



NMC (2018): Realising professionalism: Standards for education and training



All Wales recruitment and selection principles for pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes

Realising professionalism: Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards for education and training (NMC 2018)



*Trawsnewid y gweithlu ar gyfer Cymru iachach
Transforming the workforce for a healthier Wales*

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Once for Wales 2020 Recruitment and Selection Principles	2
3. Professional Standards for Recruitment and Selection	2
4. General Principles	3
5. All Wales Value Based Approach	4
6. Governance and Quality	8
7. Application process	12
8. Selection Processes	12
9. Selection Events	13
11. Person Specification	13
Reference List	18

1. Introduction

The following document sets out the principles for recruitment and selection agreed and to be adopted by the following Approved Educational Institutions (AEIs) for all pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes delivered in Wales:

- Bangor University
- Cardiff University
- Glyndwr University
- Open University Wales
- Swansea University
- University of South Wales

Terminology

The above Higher Education Institutes (HEI) will be referred to as Approved Educational Institutes (AEI) to indicate the approval of the Nursing and Midwifery Council to provide pre-registration nursing and midwifery education.

The following terminology is defined by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) as:

Admissions

Refers to the practices and processes developed and delivered by providers that relate to admitting a prospective student through an application and selection process up to the point of enrolment on a course.

Recruitment

Recruitment refers to a broad range of activities and initiatives undertaken by providers or their representatives prior to the point of admission. This includes outreach events and various marketing activities which ultimately encourage prospective students to either apply to or start a course with that provider. Within the scope of this Code, recruitment specifically refers to the process by which providers share information and advice with prospective students.

Widening access

A term which has multiple meanings depending on the context in which it is used. It can refer to issues relating to social justice and social mobility, or to activities and initiatives designed to enable different groups of people to gain entry to different

aspects of society, such as job opportunities and professions, or involvement in higher education. Within the scope of this Code, widening access refers to the process by which providers may (or may not) vary their admission or selection processes according to local or national policy guidelines and expectations (QAA, 2018).

2. *Once for Wales 2020* Recruitment and Selection Principles

The *Once for Wales 2020* all Wales Principles for Recruitment and Selection have been developed by the all Wales Admissions Group under the following terms of reference:

1. To plan, monitor and evaluate as required, the implementation of the agreed principles to support recruitment and selection
2. To plan and implement strategies required to update / amend the all Wales Admissions Principles to reflect professional and statutory requirements
3. To consider other All Wales admissions matters relating to pre-registration nursing and midwifery education, as requested by the all Wales Pre-Registration Nursing and Midwifery Group.
4. Establish task and finish groups in relation to selection and recruitment as required
5. To respond to consultations and other reports as appropriate
6. Liaise and collaborate with other professional groups and bodies as required.

3. Professional Standards for Recruitment and Selection

The importance of maintaining the standards for selection for nursing and midwifery programmes is supported by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC (2018) requirements for selection and recruitment. All AEIs will implement the Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards Realising Professionalism: Standards for Education and Training (NMC, 2018). AEIs will abide by the principle that for recruitment and selection activity in Wales, English and Welsh languages will be treated as equal and meet the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. AEIs will make individual arrangements provide equal opportunities for language requirements to suit their individual recruitment and selection processes.

It is recognised by AEIs that admission processes to pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes are complex, competitive and cognisance has been taken of the individual AEIs' recruitment needs in developing the principles to support an all Wales value-based approach.

Changes in the provision of care include increasing complex care in a diversity of settings with new service models for delivering care, wide ranges of team working models with the requirements of safety, quality and service user experience as fundamental components of improving practice. *'Enabling Professionalism in Nursing and Midwifery Practice'* is a framework which presents what professionalism looks like to support the everyday application of the Nursing and Midwifery Council *'The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives'* (NMC, 2018) in practice environments across the UK (Chief Nursing Officers for the UK and NMC, 2017).

As health is a devolved matter, all four countries within the United Kingdom (UK) present their own iteration of the core values which support the provision of healthcare. Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) require nursing and midwifery students who are in receipt of an NHS bursary under the current arrangement to work in Wales, inevitably cross country working will feature in the future professional experience of graduates. Therefore, this document draws on evidence supporting value based selection processes from across the UK.

4. General Principles

The following principles aim to maintain the wide entry gate, whilst maintaining the standards required by the Nursing and Midwifery Council to protect the public and uphold the reputation of the nursing and midwifery professions (Nursing and Midwifery Order, 2001; NMC Standards 2018).

The principles will address commonalities and key areas in relation to selection whilst allowing for individual AEIs' requirements. All AEIs in Wales involve representatives from service providers, service users and carers in their selection and recruitment processes. The principles also facilitate the selection of applicants to

meet the specific demands of practice in the context of a modern, multi-cultural, bilingual Wales.

The principles are designed to meet the requirements of the individual AEIs, the *Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Recruitment, Selection and Admissions to Higher Education* (QAA 2014, 2018), the *Core Principles for NHS Wales and the National Health Service (NHS) England Value Based Recruitment Framework* (NHS, 2016).

The all Wales Admissions Principles for programmes leading to registration, support the standards and professional requirements for pre-registration nursing and midwifery education and encompass the principles of value-based selection, widening access, social inclusion and increasing flexibility for programmes. Applications from individuals from a variety of backgrounds are encouraged to embrace the philosophy of widening access, participation and diversity. Each AEI will set its own academic entry tariff in addition to those indicated below.

The *Once for Wales 2020 all Wales Admissions Principles* promotes an inclusive approach by embedding consideration of equality and diversity matters throughout all selection processes. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, irrespective of the group or groups to which they belong, respecting protected characteristics whilst working to raise aspirations and supporting achievement for those people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds (Equality Act 2010). Those participating in recruitment and selection activities will be required to complete training provided by AEIs.

5. All Wales Value Based Approach

Failings in the delivery of compassionate care have been highlighted by key reports (Francis, 2010; Francis 2013; Department of Health, 2012). This provided impetus for the development of policy and practice to ensure the selection of students and future registrants able to deliver high quality, evidence based, and compassionate care (NHS, 2016) and the development of the following principles to support recruitment and selection processes in Wales. The National Health Service (NHS)

England report '*Compassion in Practice – One Year On*', identified that selection processes must include exploring qualities and values such as compassion and empathy as well as technical and academic skills (NHS, 2013) and a value based approach has been conceptualised by NHS England (NHS, 2013; 2016) and health boards across Wales.

In Wales, it is recognised that the selection of pre-registration applicants is based on a variety of factors that include academic ability, the applicants' understanding of the caring and complex role of the nurse/midwife and understanding of the professional demands on the individual. To provide a future nursing and midwifery workforce able to practice in a professional manner necessitates selecting applicants with the qualities and values which can be developed through working with academics, assessors, supervisors and other role models.

Appropriate selection recruitment and selection processes are fundamental to ensure that appropriate applicants with the requisite qualities and values are selected by AEIs in Wales and offered the opportunity to become future registrants. The selection processes used in Wales take an approach which allows AEIs to select applicants who demonstrate the relevant nascent values and qualities that will allow the student to develop the required knowledge, competence and professionalism to provide compassionate care as a registrant.

Values are '*what is important, worthwhile and worth striving for*' (Horton et al, 2007 p. 717). Values are fundamental to nurse interactions in the workplace (Watson, 2002), and increase the sense of team work and the impact on workplace culture (Tillot et al 2013). There is a consensus on the appositeness of certain personal qualities, values and skills for student nurses (Waugh et al 2014); these being honesty and trustworthiness, communication skills, being a good listener, patience and tactfulness, sensitivity and compassion, the ability to seek and act on guidance and being a good team worker; being ethically responsible and accountable (Maben et al 2007); competence and collaboration (DuLuc & Kotzer, 2009). To provide quality care students must have, or the ability to advance, the aptitudes, qualities and values to be able to develop skills and knowledge necessary to build effective

relationships with patients and others and also address the challenges which may be encountered in practice (Adam & Taylor, 2014). The following definitions are used to support the all Wales Principles:

- Values are the attitudes, beliefs, and priorities that bind individuals together and guide behaviour (LeDuc and Kotzer, 2009). Values are what influence a person's attitudes and behaviours (Burkhardt & Nathaniel, 2013); they define us as individuals and professionals and influence professional behaviour (Drayton & Weston, 2015).
- Empathy is understood as an ability to understand and accurately acknowledge the feelings of another, leading to an attuned response from the observer (Mercer & Reynolds 2002).
- Compassion is a virtuous response that seeks to address the suffering and needs of a person through relational understanding and action (Sinclair et al, 2017).
- The basis for qualities and values is emotional intelligence which is conceptualised as self-control, enthusiasm, persistence, motivation and altruism which is the basis of empathy and the ability to understand others (Cadman & Brewer, 2001; Bulmer Smith et al. 2009; Foster et al. 2014; Dganit & Grinberg, 2018).

Identifying the above is fundamental to the value-based selection processes used in Wales. The values and emotional intelligence required for nursing and midwifery are developed during educational programmes (Maben et al. 2007 & Dganit & Grinberg, 2018) and are therefore concomitant with value-based selection processes. Robust educational programmes are required to ensure future registrants have the ability to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to deliver care with compassion are vital (McLean 2012, Adam & Taylor 2014).

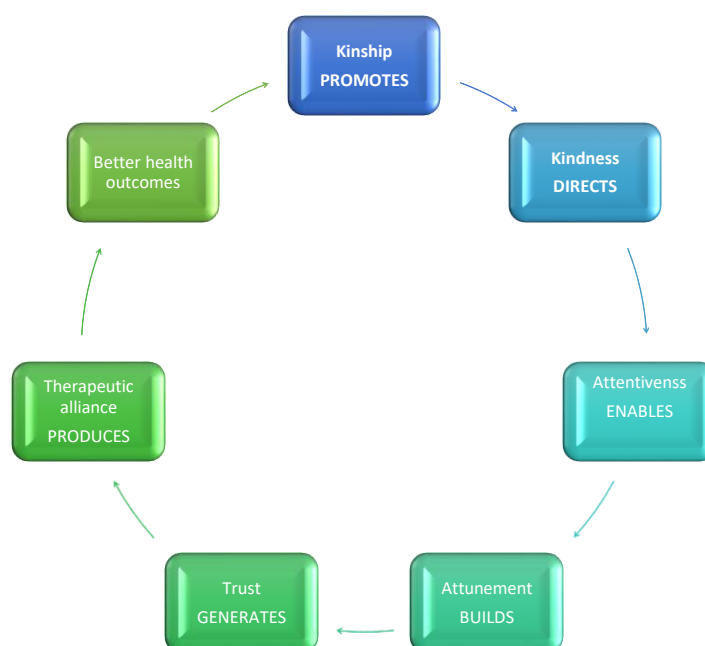
Good health care provision and good outcomes are dependent on the combination of intellect, knowledge, competence, professional practice and the values, qualities, and behaviours of nurses and midwives. Intellect and the previously mentioned qualities and values are integral to intelligent kindness; the ability to provide evidence based, compassionate person-centred care to improve health outcomes. The word kindness has also been proffered as a different way of thinking about the necessary qualities required to improve patient outcomes; '*kind meaning kin or family*' (Campling, 2015 p.4). Intelligent kindness is not about being altruistic or

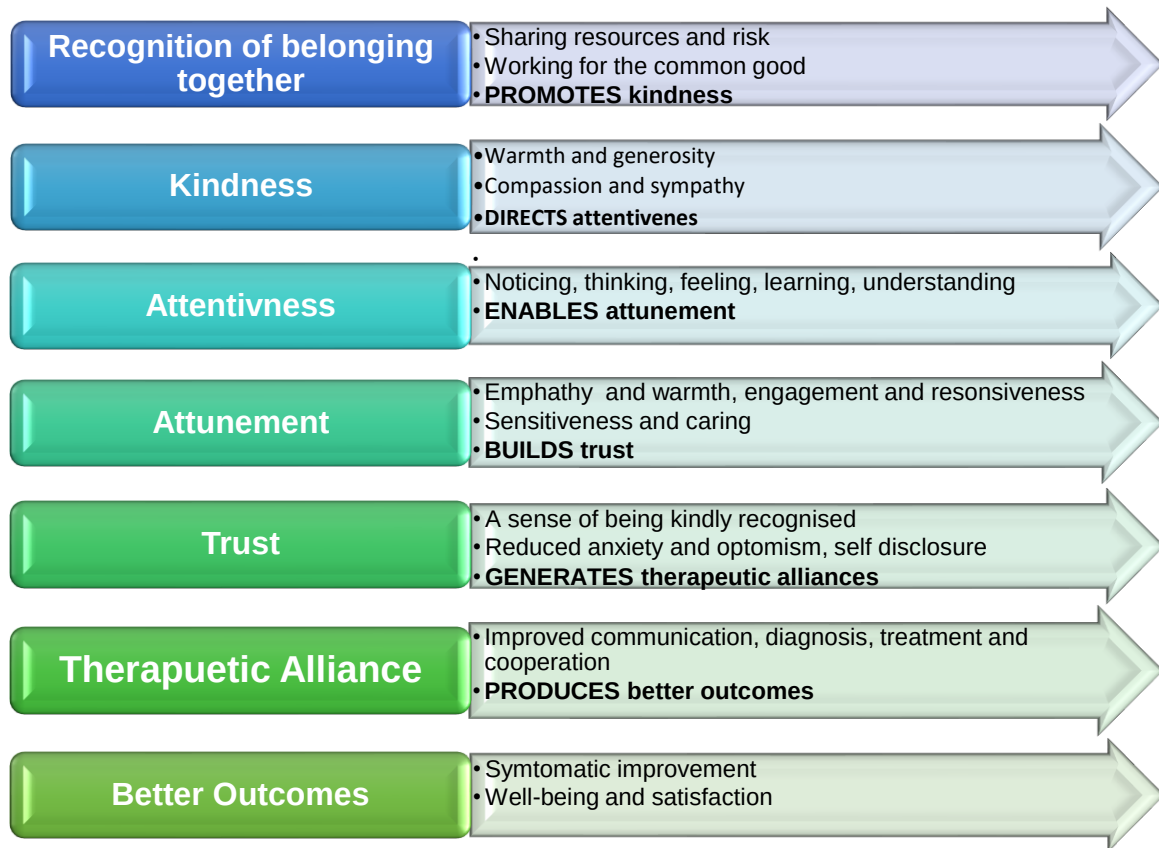
sentimental; the addition of the word *intelligent* makes kindness a multi-faceted attribute which ensures the delivery of care which recognises attentiveness to the needs of others. Campling, (2015 p. 4) describes intelligent kindness as:

'A binding, creative and problem-solving force that inspires and focuses the imagination and goodwill. It inspires and directs the attention and efforts of people and organisations towards building relationships with patients, recognising their needs and treating them well'.

To have intelligent kindness is to recognise we are part of the kinship of being human and is about attentiveness to the needs of others and attentive use of one's knowledge, skills, competence, and qualities on behalf of another to bring about the best outcomes for person or persons to whom we provide care. Put simply, having the intelligence, knowledge, competence and qualities to recognise and attend to the needs of others which requires attention to the value-based processes to ensure the appropriate selection of students to nursing and midwifery programmes. The relationship between intelligent kindness and improvement in health-related outcomes has been illustrated by Ballett and Campling (2011) as a virtuous circle with each aspect contributing to better healthcare provision.

Figure 1 Intelligent Kindness and Health Outcomes (Ballett and Campling 2011)





6. Governance and Quality

All AEs will meet the Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards Realising Professionalism: Standards for Education and Training (NMC, 2018):

Part 1: Standards Framework for Nursing and Midwifery Education; Education Governance and Quality (NMC, 2018):

2.6 ensure that recruitment and selection of students is open, fair and transparent and includes measures to understand and address underrepresentation

2.7 ensure that service users and representatives from relevant stakeholder groups are engaged in partnership in student recruitment and selection

2.8 demonstrate a robust process for recognition of prior learning (RPL) and how it has been mapped to the programme learning outcomes and proficiencies

Figure 2 Part 3: Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Programmes (NMC 2018)

Standard	NMC Requirement	AEI Processes
1.1	Confirm on entry to the programme that students:	
1.1.1.	Are suitable for their intended field of nursing practice (adult, mental health, learning disabilities and children's nursing) or midwifery practice	Personal statement, reference, interviews/selection process
1.1.2	Demonstrate values in accordance with the Code	All Wales Value selection processes, personal statements, reference, care experience, interviews /selection process
1.1.3	Have capability to learn behaviours in accordance with the Code	Personal statement, reference, care experience, interviews/selection process
1.1.4	Have capability to develop numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes	Attainment of numeracy qualification at Level 2 to include GCSE or recognised alternative
1.1.5	Can demonstrate proficiency in English language	Meets the NMC Standards for proficiency in English language
1.1.6	Have capability in literacy to meet programme outcomes	Attainment of communication/English qualification at Level 2 to include GCSE or recognised alternative
1.1.7	Have capability for digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes.	UCAS statement and use of UCAS Track to make application and receive all communication from AEI

Figure 3 Part 3: Standards for Pre- registration Nursing Programmes (NMC 2018)

Standard	NMC Requirement	AEI Processes
1.2	Ensure students' health and character are sufficient to enable safe and effective practice on entering the programme, during the programme and when submitting the supporting declaration of health and character in line with the NMC's health and character decision-making guidance. This includes satisfactory occupational health assessment and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks	Self-declaration of criminal conviction Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service review Fitness to Practice (FtP) meeting to review character, risk to the public and suitability for programme. Occupational Health Questionnaire and review
1.3	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	AEI FtP Procedures Student contract Annual self-declaration
1.6	For NMC registered nurses and midwives permit recognition of prior learning that is capable of being mapped to the Standards of proficiency for registered nurses/midwives and programme outcomes that may be more than 50 percent of the programme.	AEI Accreditation of Prior Learning procedures

DIRECTIVE 2005/36/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the recognition of professional qualifications (as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU) Article 31

Admission to training for nurses responsible for general care shall be contingent upon either:

a.	Completion of general education of 12 years, as attested by a diploma, certificate or other evidence issued by the competent authorities or bodies in a Member State or a certificate attesting success in an examination of an equivalent level and giving access to universities or to higher education institutions of a level recognised as equivalent; or	UCAS or AEI application Review of educational certificates as part of the selection process Completed compulsory education in home country i.e. GCSEs Irish Highers, Scottish Highers. Exception to include students successfully completing Access HE Diploma.
b.	Completion of general education of at least 10 years, as attested by a diploma, certificate or other evidence issued by the competent authorities or bodies in a Member State or a certificate attesting success in an examination of an equivalent level and giving access to a vocational school or vocational training programme for nursing	UCAS or AEI application Review of educational certificates as part of the selection process Completed compulsory education in home country i.e. GCSEs Irish Highers, Scottish Highers. Exception to include students successfully completing Access HE Diploma.

7. Application process

All AEIs will publish their entry requirements on their University website to meet Consumer and Market Authority (CMA) Regulations and to be cognisant of the findings of the Competition and Regulation in Higher Education England Report (CMA, 2015). All applicants to the pre-registration nursing (all fields) and midwifery degree will be required to apply via the Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS). www.ucas.ac.uk or directly to the AEI.

All applicants will be reviewed for suitability against established criteria in each AEI and those shortlisted will be invited for further selection activities, which will include a face-to-face engagement (appendix 1). The applicant will provide a reference as part of the UCAS application. Successful applicants will receive a conditional offer that is subject to satisfactory:

- The demonstration of nascent core values and qualities
- Specific academic attainment to suit AEI entry requirements
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Clearance
- Occupational health screening

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback in line with individual AEI policies.

Applicants who have a declared criminal conviction will be required to participate in the AEI Fitness to Practice/Study procedures prior to an offer being confirmed.

8. Selection Processes

All applications will be reviewed using an agreed AEI shortlisting process to review academic potential and qualities and values. UCAS and other AEI applications are shortlisted against the AEIs' entry criteria to include evidence of:

- Written and verbal communication skills
- Commitment to study and potential for academic attainment through predicted or actual grades attained
- Understanding of the nursing/midwifery programme
- Enthusiasm for a career in nursing/midwifery and wanting to make a difference to patients/service users/clients
- Understanding of the role of the nurse/midwife
- Demonstrating the values and personal qualities that make a good nurse/midwife
- Knowledge, skills and qualities demonstrated from undertaking relevant experiences or work
- Knowledge of current topical issues in nursing/midwifery/healthcare

9. Selection Events

All applicants who have been successfully shortlisted will be required to attend a face to face selection event. The selection processes vary between AEIs but always include at least one event in which the qualities and values of the applicants are explored and assessed against agreed criteria to ensure equity in the selection processes. The selection activities may include multiple mini interviews, individual structured interviews, group work and scenario based activities, and these may be supplemented by written exercises. The selection process are supported by service users and academic and health board/ NHS trust staff who have undertaken equality and diversity training. Each AEI will provide full details of the selection processes in their programme specification documents submitted as part of the validation process.

10. Criminal convictions

All applicants for a course leading to registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council as part of the selection process must:

- Disclose any convictions or cautions to the AEI that are not "protected" (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013)) and therefore would show up on a check made with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- This means applicants are required to disclose information about spent and unspent criminal convictions and spent and unspent cautions that are not protected. Guidance on the meaning of protected cautions and convictions and the filtering process can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance/dbs-filtering-guide>
- Undergo an initial self-disclosure and enhanced DBS check as part of the selection and offer requirements.
- Inform the HEI immediately of any criminal investigation commenced against you and any convictions or cautions you receive whilst on the course.

11. Person Specification

The following table sets out the person specification used during the recruitment and selection processes.

Person specification, qualities and values	Selection criteria the applicant is able to demonstrate	Rationale for selection criteria
Compassion, empathy, care, honesty, integrity	Demonstrates evidence of the qualities and values expected by the NHS, the profession and the public.	Applicants are able to explore the core concepts of empathy, compassion and care and use experiences and examples to illustrate their understanding. Demonstrates understanding and is able to articulate the meaning of the core qualities and values required for the profession and demonstrate same during selection processes. Personal statement, UCAS statement, reference, structured interview, multiple mini-interviews, group work activities.
Academic ability & aptitude	Demonstrates evidence of the achievement of the level of study for entry to the chosen programme of study.	Applicants are expected to be able to demonstrate the predicted grades or educational attainment which meets the AEI entry requirements to include evidence of numeracy and literacy. Demonstrates the AEI requirement for evidence of relevant previous study, UCAS points, entry criteria and numeracy and literacy. Personal statement, UCAS statement and reference, APL document.

Person specification, qualities and values	Selection criteria the applicant is able to demonstrate	Rationale for selection criteria
Commitment & courage	Motivation to study nursing/ midwifery	Applicants are expected to demonstrate a rationale for wanting to enter their chosen course and future profession/ field of nursing. Demonstrates good reasons for entering nursing/ midwifery by providing evidence of research into nursing/ midwifery as a career, the Bachelor of nursing/ midwifery programme, and the role of the nurse/midwife. Personal statement, UCAS statement, reference, structured interview, multiple mini-interviews, group work activities.
Communication & working with others	Communication Skills and team working	Applicants are expected to demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication and the ability to relate to others during the selection process Is able to communicate effectively in writing within the UCAS application and verbally with the selection panel; is able to articulate answers, respond appropriately and recognise the needs of others recognising and displaying appropriate non-verbal behaviour. Personal statement/ UCAS statement, reference, structured interview, multiple mini-interviews, group work activities.

Person specification, qualities and values	Selection criteria the applicant is able to demonstrate	Rationale for selection criteria
Courage, commitment, & resilience	Awareness of the demands of the course and evidence of investigation into nursing/midwifery professions, courses and other topical issues	Applicants are expected to be able to demonstrate that they understand the significant personal commitment required when undertaking a degree in nursing/midwifery. Demonstrates evidence of exploring the requirements for study which leads to registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council; to include understanding the need for theory and practice learning, the time requirements of the course to include placements to cover the 24 hour /seven day provision of care. Personal statement, UCAS statement, reference, structured interview, multiple mini-interviews, group work activities.
Competence, compassion, empathy, care, communication and commitment to quality care.	Understanding of role of the professional nurse / midwife and ability to demonstrate investigation into the role and the programme requirements.	Applicants are expected to be able to demonstrate they have an understanding of the role of the nurse in relation to the field of nursing to which they are applying. Demonstrates an understanding of the role requirements of the nurse/midwife and is able to draw on experiences to demonstrate the qualities and values which underpin care. Personal statement, UCAS statement, reference, structured interview, multiple mini-interviews, group work activities, written exercise.

Person specification, qualities and values	Selection criteria the applicant is able to demonstrate	Rationale for selection criteria
Commitment & resilience	Understanding of programme choice and ability to demonstrate investigation into the role and the programme requirements.	Applicants are expected to be able to demonstrate that they have considered their personal circumstances to be able to commit to the programme of study to which they have applied taking into account the need to balance theory and practice requirements. Gives clear indication that they understand the nature and the implications of their chosen programme. Is motivated towards programme choice and this is demonstrated in the personal statement and selection event. Open day attendance, personal statement, UCAS statement, reference, structured interview, multiple mini-interviews, group work activities.
Competence, compassion, empathy, care, & communication	Knowledge of current professional issues in nursing/midwifery/health	Applicant are expected to be able to demonstrate their preparation for the application process and the selection event by being informed of topic issues relating to the programme of study/field to which they are applying Is able to provide an informed account of a current professional issue demonstrating a clear understanding Personal statement, UCAS statement, reference, structured interview, multiple mini-interviews, group work activities.

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