

## Organisational responses

### Time limits for completion of education across all NMC education standards

Thank you for taking part in this Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) consultation about changes to our standards for the training of nurses and midwives. We propose removing the current mandatory maximum time limits for the completion of pre and post-registration programmes, to allow for unforeseen interruptions. The [consultation documents](#) outline the current requirements and the new approach we have proposed. We are seeking your views to inform our decision.

As members of the Market Research Society (MRS) we ensure the highest standards of professional research and privacy in using the information that you provide. We keep to the MRS code of conduct. Responses to the survey will be analysed as a whole and not linked to individual participants.

Email us at [consultations@nmc-uk.org](mailto:consultations@nmc-uk.org) to report any problems.

The following changes are proposed to the NMC's standards for the training and education of nurses and midwives:

- We are proposing the removal of maximum completion time limits from NMC standards.
- We are also proposing that responsibility for management of completion timescales should be devolved to approved education institutions.

**1. How far do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes outlined above?  
(Please tick only one box)**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know

*Please explain your answer:*

As discussed within the NMC consultation supporting documentation, the current completion times are not consistent in terms of how they have been calculated and there is a lack of evidence around the impact of timeliness of completion on preparation of a safe and effective practitioner.

We are aware that the timeframes for pre-registration nursing education around part time routes (7 years) are currently used by some approved education institutions (AEIs) to enable a more flexible approach to managing students who are running out of time on a full time route (5 years). This indicates that HEIs are currently managing timescales for completion; we believe that they have the infrastructure and quality assurance frameworks to enable them to expand management of timescales across all NMC approved programmes.

This would also address the current anomaly where a student may be discontinued from a programme because they are out of time to complete, but could use approval of prior learning mechanisms to gain credit when restarting on a similar programme. This sends a mixed message about timeliness of knowledge and skills.

This change to NMC standards for the training and education of nurses and midwives will bring the NMC in line with other regulators in terms of imposed time limits.

We believe that the proposals would not have any impact on public protection for the following reasons:

- A student's entry to the register would depend on them meeting all of the requirements of our registration standards and completing a full registration programme.
- The approved education institutions would, as now, have to be assured that in awarding a qualification a student has demonstrated the necessary contemporary knowledge and skills required in that programme. The student would still need to demonstrate safe and effective practice to meet our registration criteria.

**2. How far do you agree or disagree that the proposed changes will not impact public protection? (Please tick only one box)**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree

Strongly disagree

I don't know

*Please explain your answer:*

AEIs already manage the student journey within clear protocols and internal quality assurance processes. They are in a strong position to ensure that the students they are recommending for registration by the NMC are safe and effective practitioners at the point of registration. This is because they hold the data for those students who are struggling to complete within a prescribed timescale and have insight and understanding of the individual's progress and achievement. It is important that the NMC ensure that the requirements of academic regulations relating to length of programmes and completion times is an explicit part of the approval and monitoring of programmes. This should include recognition that programmes and courses can change during a student's period of intermission and scrutiny of how this is then managed for public protection and the student experience perspectives. It will also be important to compare how different AEIs manage the requirements to ensure that there is parity of experience for students across the sector.

**3. How far do you agree or disagree that the proposed approach strikes an appropriate balance between the NMC's responsibilities to ensure public protection while ensuring equality and fairness (as laid out in equality legislation)?  
(Please tick only one box)**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

I don't know

*Please explain your answer:*

As a regulator, the NMC must be seen to be fair and consistent in the application of standards which are set to promote safe and effective practice. If the proposed change is accepted, and effectively implemented by AEIs and monitored by the NMC, it would appear to offer a proportionate solution. There is greater potential for fairness and equality for students who may require extensions for their programme and there should be no untoward impact on public protection.

<b>4. Are you currently an NMC registrant?</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes – please go to question 5 <input type="checkbox"/> No – please go directly to question 6 <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know – please go directly to question 6
<b>5. Which of the following describes your registration with the NMC? (select all that apply)</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nursing <input type="checkbox"/> Midwifery <input type="checkbox"/> SCPHN <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know

<u>Organisation:</u>
<b>6. Which of the following best describes the type of organisation you are responding on behalf of?</b>  <b>(Please tick only one box)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Government or public body <input type="checkbox"/> Regulator <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional organisation or trade union <input type="checkbox"/> NHS employer of nurses or midwives <input type="checkbox"/> Independent sector employer of, or agency for, nurses and midwives <input type="checkbox"/> Education provider <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer or patient organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify:

<b>7. Please give the name of your organisation</b>
Royal College of Nursing
<b>8. Would you be happy for your comments to be attributed to your organisation?</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No – please keep my responses anonymous

**9. Please state where your organisation mainly operates:**

- UK-wide
- England
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales
- I don't know
- Other – please specify:

**General Questions:**

**10. How did you find out about this consultation?**

- NMC website
- Email or e-newsletter from the NMC
- Email or e-newsletter from another organisation
- University
- Friend/colleague
- NMC event
- My organisation
- Other
- I don't know