

End-point assessment plan for Nursing associate fully integrated apprenticeship standard

Apprenticeship standard number	Level of this end-point assessment (EPA)	Integrated
ST0827	5	Fully integrated

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Introduction and overview

Nursing associates are subject to statutory regulation by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). The NMC sets the standards of proficiency required for entry to the professional register and these are the occupational standards for nursing associates. The NMC also has the statutory duty to set requirements of programmes necessary to support the achievement of the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the occupational standard. The apprenticeship standard and the delivery of the apprentices' training must be aligned to all relevant NMC standards to ensure that apprentices are eligible for entry to the NMC register on completion. It is against the law for anyone to work as a registered nursing associate without being registered with the NMC. The end-point assessment (EPA) assesses whether apprentices have also passed the apprenticeship, and is based on the same professional knowledge, skills and behaviours as the occupational standard.

This document sets out the requirements for EPA for the nursing associate fully integrated apprenticeship standard. It is for the end-point assessment organisations (EPAO), that must be an NMC Approved Education Institution (AEI), who need to know how EPA for this apprenticeship must operate. It will also be of interest to apprentices and their employers.

Apprentices will typically spend 24 months on-programme working towards the occupational standard.

The EPA period should only start, and the EPA be arranged, once the employer and NMC Approved Education Institution is satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard and all of the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met. It is expected that the gateway will be reached on completion of the final qualification module and before the AEI's examination board.

Prior to commencement, apprentices will have their numeracy and literacy skills assessed by the NMC Approved Education Institution to ensure the apprentice has the necessary skills at a minimum of Level 2 to meet the requirements of the programme.

The EPA period is expected to last a maximum of 1 month beginning when the apprentice has passed the EPA gateway.

The EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship standard and grades of:

- fail
- pass

This apprenticeship has a fully integrated EPA. The EPA will use the assessment arrangements in use for other entry routes into this occupation and will be completed simultaneously, as outlined in this end-point assessment plan. Alignment of the integrated EPA is permitted because the following criteria are met:

1. Parliament has prescribed that the occupation (profession) must be regulated and a statutory regulator has undisputed control of access to the occupation.
2. The fully integrated EPA meets the requirements of an apprenticeship.

EPA summary table

On-programme (typically 24 months)	Training to develop the occupation standards knowledge, skills and behaviours
End-point assessment gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentice has met the knowledge, skills and behaviours • Employer and NMC Approved Education Institution (AEI) are satisfied that the apprentice has consistently demonstrated they meet the KSBs of the occupational standard • Achieved English and mathematics at Level 2. • Completion of all required modules, taking into account any Recognition of prior learning (RPL), of the foundation degree approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council in line with the requirements specified in the Nursing Associates Programme Standards (NMC 2018) which includes the mandatory protected learning time and a minimum 460 hours of external practice placements but before the AEI's examination board • Practice Assessment Document (PAD) completed and signed-off by their practice and academic assessor
End-point assessment (which would typically take place with 1 month)	<p>The EPA starts with the examination board and finishes when the AEI makes the required declarations to the NMC. The apprentice is not required to carry out any additional assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration by the examination board and notice of the decision of the examination board
Professional recognition	Registration with: Nursing and Midwifery Council

Gateway

The EPA period should only start once the employer and the NMC Approved Education Institution are satisfied that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard.

The EPA starts with exam board and finishes when the AEI:

- uploads the apprentice's course and personal details to the NMC database
- sends the NMC a declaration of the apprentice's good health and character

The apprentice must have completed the following gateway requirements prior to beginning EPA:

- Achieved English and mathematics at level 2

For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement the apprenticeships English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3 and British Sign Language qualification are an alternative to English qualifications for whom this is their primary language.

Apprentices must complete all required modules, taking into account any recognised prior learning (RPL) of the following approved qualifications as mandated in the occupational standard:

- Foundation degree approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council in-line with the requirements specified in the Nursing Associates Programme Standards (NMC 2018) which includes the mandatory protected learning time and a minimum 460 hours of external practice placements

The apprentice will also have successfully completed a Practice Assessment Document (PAD) and this will have been signed-off by their practice and academic assessor.

EPA

The EPA is:

Examination board

The examination board will be constituted in line with the NMC Approved Education Institution's academic assessment regulations and must have an external examiner present when considering achievement of the NMC approved qualification.

Independence of the EPA will be assured through:

- the examination board, which will include the external examiner, being responsible for the final decision on the award of the qualification that confirms the apprentice has met the education outcomes required for registration with the NMC.
- the end-point assessment organisation (NMC Approved Education Institution) will conduct the EPA.

Grading

Name of grade	Grade descriptor
Pass	Has met the NMC standards of proficiency for nursing associates (2018) and the requirements for the declaration of good health and character
Fail	Does not meet the NMC standards of proficiency for nursing associates (2018) and/or the requirements for the declaration of good health and character

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Apprentice	As a minimum, the apprentice should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete the constituent parts of the programme successfully • meet all apprenticeship gateway requirements • understand the structure and requirements of the apprenticeship
Employer	As a minimum, the employer should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the apprentice to achieve the KSBs outlined in the occupational standard • determine when the apprentice is working at or above the level of occupational competence outlined in the occupational standard and has met all apprenticeship gateway requirements, taking account of the advice of the NMC Approved Education Institution
The EPAO (NMC Approved Education Institution)	As a minimum the EPAO (NMC Approved Education Institution) should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be an NMC Approved Education Institution for the Nursing associate apprenticeship • be on the Register of end-point assessment organisations (RoEPAO) • work with the employer to ensure that the apprentice is given the opportunities to develop the KSBs outlined in the standard and monitor their progress during the on-programme period • confirms to the employer that gateway requirements have been met • appoint an external examiner • use appropriate recording documentation to ensure a clear and auditable mechanism for recording the decision of the Examination Board • maintain robust internal quality assurance (IQA) procedures and processes, and conduct these on a regular basis • submits required documentation to the NMC • conform to the requirements of the nominated external quality assurance body • conduct standardisation events and activities in accordance with NMC and external quality assurance (EQA) providers requirements • have, and operate, an appeals process • arrange for apprenticeship certification

External examiner	<p>As a minimum an External Examiner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the standard and assessment plan • be a nurse or nursing associate registered with the NMC • comply to the requirements of the EPAO (NMC Approved Education Institution) • be independent of the apprentice, the EPAO (NMC Approved Education Institution) or employing organisation who are involved in delivering the apprenticeship
Programme External Assessor	<p>As a minimum an external examiner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the occupational standard and on programme assessments • be a nurse or nursing associate registered with the NMC • comply to the requirements of an NMC Approved Education Institution

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance refers to the requirements that EPA organisations must have in place to ensure consistent (reliable) and accurate (valid) assessment decisions. EPA organisations for this EPA must:

- appoint external examiners who:
 - meet the EQA provider's recommendations for external examiners
 - meet the Approved Education Institution's requirements as set out in their 'Assessment, Progression and Awarding' or similar guidance

Re-sits and re-takes

In-line with the EPAO's (NMC Approved Education Institution) procedures.

Professional body recognition

This apprenticeship is based on the Nursing and Midwifery Council's standards of proficiency and education programme standards. This means that those who successfully complete the apprenticeship will be eligible to apply for registration with the NMC.

Reasonable adjustments

The EPAO (NMC Approved Education Institution) must have in place clear and fair arrangements for making reasonable adjustments for this apprenticeship standard. This should

include how an apprentice qualifies for reasonable adjustments and what reasonable adjustments will be made. The adjustments must maintain the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment decisions outlined in this EPA plan.