



NMC revalidation: next steps

An update from the RCN on NMC revalidation,
plus frequently asked questions



What is revalidation?

Revalidation is a process being introduced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC); all nurses and midwives will be required to revalidate in order to remain on the register. You will need to engage with this process to demonstrate that you practise safely and effectively throughout your career.

It is important to recognise that renewing your registration is not a new requirement to remain on the NMC register. As nurses and midwives, we declare that we have met the current NMC Prep standards every three years. Revalidation builds on the Prep standards and will also be 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.

Why now?

The NMC wants to improve public protection by bringing in a more robust process to make sure all registrants remain fit to practise throughout their career.

What are the proposed key changes and what evidence is required?

In October 2015 the NMC Council approved the model. The first registrants to revalidate under the new model will be those due to renew their registration in April 2016. The process will then continue on a monthly basis according to each individual registrant's renewal date.

It is important that the first registrants begin to familiarise themselves with the requirements to revalidate and develop their portfolio of evidence.

All registrants, however, need to be familiar with the requirements and set up an NMC online account. This is because revalidation applications will be submitted online. More information can be found at: www.nmc.org.uk/registration/nmc-online/ and at: www.rcn.org.uk/revalidation

The key changes relate to how registrants will demonstrate their compliance with the *NMC Code* (2015) and are highlighted below.

REVALIDATION CRITERIA	PREP REQUIREMENTS	REVALIDATION REQUIREMENTS	THE CHANGES
Pay annual fee	✓	✓	NO CHANGE
Obtain five pieces of practice-related feedback		✓	NEW
Prepare five written reflections on the approved NMC form; these can refer to continuing professional development (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 <i>Code</i>	The current Prep standards require you to maintain a personal, professional profile of your learning activity	✓	NEW
Have a reflective discussion with another NMC registrant		✓	NEW
Complete practice hours	✓	✓	NO CHANGE
CPD	✓	✓	NEW 35 hours, 20 hours of which must be participatory
Declaration of health and character	✓	✓	NO CHANGE
Professional indemnity	✓	✓	NO CHANGE
Confirmation by an appropriate confirmer	x	✓	NEW All registrants will have to demonstrate to an appropriate confirmer that they have complied with the revalidation requirements

How can you prepare for revalidation?

- Look at the information and resources the NMC has provided so far on the NMC website at: www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation
- Ensure you know when your renewal date is.
- Join 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.

What is the RCN offering to support you with revalidation?

In 2014 we consulted with our members to gather their views on the NMC's proposed model for revalidation and received almost 10,000 responses that we shared with the NMC.

We are currently developing online RCN resources in order to give you as much information as possible about the revalidation process, the NMC requirements and how to prepare. This information has separate sections for confirmers and employers. It supports the resources that the NMC is providing. <https://rcnrevalidation.wordpress.com>

There is also an RCN Direct online factsheet: www.rcn.org.uk/support/rcn_direct_online_advice/a-z2/prep

The RCN offers a range of CPD resources to members: www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/cpd_online_learning

We are offering advice and support in understanding the NMC revalidation requirements and how to navigate the process.

What does the RCN currently offer members to support Prep?

The RCN website is in a process of development. The Education section on the RCN website and the Learning Zone are current sources of support for Prep. They can be accessed at www.rcn.org.uk/development/learning

Does the RCN have information on NMC revalidation?

The NMC is developing a range of resources on its website in relation to the revalidation requirements. This includes information on how nurses can stay up to date and what they can do

to prepare. It also includes the templates required for recording revalidation requirements, which can be downloaded from www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation

The NMC has worked with the revalidation pilot sites in different settings around the UK to determine the state of readiness across the profession and at an organisational level. The findings have informed the agreed revalidation model.

If you are due to revalidate in the first few months after April 2016, the RCN is keen to hear from its members about their experience of revalidation. If you would like to share your experience, please contact the RCN on digital@rcn.org.uk

The RCN web page on revalidation details what revalidation is, what the RCN has done to influence and shape the process and how the RCN will support its members. www.rcn.org.uk/revalidation

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Q – 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 new *NMC Code of Conduct*, which was launched on 31 March 2015, as this is key to revalidation.
- Establish when individuals within your team will next be completing their notification of practice form, and who they might need to share this information with, to ensure they are supported to complete the revalidation process. (You can find out your renewal date by checking your NMC online account.)
- 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, or 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 are continuing 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.
- Begin to explore and identify who will be able to take on the role of confirmer.

Q – 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. This is an existing requirement and will continue under revalidation. 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 website.

Q – 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.

Q – 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 website 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: www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation/revalidation-guidance-and-resources

Q – 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 *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 representatives. As an RCN trade union 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 and will map against the four broad areas of the *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 revalidation website.

Q – Reflective feedback – does the RCN have any guidance on this?

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 *Code*.

More information can be found on the RCN revalidation website and on the RCN Learning Zone website.

Q – 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 approved 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 at www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation/revalidation-guidance-and-resources

Q – How long and 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 must ensure that the NMC registrant with whom you have your reflective discussion signs the approved NMC form, recording their name, NMC PIN and email, as well as the date you had your reflective discussion. This form must be kept in paper format only.

Q – I am a bit concerned as to how I will achieve revalidation as I have been out of clinical practice for some time. I certainly don't want to lose my registration.

Your practice hours will relate to your own specific field of practice and are not limited to direct patient care. For some roles, practice will include non-clinical practice, such as those working in research, policy, education or management. All of these important roles ultimately contribute to provision of excellent patient care and map against the four broad areas of the *Code*. Therefore, this

will not prevent you from meeting the requirements of revalidation.

For more information or support on any of the topics above, access the RCN's and NMC's resources at:

www.rcn.org.uk/revalidation

www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation

Q – What is the difference between being asked for my annual retention payment and periodic renewal?

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

Your periodic renewal occurs every three years, when you must demonstrate that you have met the requirements to renew your registration. Once revalidation is introduced you will need to demonstrate that you have met the revalidation requirements.

Q – 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 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. The 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.

Q – What guidance should employers be giving to confirmers?

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: www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation/revalidation-for-employers/

Q – 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/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/590732/General-information-on-working-abroad-v4.pdf

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

Q – 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.

Q – How in-depth should the reflection be?

The NMC has provided specific guidance on recording your written reflective accounts and has provided a form that each registrant must use. One form is to be used for each reflective account. Your reflection 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 this relates to the *Code*.

Q – 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.

Q – 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 *Code*. You will need to meet all seven of the requirements for revalidation.

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

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