

Newly Registered Nursing Associate Guide

(England only)





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Your voice is important to us. As a member of the RCN you will lead, connect, educate and evolve

You are a valued part of a huge network of active RCN members and, now that you are stepping into your career as a registered nursing associate (RNA), the RCN is here to support you in promoting excellence in practice and shaping health policy. We'll provide you with the tools and resources you need to help you deliver high-quality patient care.

As both a professional body and trade union, the RCN has a unique strength in providing members with a powerful voice. Sometimes that voice takes the form of individual support and guidance, or representation at times when members feel most vulnerable and alone. At other times, that voice can contribute to the wider nursing community through our networks, forums, and campaigns.

We'd like to show you how you can stay connected with the RCN, find support and resources when you need them, have your voice heard and become more active as a member.

Starting your role as a registered nursing associate (England only)

At the RCN, we pride ourselves on the member support that we offer, and we have developed and provided dedicated resources to support our members as they live and work through challenging times.

Looking after yourself, your physical, emotional and mental wellbeing is important to us, as you progress through your career.

We know that the skills, values, behaviours, knowledge and understanding that you have gained as a student nursing associate (SNA) will provide you with a comprehensive base to continue your development.



Introduction

As an RNA you are an integral part of the nursing team, working with people of all ages, in a variety of settings. Your role contributes to the core work of nursing, releasing time for registered nurses to focus on more complex clinical care.

Whether you choose to work within the NHS, independent sector, or social care, you will continue to learn new skills as you develop and grow in your role.

This guide will support you in self-managing your transition from an SNA to RNA.

Top Tips

Transitioning from an SNA to RNA

- Find out the date that you will complete your studies, the date that your details will be sent to the NMC and the date you will receive your PIN.
- Take the time to consider what the best options are for you. You may want to speak to your mentor who can guide and advise you about the range of opportunities for nursing associates. The RCN also offers career support services. rcn.org.uk/professional-development/your-career/nurse

Continue to create reflection pieces to support your learning and experience, and your NMC revalidation (see **Appendix 1** for reflective template). You are expected to reflect on your practice and discuss it with your mentor using whichever reflective model suits you. It is an integral part of professional practice and will become familiar to you. Evidencing reflective practice in your professional portfolio will support your learning and future development.

Employment checklist	<p>Have you received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your job description?• your contract of employment? See the RCN advice guide on contracts: rcn.org.uk/contracts• details of working patterns – days/shifts/times? <p>If a new employer, they will need to see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your nursing qualification• RNA NMC PIN. <p>Check if the employer will require an additional form of identification, such as a driving licence.</p> <p>Are preceptorship plans arranged? And do you have all the relevant documentation to support future learning, training and development?</p> <p>Create/maintain an e-portfolio that collates and records learning and development through preceptorship.</p> <p>Plan opportunities to develop practice supervisor skills.</p> <p>Have you received the information about your induction to the organisation, if you need one?</p> <p>Update your work details with the RCN at: rcn.org.uk/log-in</p> <p>Engage with networks and forums of choice and consider how these inform and support your current role and ongoing professional development.</p> <p>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. rcn.org.uk/get-help/indemnity-scheme</p>
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Standards of proficiency for registered nursing associates

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (nmc.org.uk)

The standards of proficiency for RNAs are set out by the NMC and are grouped under 6 platforms. It is important that you understand them because they:

- represent the knowledge, skills and attributes that all RNAs must demonstrate when caring for people of all ages and across all health and care settings
- reflect what the public can expect RNAs to know and be able to do in order to deliver safe, compassionate and effective care
- provide a benchmark for those who plan to return to practice after a period of absence.

The 6 platforms

1. Being an accountable professional

2. Promoting health and preventing ill health

3. Providing and monitoring care

4. Working in teams

5. Improving safety and quality of care

6. Contributing to integrated care



The foundation of good practice

Exploring the 6 platforms in more detail

1. Being an accountable professional

RNAs provide safe and compassionate care that's based on a person's unique needs. They act professionally at all times, make informed decisions and take responsibility for their actions.

2. Promoting health and preventing ill health

RNAs support people in managing their health so that they can have a good quality of life at every age. They help to tackle the big issues that affect public health, including issues that particularly matter to individuals.

3. Providing and monitoring care

RNAs monitor a person's health needs, and work with them and their family or carers to deliver care.

4. Working in teams

RNAs work well with a wide variety of colleagues in different roles, ensuring they communicate effectively with nurses and other health and care professionals.

5. Improving safety and quality of care

RNAs help monitor and improve the quality of care a person receives. They identify any risks to safety and take action to manage these, ensuring a person's best interests, needs and preferences are put first.

6. Contributing to integrated care

RNAs play a key role in the provision of care, alongside a range of other professionals and carers.

For a more detailed breakdown of the NMC's standards of proficiency for a registered nursing associate, head to: nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-nursing-associates

NMC registration and revalidation

Every year, you will need to pay a fee 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 folder and that the NMC has your most up-to-date email address.

Further information can be found at: nmc.org.uk/revalidation/overview/nursing-associate

Find out about the requirements of revalidation, what you can do to prepare and how the RCN can support you at: rcn.org.uk/revalidation

Please contact us if you have any queries: **0345 772 6100** or visit: rcn.org.uk/get-help

Continuing professional development (CPD)

Being able to reflect is fundamental to our learning. It is important to recognise the value of all that you have learnt through your life experiences, personal learning, your programme experiences and the learning required to achieve your qualification. Consolidating and applying much of this learning will allow you to continue developing yourself and your career.

Continuing professional development (CPD) is a requirement for continued registration with the NMC. CPD is fundamental to the nursing profession, ensuring that nurses deliver up-to-date evidence-based practice throughout their career.



The NMC does not prescribe any particular CPD activities to meet its requirements. What is important is that you can demonstrate that your chosen learning activities are relevant to and have benefited your practice. For example, you might:

- read a journal article
- undertake an e-learning activity
- shadow a professional colleague
- engage in a topical conversation via webinars or social media.

The evidence of learning from any of these activities is through reflection and exploring how they can inform and improve your practice.

The RCN has a range of networks, forums, and services that you can use as part of your continuing professional development. As a member, these services are free for you to use and are available on the RCN website. Useful examples are listed below:

rcn.org.uk/professional-development

rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics

rcn.org.uk/get-involved/forums

rcn.org.uk/library

RCN Congress is an important event in the nursing calendar. It is where nursing staff meet to learn, develop and share nursing practice, and to influence nursing and health care policy.

Congress is free to attend, however you will need to consider the cost of your travel and accommodation. rcn.org.uk/congress



Overview of preceptorship

The NMC defines preceptorship as ‘the structured start for newly registered nurses, midwives and nursing associates.’

Preceptorship aims to support and guide your development as a newly registered nursing associate, facilitating your transition from student to professional and helping you understand how to apply the NMC Code’s standards in your everyday practice.

Preceptorship should be supported by an experienced practitioner, known as a preceptor, whose role is to promote confidence and facilitate your continued learning and development. The preceptor role focuses on enabling you to refine your skills, values and behaviours within the context of your first post as a registered nursing associate and to underpin your future professional practice. This is supported by learning from best practice in providing effective patient-centred care and will develop a foundation for lifelong learning.

Preceptorship resources

The RCN provides useful information and resources to support preceptorship:
rcni.com/keywords/preceptorship

Further information, along with the NMC’s expectations of preceptorship, can be found at:
rcn.org.uk/nmc-precept



Supporting you along the way

Appraisal

Appraisal is an important part of your ongoing development within your organisation. You should have a performance appraisal and development review at least once a year. There may be a requirement within your organisation for a meeting at six months to review your progress and to prepare for your annual appraisal.

If your organisation does not have a policy for appraisal, then it is good practice to request a review meeting with your preceptor and/or your manager to ensure that there is an opportunity to review and discuss your progress.

Guidance on how to prepare for an appraisal or performance review can be found at: rcn.org.uk/Get-Help/RCN-advice/appraisals-and-performance-reviews-checklist

Opportunities for career development

As an RNA, you have a growing number of opportunities to develop your career further.

As your role is new to the nursing profession, career paths and opportunities for growth continue to emerge. One readily established option is the progression to graduate registered nurse, building on the qualifications and experience you would have gained as an RNA.

For more information or advice, head to the RCN's careers service: rcn.org.uk/professional-development/your-career

Details can also be found on the Skills for Health website: haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/r-n-degree-apprenticeship



Taking care of yourself

Whilst your employer has a legal duty to protect your health, safety and welfare at work, there is much you can do to care for yourself. As a nursing professional, it is important you take the time to consider factors that impact upon your own health.

Resources are available to assist you on the RCN website:

rcn.org.uk/employment-and-pay/Health-safety-and-wellbeing/Self-care

rcn.org.uk/employment-and-pay/Health-safety-and-wellbeing/Rest-Rehydrate-Refuel

rcn.org.uk/employment-and-pay/Health-safety-and-wellbeing/Time-and-space

As an RCN member, you can also access free, confidential advice, representation and support at: rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services or you can call RCN Direct on: 0345 772 6100.

We know that for some, the COVID-19 pandemic severely interrupted training, clinical placements and academic routes. In an effort to help you through this challenging time, we have created resources focused on protecting your wellbeing and offering employment and clinical guidance. rcn.org.uk/covid-19

RCN support in the workplace

There are many active RCN members in the workplace. Some hold official roles, and many others get active through their branch, professional forum or through the RCN's social media groups. Use the relevant links below to find out how you too can get involved.

What it means to be an RCN rep: rcn.org.uk/get-involved/rcn-reps

Find out what is happening in your area: rcn.org.uk/get-involved/countries-and-regions

Discover and join a forum: rcn.org.uk/get-involved/forums

Campaigns

As an RCN member you can work with us to create positive change for the nursing profession; improve conditions in your workplace and help raise awareness of our campaigns. Find out how you can take action today at: rcn.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns

Equality and inclusion

As a registered nursing associate, understanding your responsibilities in promoting inclusion and implementing equality of opportunity is important, not just to ensure that you keep within The Code (NMC, 2018), but it is critical to your colleagues and to your patients too. The RCN offers resources to guide and support you.

rcn.org.uk/diversity-and-inclusion

Download the RCN Inclusion Café booklet to learn more about workplace incivility and boost your knowledge of the protections that you have against facing discrimination in the workplace. rcn.org.uk/inclusion-cafe

Appendix 1

Gibbs 1998 Reflective Model

Gibbs's Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1998) helps you to understand and practise your reflective skills. Use the template to reflect on a recent event in which you demonstrated a reflected ability to improve or demonstrate the need for further learning or development.

Reflective title

Name

Date

Description: what happened?

Feelings: what were you thinking and feeling?

Evaluation: what was good and bad about the experience?

Analysis: what sense can you make of the situation?

Conclusion: what else could you have done?

Action plan: if the situation arose again, what would you do?



Interested in funding for education opportunities?

We know that patients deserve the best possible experience and care, delivered by well trained and high performing professionals like you.

The RCN Foundation offers grants to nurses, midwives and nursing support workers to engage in development and learning activities. These opportunities will enhance your skills and knowledge to transform your patients' care.

Visit our website to see what we offer, tips for applying and how you can make a difference to nursing and patients through RCN Foundation funding.

rcnfoundation.org.uk

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

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