NMC revalidation

An update from the RCN on NMC revalidation, plus frequently asked questions
What is revalidation?
Revalidation is a process introduced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). From April 2016, all nurses and midwives are required to revalidate in order to remain on the register. You need to engage with this process to show that you practise safely and effectively and demonstrate compliance with the NMC Code of Conduct throughout your career.

Revalidation builds on the Prep standards and is a process that takes place every three years. REMEMBER – you must still pay your annual retention fee every year to the NMC to retain your registration.

What are the revalidation requirements?
• Pay annual retention fee to the NMC.
• Complete 450 hours of practice (or 900 if a midwife and nurse registrant).
• Complete 35 hours of continuing professional development (CPD), of which 20 should be participatory.
• Prepare five written reflections on the mandatory NMC form; these can refer to an instance of CPD and/or a piece of practice-related feedback you have received and/or an event or experience in your own professional practice and how it relates to the NMC Code.
• Obtain five pieces of practice-related feedback.
• Have a reflective discussion with another NMC registrant.
• Complete declaration of health and character.
• Provide proof of professional indemnity.
• Obtain confirmation by an appropriate confirmer.

How can you prepare for revalidation?
• Look at the information and resources the RCN has provided here: www.rcn.org.uk/revalidation
You can also visit the dedicated NMC microsite on revalidation: www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation
• Ensure you know when your revalidation date is.
• Join NMC Online at www.nmc.org.uk/registration/nmc-online/
• Ensure the NMC has your most up-to-date contact details as they may need to contact you.
• Ensure you are familiar with the NMC Code.
• Start collecting the information outlined above.

How will the RCN support me with revalidation?
We are offering advice and support in understanding the NMC revalidation requirements and navigating the process.

We have a dedicated revalidation web page, which also provides a link to case studies of those who have already completed revalidation. www.rcn.org.uk/revalidation
You can also contact RCN Direct any time on 0345 772 6100, and speak to one of our advisers.
The RCN offers range of CPD resources to members. Visit our website to find out how we can support you: www.rcn.org.uk

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)
How should I and the rest of my nursing team prepare for revalidation?
Here are some suggestions:
• Make sure all the team, where relevant, are familiar with the NMC Code, which was launched on 31 March 2015, as this is key to revalidation.
• Establish when individuals within your team will be completing their revalidation application. Also find out who they might need to share this information with, to ensure they are supported to complete the revalidation process.
• Explore how you might use team meetings, appraisals and one-to-ones to facilitate reflection on practice, provide feedback and identify developmental needs.
• Identify the range of different learning opportunities that are available to your team – remember this can be through both formal activities, such as a taught course, and informal opportunities, such as reading about issues relevant to practice or engaging in a relevant social media discussion.
• Encourage the team to reflect on their practice so that they continue to build skills around reflective practice that will stand them in good stead for the revalidation process.
• Start to gather feedback from activities with your client group. Remember, feedback may not always be positive – less positive feedback can often trigger us to reflect and adjust our practice appropriately.
• Identify who will be able to take on the role of reflective discussion partner and confirmer.
How can I obtain feedback?
Feedback can be given in a formal or informal way. It could be written or verbal. You can obtain feedback from a variety of sources. For example, you might receive feedback directly from patients or other service users, carers, students or colleagues. You can also obtain feedback by reviewing complaints, team performance reports and serious event reviews. You may also have received feedback through clinical supervision, one-to-ones or annual appraisals. If it is group or team feedback, it is important that you are clear about the specific impact that the feedback had on your own practice.

In what format must the feedback be?
The actual evidence of feedback does not need to be submitted to the NMC; however, it is recommended that you keep a note of the content of any feedback you receive in anonymised form, including details of how you used it to improve your practice. This will be helpful for you to use when you are preparing your reflective accounts. You can use the template provided by the NMC to record your feedback.

Does the RCN have any guidance on written reflections?
Reflection is about the individual and how his or her experience leads to a new understanding. In other words, reflection is a process that allows you to stop and think about your practice and consciously analyse it. The NMC wants to encourage nurses to engage in reflective practice so that they identify any changes and improvements they need to make in their practice from what they have learnt. Each reflective account can be about an instance of CPD, feedback you have received, an event or experience, or a combination of all these in your practice as a nurse or midwife, and how this relates to the NMC Code. More information can be found on the RCN revalidation web page.

Is there a template for reflection? Should we use a specific model?
You can use a reflective model of your choice to help structure your reflection but each reflective account must be recorded on the NMC’s mandatory template and must refer to an instance of CPD and/or a piece of practice-related feedback you have received and/or an event or experience in your own professional practice and how it relates to the Code. For further information, and to download the template, visit the NMC website.

Can mandatory training form part of my CPD requirements?
The NMC has outlined in its guidance its position on mandatory training that is not directly related to your practice. For example, fire training or health and safety training cannot be included as part of your 35 hours of CPD. However, if you undertake any mandatory training that supports and enables you to develop your practice this can count towards the required CPD hours. This could include mandatory training on equality legislation if you are in a policy role, or safeguarding when working with vulnerable groups.

Is there any guidance on the reflective discussion?
You must ensure that the NMC registrant with whom you have your reflective discussion signs the mandatory NMC form, recording their name, email address and NMC PIN, as well as the date on which you had your reflective discussion.

Could a registrant set up a private business that includes confirming — and charge a fee?
The NMC has clear guidance around conflicts of interest (see below). It could be argued that the nature of the commercial relationship, if the confirmer is running this as part of a business, may impact on both impartiality and objectivity for confirmation.

Conflicts of interest
(page 8 of the NMC Information for confirmers)

31 A conflict of interest is a situation that has the potential to undermine your impartiality or objectivity. Examples of conflicts of interest are personal or commercial relationships.

32 You should generally avoid providing a confirmation where there is a conflict of interest. However, we recognise that there is likely to be a commercial interest in many small businesses and in some cases this will not be avoidable.

33 All confirmations must be provided objectively. You must not be influenced by any personal or commercial relationship you might have with the registrant when providing confirmation. If you do not think that you can provide confirmation objectively, you should discuss this with the registrant.
What guidance should employers be offering on revalidation?

Your employer is not obliged to provide specific support to the nurses and midwives they employ. However, providing support for revalidation could be considered a key part of a quality and assurance system. Good employment practice requires employers to have support in place so that the nurses and midwives they employ are competent to provide safe and effective care. The NMC has produced a guide for employers:
http://revalidation.nmc.org.uk/information-for-employers

Where should I store my evidence for revalidation?

The NMC recommends that the evidence you collect as part of the revalidation requirements be kept in a portfolio. You can decide where to store your evidence – you may wish to store it digitally, or in a physical portfolio. The RCN has produced information on the different ways to collect and store evidence. See the RCN revalidation web page for further details.

The NMC has produced a checklist to help you make sure that all of the information you require to revalidate is in your portfolio before you have your confirmation discussion. It has also provided downloadable templates for completion. These can be found at: http://revalidation.nmc.org.uk/ready-to-submit-online

What is the difference between being asked for my annual retention payment and revalidation?

Your annual fee is the payment that you must pay each year to maintain your registration.

Your revalidation occurs every three years, when you must demonstrate that you have met the requirements to renew your registration. The NMC must receive your direct debit payment before it confirms that your revalidation is complete.

I don’t have access to IT, so how can I meet my revalidation requirements online?

The NMC has asked that all nurses and midwives register for NMC Online, as that is how they will communicate with you as a registrant. You will revalidate online, so it is important that you identify how you are going to facilitate this before you are required to complete the process. If you need support accessing a computer or getting online please visit a library – one of the RCN Libraries, your local library or your NHS trust library. Most NHS and independent trusts, RCN Libraries and local libraries have excellent and often free access to computers, as do local universities.

Go to www.nmc.org.uk/registration/nmc-online to register for an online account. You can do this via a smartphone, tablet, PC or laptop. RCN Libraries are offering support to members who would like to be more IT-confident. Please see www.rcn.org.uk/development/library_and_heritage_services for more information.

Will the NMC accept practice hours worked abroad?

Yes. The NMC says that you can meet the practice hours requirement if you are working overseas (or have worked overseas for part of the registration period) on the basis of your registration with the NMC. It does recommend that you always register with the appropriate regulator in the country in which you are practising. Please refer to our guidance on www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/ecn-advice/working-overseas

Please also see the NMC guidance on working outside the UK: www.nmc.org.uk/registration/working-outside-the-uk

I am employed in a role where I do not have to be a registered nurse but I want to maintain my registration. How can I do this?

Your practice hours will relate to your own specific scope of practice and are not limited to direct patient care. For some registrants, practice is working in research, policy, education or management. If you use your nursing registration knowledge and skills in the role you are employed in you should be able to reflect on this sphere of practice and the professional NMC Code. You will need to meet all seven of the requirements for revalidation.
I am a registered nurse and a full-time trade union representative. This has meant I have not had a clinical role for some time. How will the RCN be able to support me in remaining on the NMC register?

All registrants will be able to map against the NMC Code within their own field of practice, which may or may not be within a clinical practice setting. This will be no different for RCN trade union representatives. As an RCN representative you play an important part in:

- influencing good employment relations with employers
- encouraging the employer to work towards a healthy workplace environment
- supporting the learning and career development of RCN members in the workplace by enabling members to meet continuing professional development requirements.

This important work ultimately contributes to the provision of excellent patient care. It will map against the four broad areas of the NMC Code and therefore not hinder the revalidation process. You could use feedback on your practice from those who you work with and those who you have supported.

There is more information on this on the RCN representatives web page.

What are the implications for registrants who are not practising?

The activities you undertake to meet the revalidation requirements will reflect your individual scope of practice as a nurse or midwife.

All nurses and midwives are required to declare that they have undertaken the required amount of practice hours in the last three years. You must meet your practice hours in a role where you rely on your skills, knowledge and experience of being a registered nurse or midwife. Nurses and midwives work across a wide range of roles, functions and settings. For example, these include roles in frontline clinical care in both acute and community settings, roles in nursing and midwifery education and research, policy advisory roles, and management and leadership roles specific to nursing or midwifery.

If you do not undertake any type of work where you rely on your skills, knowledge or experience as a registered nurse or midwife, you will need to cancel your registration. You will not be able to meet the practice hours requirements, as well as other revalidation requirements. You can apply for readmission to the register in future if you wish to practise as a nurse or midwife.

If you are concerned that you may not meet this requirement, you should review the NMC’s guidance. For further information see the RCN revalidation web page.
The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies

June 2016

RCN Online
www.rcn.org.uk

RCN Direct
www.rcn.org.uk/direct
0345 772 6100

Published by the Royal College of Nursing
20 Cavendish Square
London
W1G 0RN

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www.youtube.com/rcnonline
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Publication code 005 645