Programme approval visit report

Section one

Programme provider name:	University of Plymouth
In partnership with: *(Associated practice learning partners involved in the delivery of the programme)*	Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust Private, Voluntary and Independent Health Care Providers'
Programme reviewed:	Pre-registration nursing associate ☒ Nursing associate apprenticeship ☒
Title of programme:	FdSc Nursing Associate
Date of approval visit:	25 June 2019

Programme start date:
    Pre-registration nursing associate
    Nursing associate apprenticeship
	1 September 2020
	2 September 2019

Academic level:	England ⊠ Level 5 ☐ Level 6
QA visitor(s):	Registrant Visitor: Maureen Harrison Lay Visitor: Carol Rowe

Summary of review and findings
The University of Plymouth, faculty of health and human sciences, school of nursing and midwifery (the school) has presented a two-year full time foundation degree, nursing associate programme for approval against the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes (NMC, 2018). The programme is presented in partnership with national health service (NHS) providers and independent employers throughout the south west peninsula of England. Employers and practice learning partners (PLPs) have formed two 'communities of practice' (Devon and Cornwall clinical commissioning groups 'communities of practice') who collaborated in the development of apprenticeship and direct entry routes to the nursing associate programme. The following employers of nursing associate apprentices contributed to the approval visit and acknowledge their obligation to comply with the Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes (NMC, 2018); Royal Devon and Exeter NHS foundation trust, Livewell Southwest, Cornwall Hospice Care, Hospiscare Exeter, Cornwall Partnership NHS foundation trust, Torbay and South Devon NHS trust, University hospitals Plymouth NHS trust, NHS Kernow clinical commissioning group (CCG). The apprenticeship route commences in 2019 and the direct entry route commences in 2020. The programme documentation and approval process confirm evidence of effective partnership working between the approved education institution (AEI), employers and PLPs. Since September 2018 the AEI has provided a level five nursing associate curriculum framework developed by Health Education England. Employers support this initiative. On successful completion of the programme there are opportunities for students to progress to the BSc (Hons) pre-registration nursing programme via direct entry or degree apprenticeship route. The university has worked with other AEIs in the southern region to adopt the all England Practice Assessment document (PAD) for nursing associates and the ongoing achievement record (OAR). The Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (NMC 2018) is not met at programme level. Arrangements at programme level between the AEI and PLPs meet the Standards for student supervision and assessment (NMC 2018). The programme is recommended to the NMC for approval subject to two conditions. One recommendation is made. 11 July 2019 Evidence was provided to meet the two conditions. The conditions and related standards/requirements are now met. The Standards framework for nursing and

Recommended outcome of the approval panel	
Recommended outcome to the NMC:	Programme is recommended to the NMC for approval ☐ Programme is recommended for approval subject to specific conditions being met ☒ Recommended to refuse approval of the programme ☐
Conditions: *Please identify the standard and requirement the condition relates to under the relevant key risk theme.* *Please state if the condition is AEI/education institution in nature or specific to NMC standards.*	**Effective partnership working: collaboration, culture, communication and resources:** Condition one: To develop an implementation plan for service user/lay representative involvement in the design, development, delivery, evaluation and co-production of the programme. (Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education R1.12, Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes 2.1) **Selection, admission and progression:** Condition two: To develop an implementation plan to ensure that service users are engaged in partnership in student recruitment and selection. (Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education R2.7) **Practice learning:** None identified **Assessment, fitness for practice and award:** None identified **Education governance: management and quality assurance:** None identified
Date condition(s) to be met:	12 July 2019
Recommendations to enhance the programme delivery:	Recommendation one: In student-facing documentation consider detailing the theory/ practice balance of the programme, to make explicit what

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	activities constitute an equal balance of theory and practice learning hours. (Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes R2.7)
Focused areas for future monitoring:	To ensure the programme is developed, delivered, evaluated and co-produced with service users. To keep under review protected learning time in practice learning.

Programme is recommended for approval subject to specific conditions being met

Commentary post review of evidence against conditions:
Evidence is provided that the changes required to meet the two conditions are made.
A detailed implementation plan is provided, with time-frames, and the identification of persons responsible to increase the involvement of service users and carers (SUCs) through all aspects of programme delivery. (Condition one)
Assurance is provided of partnership working to enhance the SUCs involvement in student recruitment and selection. (Condition two)
The Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education is now met at programme level. The Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes are now met.

AEI Observations	**Observations have been made by the education institution YES ☐ NO ☒**
Summary of observations made, if applicable	
Final recommendation made to NMC:	Programme is recommended to the NMC for approval ☒ Recommended to refuse approval of the programme ☐
Date condition(s) met:	11 July 2019

Section three

NMC Programme standards
Please refer to NMC standards reference points *Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes (NMC, 2018)* *Standards of proficiency for nursing associates (NMC, 2018)* *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (NMC, 2018)*

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Standards for student supervision and assessment (NMC, 2018)

The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates

QA framework for nursing, midwifery and nursing associate education (NMC, 2018)

QA Handbook

Partnerships

The AEI works in partnership with their practice learning partners, service users, students and all other stakeholders

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Please refer to the following NMC standards reference points for this section:
Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (NMC, 2018)

Standard 1: The learning culture:
R1.12 ensure programmes are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and co-produced with service users and other stakeholders
R1.13 work with service providers to demonstrate and promote inter-professional learning and working

Standard 2: Educational governance and quality:
R2.2 all learning environments optimise safety and quality taking account of the diverse needs of, and working in partnership with, service users, students and all other stakeholders
R2.4 comply with NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment
R2.5 adopt a partnership approach with shared responsibility for theory and practice supervision, learning and assessment, including clear lines of communication and accountability for the development, delivery, quality assurance and evaluation of their programmes
R2.7 ensure that service users and representatives from relevant stakeholder groups are engaged in partnership in student recruitment and selection

Standard 3: Student empowerment:
R3.3 have opportunities throughout their programme to work with and learn from a range of people in a variety of practice placements, preparing them to provide care to people with diverse needs
R3.16 have opportunities throughout their programme to collaborate and learn with and from other professionals, to learn with and from peers, and to develop

supervision and leadership skills

R3.17 receive constructive feedback throughout the programme from stakeholders with experience of the programme to promote and encourage reflective learning

R3.18 have opportunities throughout their programme to give feedback on the quality of all aspects of their support and supervision in both theory and practice.

Standard 4: Educators and assessors:

R4.7 liaise and collaborate with colleagues and partner organisations in their approach to supervision and assessment

R4.9 receive and act upon constructive feedback from students and the people they engage with to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching, supervision and assessment

R4.10 share effective practice and learn from others

Standard 5: Curricula and assessment:

R5.4 curricula are developed and evaluated by suitably experienced and qualified educators and practitioners who are accountable for ensuring that the curriculum incorporates relevant programme outcomes

R5.5 curricula are co-produced with stakeholders who have experience relevant to the programme

R5.14 a range of people including service users contribute to student assessment

Standards for student supervision and assessment (NMC, 2018)

Standard 1: Organisation of practice learning:

R1.7 students are empowered to be proactive and to take responsibility for their learning

R1.8 students have opportunities to learn from a range of relevant people in practice learning environments, including service users, registered and non-registered individuals, and other students as appropriate

Standard 2: Expectations of practice supervisors:

R2.2 there is support and oversight of practice supervision to ensure safe and effective learning

Standard 3: Practice supervisors: role and responsibilities:

R3.3 support and supervise students, providing feedback on their progress towards, and achievement of, proficiencies and skills

Standard 4: Practice supervisors: contribution to assessment and progression:

R4.3 have sufficient opportunities to engage with practice assessors and academic assessors to share relevant observations on the conduct, proficiency and achievement of the students they are supervising

Standard 7: Practice assessors: responsibilities:

R7.9 communication and collaboration between practice and academic assessors

is scheduled for relevant points in programme structure and student progression

Standard 9: Academic assessors: responsibilities:
R9.6 communication and collaboration between academic and practice assessors is scheduled for relevant points in programme structure and student progression

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Findings against the standard and requirements

Provide an evaluative summary about the effectiveness of the partnerships between the AEI and their practice learning partners, service users, students and any other stakeholders

The programme documentation and approval process confirm evidence of effective partnership working between the AEI, employers and PLPs at strategic and operational levels which is evident within a shared commitment to the proposed nursing associate programme. PLPs include national health service (NHS) trust partners, independent health care providers across Devon and Cornwall.
Partnership working between PLPs is evident in the sharing of good practice between the communities of practice.
Employers and PLPs will continue to work closely with the university to prepare staff for the roles of practice supervisor and practice assessor. They will work collaboratively with academic assessors in a new model of practice support, supervision and assessment for students. There are established practice learning meetings between the school and PLPs for ongoing monitoring and reporting of practice learning and related issues. PLPs understand their responsibilities in meeting the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.

There is minimal evidence of SUC involvement in selection of students and in the design and development of the programme. The school has established a service user and carer strategy which will develop current service user and carer activity and promote service user and care involvement in all aspects of the nursing associate programme. The strategy requires implementation. (Condition one) (Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education, R1.12 Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes R2.1)

There are processes in place for student evaluations on their programme and experiences in practice learning which will be fed back to PLPs. There will be student representation on programme committees.

Assurance is provided that the AEI works in partnership with their practice learning partners, service users, students and all other stakeholders as identified in Gateway 1: *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education* and,

	MET ☐	NOT MET ☒

We found minimal evidence of SUC being involved in the design and development of the programme. Condition one, SFNME R1.12, SPNAP R2.1.

In addition there is limited SUC involvement in the recruitment and selection process on the nursing associate apprenticeship route. Condition two, SFNME R2.7.

Gateway 2: *Standards for student supervision and assessment*

MET ☒   NOT MET ☐

If not met, state reason and identify which standard(s) and requirement(s) are not met and the reason for the outcome

We found minimal evidence of SUC being involved in the design and development of the programme. In addition there was limited SUC involvement in the recruitment and selection process. This has resulted in two conditions.

Condition one. To develop an implementation plan for service user/lay representative involvement in the design, development, delivery, evaluation and co-production of the programme. (SFNME, R1.12, SPNAP R2.1)

Condition two. To develop an implementation plan to ensure that service users and carers are engaged in partnership in student recruitment and selection. (SFNME R2.7)

Post Event Review

Identify how the condition is met:

Evidence is provided to confirm that condition one is now met.

A detailed implementation plan is provided, with time-frames, and the identification of persons responsible to increase the involvement of service users and carers (SUCs) through all aspects of programme delivery. Condition one is now met.

Evidence
Service user implementation plan, July 2019

Evidence is provided to confirm that condition two is now met.

An implementation plan to ensure that service users and carers are engaged in partnership in student recruitment and selection has been provided. Condition two is now met.

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Evidence
Service user implementation plan, July 2019

Date condition(s) met: 11 July 2019

Revised outcome after condition(s) met: MET ☒   NOT MET ☐
Condition one is now met.
The SFNME R1.12 is met.
The SPNAP R2.1 is met

Condition two is now met.
SFNME R2.7 is met.

Student journey through the programme

Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

R1.1 Confirm on entry to the programme that students:
R1.1.1 demonstrate values in accordance with the Code
R1.1.2 have capability to learn behaviours in accordance with the Code
R1.1.3 have capability to develop numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes
R1.1.4 can demonstrate proficiency in English language
R1.1.5 have capability in literacy to meet programme outcomes
R1.1.6 have capability for digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes
R1.2 ensure students' heath and character allows for safe and effective practice on entering the programme, throughout the programme and when submitting the supporting declaration of health and good character in line with the NMC's health and character decision-making guidance. This includes satisfactory occupational health assessment and criminal record checks.
R1.3 ensure students are fully informed of the requirement to declare immediately any cautions or convictions, pending charges or adverse determinations made by other regulators, professional bodies and educational establishments and that any declarations are dealt with promptly, fairly and lawfully.
R1.4 ensure that the registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the educational programme or their designated registered nurse substitute or designated registered nursing associate substitute, are able to provide supporting declarations of health and character for students who have completed a pre-registration nursing associate programme.
R1.5 permit recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the

Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes, up to a maximum of 50 percent of the programme. This maximum limit of 50 percent does not apply to applicants to pre-registration nursing associate programmes who are currently a NMC registered nurse without restrictions on their practice, and

R1.6 provide support where required to students throughout the programme in continuously developing their abilities in numeracy, literacy, digital and literacy to meet programme outcomes

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education specifically:
R2.6, R2.7, R2.8, R2.10

Proposed transfer of current students to the programme under review
Demonstrate a robust process to transfer students studying Health Education England curriculum onto the proposed programme to ensure programme learning outcomes and proficiencies meet the Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes (NMC, 2018).

Findings against the standard and requirements

Evidence provides assurance that the following QA approval criteria are met:

- There is evidence of selection processes, including statements on digital literacy, literacy, numeracy, values-based selection criteria and capability to learn behaviour according to the Code, educational entry standard required, and progression and assessment strategy, English language proficiency criteria is specified in recruitment processes. Service users and practitioners are involved in selection processes. (R1.1.1 – R1.1.6)

  YES ☐   **NO** ☒

R1.1.1-R1.1.6 are not met. Documentary evidence and discussion with the programme team, employers and PLPs demonstrate that selection processes are fair. PLPs and the school meet objective criteria on digital literacy, numeracy, and candidates' capability to learn behaviour according to the Code. Candidates are attracted from a widening participation background. Partners ensure education standard requirements are met. Employers and PLPs tell us that employees interested in the nursing associate programme without the education requirements are encouraged and supported to reapply following successful studies which meet the requirements.

Employers inform us that they are responsible for the initial recruitment and selection of trainee nursing associates. Employers inform us that they have not involved SUCs in student recruitment and selection but they have plans to do so in the future. The AEI has a robust admissions policy. The school works with SUCs to build on the policy to provide values- based recruitment. Specific SUC involvement in recruitment and selection of nursing associate trainees should be

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identified in the SUC implementation plan. Condition two.

- There is evidence of occupational health entry criteria, inoculation and immunisation plans, fitness for nursing assessments, Criminal record checks and fitness for practice processes are detailed. (R1.2)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

- Health and character processes are evidenced including information given to applicants and students including details of periodic health and character review timescales. Fitness for practice processes are evidenced and information given to applicants and students are detailed. (R1.3)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

- Processes are in place for providing supporting declarations by a registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the educational programme (R1.4)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Provide an evaluative summary from your documentary analysis and evidence AND discussion at the approval visit to demonstrate if assurance is provided that the QA approval criteria below is met or not met.

- There is evidence of recognition of prior learning processes that are capable of being mapped to the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes, up to a maximum of 50 percent of the programme. This maximum limit of 50 percent does not apply to applicants to pre-registration nursing associate programmes who are currently a NMC registered nurse without restrictions on their practice. (R1.5)

  MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

R1.5 is met. Documentary evidence and the programme team confirm a robust recognition of prior learning (RPL) process. Candidates may make an RPL claim for up to a maximum of 50 percent of the programme. The programme team inform us that no candidates have applied for RPL. They confirm that the maximum RPL does not apply to those who are an NMC registered nurse without restrictions on their practice.

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- Numeracy, literacy, digital and technological literacy are mapped against proficiency standards and programme outcomes. Provide evidence that the programme meets NMC requirements, mapping how the indicative content meets the proficiencies and programme outcomes. Ongoing achievement record (OAR)/PAD linked to competence outcomes in literacy, digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes. (R1.6)

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

R1.6 is met. At recruitment each applicant on the apprentice route has an 'initial needs analysis'. This is a prior learning check to establish the skills and expertise the student will be bringing to the programme, together with an identification of those skills and proficiencies which need development. PLPs inform us that this has helped them to determine the readiness of the employee to undertake university study. PLPs confirm a 'commitment statement' is completed detailing what is expected from the school and employer as well as the individual apprentice.

We found numeracy, literacy; digital and technological literacy is evident across the curriculum in theory and practice modules. Student-facing documentation, including the PAD and OAR are linked to proficiency outcomes.
Students tell us of difficulties of adapting to the culture of learning in higher education, in particular becoming comfortable with literacy, digital and technological platforms. Owing to their non-academic backgrounds they have fed back to programme managers the need for more preparation 'for study' prior to joining the programme. Student feedback has been actioned. The university apprenticeship team have developed a 'preparing to learn' package for candidates to access prior to enrolment.

Numeracy skills are developed across the curriculum regarding medicines management. In the year two 'medicines management' module the pass mark is 100 percent. Students confirm they undertake medicine calculations with their practice supervisor. Students are aware of SUM:UP, a maths drop-in service offered by the learning development team to support numeracy development.

Literacy skills are developed as students progress in the programme through feedback on formative and summative assessments. Support for literacy skills can be sought from the university learning development team and a writing café. A learning development adviser for the school offers one to one and small group tutorials. Support in areas such as writing and presenting, critical thinking, communication and preparation for assessment and exams are available. Students and the programme team confirm these support services.

Digital and technological literacy is developed through interactions with the Moodle

virtual learning environment, a gateway to information regarding the programme and on- line learning resources. Students tell us they communicate via email and submit assignments and time management sheets electronically. In practice learning students develop digital and technological skills using for example electronic patient records.

Mapping demonstrates the indicative content meets NMC proficiencies and requirements.

Proposed transfer of current students to the programme under review

From your documentary analysis and your meeting with students, provide an evaluative summary to confirm how the *Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes* **and** *Standards of proficiency for nursing associate* **will be met through the transfer of existing students onto the proposed programme.**

- There is evidence that students learning in theory and practice on the HEE curriculum is mapped to the programme standards and Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes and support systems are in place.

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MET ☒   **NOT MET**

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Current students on the nursing associate FD will not be transferring to the programme seeking approval. Students who interrupt their studies will, where appropriate, return to the new programme at an appropriate point; modules have been mapped to the NMC standards for pre-registration nursing associates to facilitate transfer.

Students will be supported by the new SSSA from September 2019. Students confirm they understand the new roles of practice supervision and assessment. All current students on the nursing associate FD will be transferring to the SSSA model from September 2019.

Assurance is provided that Gateway 1: *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education* relevant to selection, admission and progression are met

<div align="center">

YES ☐   **NO** ☒

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Employers inform us that they are responsible for the initial recruitment and selection of nurse associate apprentices. Most PLPs and employers inform us that they do not involve SUCs in student recruitment and selection but they have plans to do so in the future. The AEI has a robust admissions policy. The school works with service users to build on the policy to provide values based recruitment. Specific SUC involvement in recruitment and selection of nursing associate appentices at the school should be identified on the SUC implementation plan. (Condition two)

Outcome

Is the standard met? **MET** ☐   **NOT MET** ☒
PLPs and employers tell us that SUC are not involved in the selection and recruitment of trainee nursing associate apprentices. Prospective nursing associate candidates on the direct entry pathway are recruited and selected at the university. Policies confirm that interviews at the school include SUC and PLP partnership. Condition two: To develop an implementation plan to ensure that service users are engaged in partnership in student recruitment and selection. (Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education R2.7) **Date:** 25 June 2019

Post Event Review

Identify how the condition is met: Evidence is provided to confirm that condition two is now met. A commitment has been made by employers to use a range of models to incorporate SUCs involvement in student recruitment and selection. Assurance is provided of partnership working to enhance the SUCs involvement in student recruitment and selection. Condition two is now met. Evidence Service user implementation plan, July 2019

Date condition(s) met: 11 July 2019 **Revised outcome after condition(s) met:**   **MET** ☒   **NOT MET** ☐   Condition two is now met. SFNME R2.7 is met.

Standard 2: Curriculum

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

R2.1 ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education
R2.2 comply with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment
R2.3 ensure that all programme learning outcomes reflect the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.
R2.4 design and deliver a programme that supports students and provides an appropriate breadth of experience for a non-field specific nursing associate programme, across the lifespan and in a variety of settings
R2.5 set out the general and professional content necessary to meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates and programme outcomes
R2.6 ensure that the programme hours and programme length are:
2.6.1 sufficient to allow the students to be able to meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates,
2.6.2 no less than 50 percent of the minimum programme hours required of nursing degree programmes, currently set under Article 31(3) of Directive 2005/36/EC (4,600 hours)
2.6.3 consonant with the award of a foundation degree (typically 2 years)
R2.7 ensure the curriculum provides an equal balance of theory and practice learning using a range of learning and teaching strategies, and
R2.8 ensure nursing associate programmes which form part of an integrated programme meet the nursing associate requirements and nursing associate proficiencies.

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education specifically:
R1.9, R1.13; R2.2, R2.14, R2.15, R2.18, R2.19; R3.1, R3.2, R3.4, R3.7, R3.9, R3.10, R3.15, R 3.16; R5.1 - R5.16.

Standards for student supervision and assessment specifically:
R1.2, R1.3, R1.7, R1.10, R1.11

Findings against the standard and requirements

Evidence provides assurance that the following QA approval criteria are met:

- There is evidence that the programme complies with the NMC *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education* (R2.1)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

- There is evidence that the programme complies with the NMC *Standards for student supervision and assessment* (R2.2)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

- Mapping has been undertaken to show how the curriculum and practice learning content meets the *Standards of proficiency for nursing associates* and programme outcomes. (R2.3)

YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Provide an evaluative summary from your documentary analysis and evidence AND discussion at the approval visit to demonstrate if assurance is provided that the QA approval criteria below is met or not met

- There is evidence to show how the design and delivery of the programme will support students in both theory and practice to experience a non-field specific nursing associate programme, across the lifespan and in a variety of settings. (R2.4)

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

R2.4 is met.
The approval document and programme specifications for direct entry and the apprenticeship route detail the structure of the programme including the modules, placements and theory/practice curricula. Academics representing all fields of nursing contribute to the programme. To develop the generic nursing associate role, all modules include theoretical input and perspectives from the four fields of nursing. The programme team tell us of study days and simulations which focus on specific fields of nursing. The programme team, PLPs and students assure us that students in both theory and practice experience a non-field specific nursing associate programme. PLPs identify action they take to ensure students experience care across the lifespan and in a variety of settings. Students confirm this by identifying the range of practice experiences they have had in the first year of the health education England (HEE) nursing associate programme. They have worked with people across the lifespan and cared for people with mental health needs and learning disabilities. Students tell us that they are encouraged to understand the care experiences of whole families.

Evidence provides assurance that the following QA approval criteria are met:

- There is evidence that mapping has been undertaken to show how the programme outcomes, module outcomes and content meets the *Standards of proficiency for nursing associates* and programme outcomes. (R2.5)

YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Provide an evaluative summary from your documentary analysis and evidence AND discussion at the approval visit to demonstrate if assurance is provided that the QA approval criteria below is met or not met.

- There is evidence that:
  - the programme meets NMC requirements on programme hours and programme length;
  - programmed learning is sufficient to allow the students to be able to meet the *Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.* (R2.6)

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

R2.6 is met.
Documentary evidence and discussion with the programme team confirm the length of the programme and the required hours for both theory and practice learning meet NMC requirements. The module descriptors detail the theory learning hours. Rigorous processes are in place, including the recording of both theory and practice hours, to ensure each student meets the NMC requirements on programme hours. There is documentary, programme team, PLP, employer and student evidence of partners working together to provide data on attendance and absence. PLPs, employers and academic staff confirm the rigorous processes used to monitor attendance in both theory and practice and actions taken when students have unplanned absences.

- The programme structure demonstrates an equal balance of theory and practice learning. This is detailed in the designated hours in the module descriptors and practice learning allocations. A range of learning and teaching strategies are detailed in the programme specification, programme handbook and module descriptors with theory / practice balance detailed at each part of the programme and at the end point. There are appropriate module aims, descriptors and outcomes specified. There is a practice allocation model for the delivery of the programme that clearly demonstrates the achievement of designated hours for the programme detailed. (R2.7)

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

R2.7 is met.
Student-facing documentation identifies there is an equal balance of theory and practice learning. A minimum of 20 percent of theory hours is detailed in programme documentation. Students confirm there are a range of learning and teaching strategies such as use of webinar, role play, simulation and a variety of blended learning approaches.
The programme has a minimum of 20 per cent assured protected learning time in external placements. In student-facing documentation it could be made clearer

how theory and practice are balanced in the remaining 60 per cent (1380 hours) of programme time. Students confirm they are clear on time allocated for practice learning but not always sure how much time in practice can be given to theory activities. For example, writing reflections and episodes of care in their PAD, or using PLP library facilities to learn more about patient care procedures.

Programme staff inform us that all hours, theory and practice are recorded and monitored to ensure a balance. This is confirmed by PLPs and students.

PLPs describe diverse practice allocation models which students also identify. Students' experience of protected learning time differs between the students we met.

Recommendation one: In student-facing documentation consider detailing the theory/practice balance of the programme to make explicit what activities constitute an equal balance of theory and practice learning hours. (Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes R2.7)

Evidence provides assurance that the following QA approval criteria are met:

- There is evidence that programmes leading to nursing associate registration and registration in another profession, will be of suitable length and nursing associate proficiencies and outcomes will be achieved in a nursing associate context. (R2.8)

YES ☐   NO ☒

The programme leads to NMC nursing associate registration solely.

Assurance is provided that Gateway 1: *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education* relevant to curricula and assessment are met

YES ☒   NO ☐

Assurance is provided that Gateway 2: *Standards for student supervision and assessment* relevant to curricula are met   **YES** ☒   **NO**

Outcome

Is the standard met?   **MET** ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

Date: 25 June 2019

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Standard 3: Practice learning

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

R3.1 provide practice learning opportunities that allow students to develop and meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates to deliver safe and effective care, to a diverse range of people, across the lifespan and in a variety of settings

R3.2 ensure that students experience the variety of practice expected of nursing associates to meet the holistic needs of people of all ages

R3.3 ensure technology enhanced and simulation-based learning opportunities are used effectively and proportionately to support learning and assessment

R3.4 take account of students' individual needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, and

R3.5 ensure that nursing associate students have protected learning time in line with one of these two options:

3.5.1 Option A: nursing associate students are supernumerary when they are learning in practice

3.5.2 Option B: nursing associate students who are on work-placed learning routes:

3.5.2.1 are released for at least 20 percent of the programme for academic study

3.5.2.2 are released for at least 20 percent of the programme time, which is assured protected learning time in external practice placements, enabling them to develop the breadth of experience required for a generic role, and

3.5.2.3 protected learning time must be assured for the remainder of the required programme hours.

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education specifically:
R1.1, R1.3, R1.5; R2.9, R2.11; R3.3, R3.5, R 3.7, R3.16; R5.1, R5.7, R5.10, R5.12

Standards for student supervision and assessment specifically:
R1.1 – R1.11

Findings against the standard and requirements

Provide an evaluative summary from your documentary analysis and evidence AND discussion at the approval visit to demonstrate if assurance is provided that the QA approval criteria below is met or not met.

Evidence that the practice learning opportunities allow students to develop and meet the *Standards of proficiency for nursing associates* to deliver safe and effective care, to a diverse range of people, across the lifespan and in a variety of settings. (R3.1)

Practice learning placements are organised by the employers and practice education leads for students on the apprenticeship route. Direct entry students will have placements organised collaboratively with the AEI and PLPs. PLPs from diverse practice learning areas tell us they will organise and facilitate practice learning opportunities to allow students to develop and meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.

PLPs spoke of 'communities of practice' where employers meet regularly together to create sustainable transformation plans for maintaining and developing the workforce. PLPs share and learn from other employers' experiences in developing nursing associates. PLPs have different strategies for providing opportunities for their employees to deliver safe and effective care across a diverse range of people, across the lifespan. PLPs work together to provide external placements in different contexts of care. Students from primary, secondary and tertiary settings and from adult, mental health and learning disability care confirm they have a range of different placement learning experiences. R3.1 is met.

- There is evidence of how the programme will ensure students experience the variety of practice learning experiences to meet the holistic needs of people in all ages. There are appropriate processes for assessing, monitoring and evaluating these practice experiences. (R3.2)

MET ☒   NOT MET ☐

The cohort of students we met have experience of care across the life span. The students describe working with people with diverse needs. They are employed in primary, secondary and tertiary settings. Students tell us they learnt a lot about contexts of care and holistic care from each other through reflective sessions in class. In addition students describe the way the PLPs are facilitating their learning in different contexts. Some students will remain within their primary employer because a range of care contexts is available. Some students have placement learning experiences with a different organisation but organised by their managers. Patient pathways are to be utilised by communities of practice to facilitate learning experiences to meet the holistic needs of people. PLPs confirm that there will be opportunities for students to gain practice experience with infants and children, through general practice (GP) placements and with health visitors. Documentation, PLPs, programme staff and students identify that rigorous processes are in place to assess, monitor and evaluate practice experiences. The quality of practice learning is managed through partnership working. Monitoring activities include student evaluation, educational audit, management of complaints and monitoring of concerns raised internally or by external regulatory reports such as Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections. Education leads within all PLP organisations meet regularly with relevant academic staff, for example, the

associate head of school for practice, associate head of school for teaching and learning, and the programme manager. R3.2 is met.

- There is evidence of plans for effective and proportionate use of technology enhanced and simulation-based learning opportunities and to support learning and assessment in the curriculum (R3.3)

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

Programme staff, PLPs and students identify how the Elsevier clinical skills digital platform is used to develop the knowledge, understanding and technical application of clinical procedures. Students spoke highly of the information and digital resources available through the Moodle platform. PLP education-based staff and supervisors identify simulation type activities to develop procedural proficiencies. Students told us of simulated learning to develop procedural skills such as respiratory assessment and blood pressure recording. Programme staff and students tell us that there is communication and field based simulation activities timetabled into the curriculum. The programme team tell us of the introduction of filming simulation activities, in particular communication based scenarios, in order to review and debrief. Students confirm this enhances the learning experience. Simulation can be undertaken in a safe environment with ongoing feedback in preparation for practice; and which also addresses public protection. R3.3 is met.

- There are processes in place to take account of students' individual needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning including making reasonable adjustments for disabilities. (R3.4)

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

We found documentary evidence of a disability policy with reasonable adjustments being identified and supported through individualised support plans. Documentary evidence and the approval visit confirm processes are in place to ensure students' needs and personal circumstances are considered when allocating practice learning for direct entry students. All students are encouraged to disclose any disability or learning needs at application and to share any reasonable adjustments advised by the university disability services with the practice learning areas so that support can be given. PLPs confirm reasonable adjustments are managed for student apprentices. We note that PLPs monitor their students carefully; ensuring sufficient support is in place. We note a partnership approach taken to manage a student's change of circumstances. PLPs tell us that it is not unusual to find a student/ employee struggles with programme demands.

Students tell us that available support services are signposted from the beginning of the programme. Students describe support from employers and the AEI. Students know how to access help. Students with personal experience describe

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specific help received for a disability. R3.4 is met.

- Evidence that nursing associate students have protected learning time through one of the two options (A or B). There must be clarity of evidence to support the single option selected.

  Processes are in place to ensure that protected learning time will be monitored in accordance with the selected option.

  Evidence that students will be released for a minimum of 20 percent of the programme for academic study.

  Evidence that students will be released for a minimum of 20 percent of the programme time, which is assured protected learning time in external practice placements, enabling them to develop the breadth of experience required for a generic role.

  Evidence that information is provided to students and practice learning partners on protected learning time/supernumerary status and the selected single option. (R3.5)

MET ☒   NOT MET ☐

Note: If issues of concern have been identified by system regulators regarding practice learning environments which are to be used for this programme include an overview of the partnership approach between the AEI/education institution and their practice learning partners to manage and mitigate any risks to student learning.

Documentary evidence including student-facing documents states that nursing associate students undertaking the direct entry FdSc route, will be supernumerary when they are learning in practice, option A. Students' feedback via the online placement system regarding supernumerary status and their perception of placement support and facilitation of learning will be monitored. Each placement and provider lead can review the students' feedback and draw up appropriate action plans which can be reviewed during the educational audit cycle. Any concerns raised by students are followed up by the associate head of school for practice learning. Employers and PLPs confirm they have the capacity to support additional nursing associate students and are in favour of having the two routes.

Students we met are apprentices and have protected learning time through option B. PLPs and employers affirm their commitment to protected learning time. They confirm the assurance of sufficient and appropriate staff to supervise the students. PLPs manage the whole placement journey for their employees. Evaluation and feedback of the learning experience is the same as option A. Each employer uses different models of placement learning. There are examples of day release, supernumerary block placements, and rotational placements. PLPs tell us they have learnt a lot from supporting students on the HEE curriculum. They tell us that experiences are shared with other employers to enable all to be smarter in managing protected learning time. A manager spoke of how important it is to guide

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a student's expectation of what constitutes practice learning during protected time. Students confirm they have 20 percent protected learning time in external placements. Students also spoke of protected learning time in their primary placement. Some students were not clear on what was protected learning time. Students describe how they are applying themselves to develop learning beyond the competencies expected from their employment. Students confirm they are encouraged to follow a patient pathway, or they are released to meet members of an inter-professional team. Students tell us they are enabled to find evidence based papers on procedures they thought they had competence in. The protected learning is monitored through timesheets, reflections, the PAD and ongoing achievement record.

PLPs and programme staff told us how risks to student learning are managed. When concerns are raised by the CQC, PLPs brief key staff at the AEI. Joint action plans are written with clear lines of accountability identified. Through well set up processes of audit, changes in capacity for student supervision are managed. R3.5 is met

Assurance is provided that Gateway 1: *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education* relevant to practice learning are met

YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Assurance is provided that Gateway 2: *Standards for student supervision and assessment* relevant to practice learning are met   **YES** ☒   **NO** ☐

Outcome

Is the standard met?	**MET** ☒	**NOT MET** ☐

Date: 25 June 2019

Standard 4: Supervision and assessment
Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must: R4.1 ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education R4.2 ensure that support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies

with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment

R4.3 ensure they inform the NMC of the name of the registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the education programme

R4.4 provide students with feedback throughout the programme to support their development

R4.5 ensure throughout the programme that students meet the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates

R4.6 ensure that all programmes include a health numeracy assessment related to nursing associate proficiencies and calculation of medicines which must be passed with a score of 100 percent

R4.7 assess students to confirm proficiency in preparation for professional practice as a nursing associate

R4.8 ensure that there is equal weighting in the assessment of theory and practice, and

R4.9 ensure that all proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which must demonstrate the achievement of proficiencies and skills as set out in Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education specifically: specifically: R2.11; R3.5, R3.6, R 3.8, R3.11, R3.13, R3.14, R3.17; R4.1, R4.2, R4.3, R4.4, R4.5, R4.6, R4.8, R4.11; R5.9

Standards for student supervision and assessment specifically: R4.1 – R4.11

Findings against the standards and requirements

Provide an evaluative summary from your documentary analysis and evidence AND discussion at the approval visit to demonstrate if assurance is provided that the QA approval criteria below is met or not met

- There is evidence of how the programme will ensure how support, supervision, learning and assessment provided complies with the NMC *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education*. (R4.1)

<div align="center">

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

</div>

Documentary evidence demonstrates that structures and processes allow nursing associate students to be supported, supervised and assessed in all learning environments. The approach between partners is cohesive with evidence of regular meetings between partners at individual and programme governance level. Student-facing documentation is aligned with the Code (NMC, 2018). Student support is detailed in the programme handbook and is offered through a number of formal mechanisms which operate across the university and include module teams and academic assessor support in practice.

The programme team and PLPs tell us that students will receive induction at the beginning of their programme of study and orientation at the beginning of practice

placements.

There is a clear infrastructure which will support students in the practice learning environment. Students are assigned a practice supervisor (PS) practice assessor (PA) and an academic assessor (AA) to support them within their practice learning experiences. PLPs explained the processes in place to allocate students to their PSs and PAs. These arrangements are evident within the PAD including the roles and responsibilities of the PS, PA and AA. Dependent on placement allocation models, students for each year of the programme may have a different PA for each placement or one who is from the primary placement. We met practice educators with specific responsibilities for student nursing associates. PLPs are committed to the support and development of their students and contracts are in place detailing the same.

PLPs are clear about the process if a cause for concern is raised about a student's behaviour, conduct or performance. Students on the apprenticeship route, although employees, will still be dealt with under the university fitness to practise policy and process. Employers and PLPs told us of their experience of raising concerns and are satisfied that the process is robust.

PLPs tell us of plans to expand numbers of nursing associates in the workplace. R4.1 is met.

- There is evidence of how the *Standards for student supervision and assessment* are applied to the programme. There are processes in place to identify the supervisors and assessor along with how they will be prepared for their roles. (R4.2)

<div align="right">

MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

</div>

Documentary evidence, the programme team and PLPs confirm that preparations for full compliance of the Standards of student supervision and assessment (SSSA) (NMC, 2018) are in place. Training plans for the adoption of the SSSA are written, shared with PLPs, and are being delivered in all placement areas. Training plans include the preparation of all new roles for current mentors and PLPs inform us they are also preparing new supervisors. Students are conversant with the new roles and understand the difference between supervision and assessment. The programme team and PLPs confirm they are ready to put the new standards of supervision and assessment in place for all nursing and nursing associate students this autumn. R4.2 is met.

Evidence provides assurance that the following QA approval criteria are met

- There are processes in place to ensure the NMC is informed of the name of the registered nurse or registered nursing associate responsible for directing the education programme. (R4.3)

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YES ☒   **NO** ☐

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Provide an evaluative summary from your documentary analysis and evidence AND discussion at the approval visit to demonstrate if assurance is provided that the QA approval criteria below is met or not met

- There are processes in place to provide students with feedback throughout the programme to support their development. Formative and summative assessment strategy is detailed (R4.4)

  MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

Documentary evidence confirms the opportunities for feedback from academic staff, PLPs, service users and peers throughout the programme. The PAD provides the framework for formative and summative practice assessment. PLPs and students told us that they are familiar with the PAD. PLPs tell us the pan England nursing associate PAD to be implemented does not differ significantly from the PAD already in use. SUCs provide feedback via specific forms in the PAD. Students tell us that the PS may identify appropriate SUC to approach. Where relationships are established between the student and SUC a direct approach can be made.

Formative and summative assessment occurs within the module framework. Students receive feedback on all assessment including exams. Feed-forward provides information students can use to make improvements on current or future assessments. There is also opportunity to get feedback on draft submissions and the option of practice tests.

The programme team have strategies in place to identify and support students who are finding difficulties in adapting to higher education study. Students only undertake one module at a time to avoid a burden of assessment. PLPs told us that they were aware that some students find the demands of employment, family life and study challenging. They tell us that they are creating peer support groups with more senior students giving 'hints and tips' for coping with the demands of the programme. R4.4 is met.

- There is appropriate mapping of the curriculum and practice learning placements to ensure throughout the programme that students meet the *Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.* (R4.5)

  MET ☒   **NOT MET** ☐

Documentary evidence and mapping of programme outcomes and the nursing associate PAD confirm the programme meets the Standards of proficiency for nursing associates. PLPs speak of strategies in place, together with Elsevier skills online; to enable students to meet the proficiencies in Annexe B. R4.5 is met.

Evidence provides assurance that the following QA approval criteria are met:

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- There is evidence that all programmes include a health numeracy assessment related to nursing associate proficiencies and calculation of medicines which must be passed with a score of 100 percent (R4.6)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

- There is an appropriate assessment strategy and process detailed. (R4.7)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

There is an assessment strategy with details of the weighting for all credit bearing assessments. Theory and practice weighting is calculated and detailed in award criteria and programme handbooks. (R4.8)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

- There is evidence that all proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which must demonstrate the achievement of proficiencies and skills as set out in the *Standards of proficiency for nursing associates.* (R4.9)

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Assurance is provided that Gateway 1: *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education* relevant to supervision and assessment are met

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Assurance is provided that Gateway 2: *Standards for student supervision and assessment* are met

  YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Outcome

Is the standard met?   **MET** ☒   **NOT MET** ☐
Date: 25 June 2019

Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:

R5.1 ensure that the minimum award for a nursing associate programme is a Foundation Degree of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (England), which is typically two years in length, and
R5.2 notify students during the programme that they have five years in which to register their award with the NMC. In the event of a student failing to register their qualification within five years they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as is specified in our standards in order to register their award.

Evidence provides assurance that the following QA approval criteria are met

- The minimum award for a nursing associate programme is a Foundation Degree of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (England) (R5.1)

    YES ☒   **NO** ☐

- Evidence that students are notified during the programme that they have five years in which to register their award with the NMC. In the event of a student failing to register their qualification within five years they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as is specified in our standards in order to register their award. (R5.2)

    YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Fall Back Award
If there is a fall back exit award with registration as a nursing associate all NMC standards and proficiencies are met within the award

Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education specifically R2.11, R2.20

    YES ☐   **NO** ☐ **N/A** ☒

There is a certificate in higher education if students exit after one year of the programme. This does not confer NMC registration status. All NMC proficiencies are only met on successful completion of the two year programme.

Assurance is provided that the *Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education* relevant to the qualification to be awarded are met

    YES ☒   **NO** ☐

Outcome
Is the standard met?   **MET** ☒   **NOT MET** ☐   **Date:** 25 June 2019

Section four

Source of evidence

The following documentation provided by the AEI/education institution was reviewed by the visitor(s):

Key documentation	YES	NO
Programme document, including proposal, rationale and consultation	☒	☐
Programme documentation includes collaboration and communication arrangements with HE/FE partner if relevant	☐	☒
Programme specification	☒	☐
Module descriptors	☒	☐
Student facing documentation including: programme handbook	☒	☐
Student university handbook	☒	☐
Student facing documentation includes HE/FE college information for students, if relevant	☒	☐
Practice assessment documentation	☒	☐
Ongoing record of achievement (ORA)	☒	☐
Practice learning environment handbook	☒	☐
Practice learning handbook for practice supervisors and assessors specific to the programme	☒	☐
Academic assessor focused information specific to the programme	☒	☐
Placement allocation / structure of programme	☒	☐
PAD linked to competence outcomes, and mapped against standards of proficiency	☒	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education institution has met the Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (NMC, 2018)	☒	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education institution has met the Standards for pre registration nursing associate programmes (NMC, 2018)	☒	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the Standards for student supervision and assessment (NMC, 2018) apply to the programme	☒	☐
Curricula vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐
CV of the registered nurse or nursing associate responsible for directing the education programme	☒	☐
Registrant academic staff details checked on NMC website	☒	☐
External examiner appointments and arrangements	☒	☐

Written confirmation by education institution and associated practice learning partners to support the programme intentions, including a signed supernumerary for protected learning	☒	☐
List additional documentation: Post event documents to support conditions are met: Service user implementation plan, July 2019.		
If you stated no above, please provide the reason and mitigation: There is not a handbook for supervisors and assessors specific to the programme but there is evidence of a presentation which has been cascaded amongst partners with all relevant information for practice supervisors and assessors and academic assessors.		
Additional comments:		

During the visit the visitor(s) met the following groups:

	YES	NO
Senior managers of the AEI/education institution with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐
HE/FE college senior managers, if relevant	☒	☐
Senior managers from associated practice learning partners with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐
Programme team/academic assessors	☒	☐
Practice leads/practice supervisors/ practice assessors	☒	☐
Students	☒	☐
If yes, please identify cohort year/programme of study: All six students were in year one of the HEE nursing associate FD. The students represented different communities within the region and differing employers.		
Service users and carers	☒	☐
If you stated no above, please provide the reason and mitigation:		
Additional comments:		

The visitor(s) viewed the following areas/facilities during the visit:

	YES	NO
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. clinical skills/simulation suites)	☐	☒
Library facilities	☐	☒

Technology enhanced learning/virtual learning environment		☐	☒
Educational audit tools/documentation		☐	☒
Practice learning environments		☐	☒
	If yes, state where visited/findings:		
System regulator reports reviewed for practice learning partners		☒	☐
System Regulator Reports List: Care Quality Commission (CQC) report, Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust (14 December 2018) CQC report, Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust (05 February 2018) CQC report, Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (5 March 2018)			
If you stated no to any of the above, please provide the reason and mitigation: The university of Plymouth is an established AEI and provider of NMC programmes.			
Additional comments:			