direction of health and social care in Wales <https://beta.gov.wales/review-health-and-social-care?lang=en>
It would also be beneficial for you to be aware of the *Post-Registration Career Framework for Nurses in Wales* <http://gov.wales/topics/health/professionals/nursing/professional/?lang=en>

If you are planning on working in the health and social care (HSC) sector or the independent sector in **Northern Ireland**, it is important that you familiarise yourself with the current Northern Ireland government strategies. The strategic direction for health is contained in the Health Ministers vision *Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together*.

Delivering Care: Nurse Staffing in Northern Ireland is a policy framework that aims to support the provision of high quality care which is safe and effective in hospital and community settings, through the development of a framework to determine staffing ranges

Finding your feet

for the nursing and midwifery workforce in a range of major specialties.

The Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council (NIPEC) nipec.hscni.net also have a number of very useful microsites which give information on a range of professional tools and resources including:

Career progression and development nursingandmidwiferycareersni.hscni.net

Preceptorship nipec.hscni.net/resource-section/preceptorship

NRN Network

For peer support and to share your successes and challenges with other newly registered nurses you may want to consider joining the RCN NRN Network once you are qualified.

The NRN Network aims to add the unique perspective of the newly qualified to the voice of nursing, while providing support and guidance at the beginning of the nursing journey.

We seek to support those in the last six months of their degree through to the end of their preceptorship (roughly 18 months post-registration).

Find out more: rcn.org.uk/get-involved/forums/nrn-network/about-us



If you are planning to work in Scotland

If you are planning to work in Scotland, there are a few key national health policies it is important for you to be familiar with.

The Scottish Government's *Nursing 2030 Vision* sets out what nursing needs to look like by 2030 – capturing what is currently done well and what needs to be done differently to deal with future demands on public services and issues such as the ageing population and workforce.

The vision was developed following a Scotland-wide engagement exercise involving current nurses, students and other key stakeholders. Three key themes emerged:

- Personalising care – moving towards providers and recipients of care being equal partners
- Preparing nurses for future needs and roles – ensuring competent and skilled nurses can take on new ways of working to enable them to perform in a wide range of settings
- Supporting nurses – identifying and addressing the challenges faced by nurses, including accessing development opportunities and support with health and wellbeing.

The Public Bodies Joint Working (Scotland) Act 2014 came into force in April 2016 to integrate the planning and delivery of health and social care. Integration aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people using health and care support and services in Scotland, and to make sure that those working in health and social care are equipped to make best use of their collective skills and resources to improve outcomes for individuals. New integration authorities have been established between health boards and local authorities to commission and oversee the commissioning and delivery of health and social care services in each partnership area. They have control of an integrated budget. Integration covers adult social care, adult community health care and some aspects of adult hospital care.

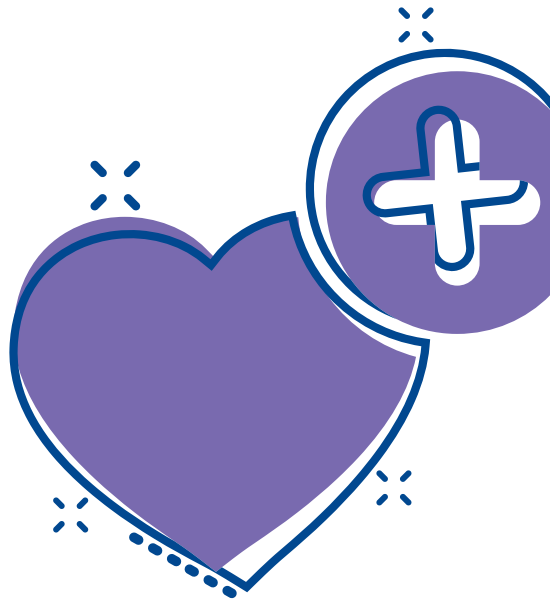
Health boards and local authorities decide locally whether to include children's health and social care services. Services must be planned and provided in a way that takes into account the principles of integration set out in the legislation and meets a suite of National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes.

If you are planning to work in Scotland

Scotland will legislate for a National Care Service during the current Scottish Parliament – this is to be in place by 2026 and will affect how integration works.

The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act was passed in 2019, and the RCN had been working closely with the Scottish Government to develop statutory guidance and health boards were making preparations for implementation too. Regrettably, this work had to be put on pause as services focused on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Act is the first in the UK to set out requirements for safe staffing across both health and care services. Safe and effective staffing is a key element to remobilising the NHS safely and ensuring that Scotland's care homes can safely deliver care to residents. RCN Scotland is calling for the Act to be implemented as soon as possible, and for continued work to develop workforce planning tools.

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The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies.

www.rcn.org.uk
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20 Cavendish Square
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August 2021
Publication code: 009 800



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