The draft generic competency framework for pre-registration nursing education programmes

The domains and generic competencies

This framework is made up of four areas of practice referred to as domains. Each domain has an overall standard of competence meaning all nursing students irrespective of their field must achieve the standard. There are ten generic competencies/elements in each domain. This means all together there are four standard statements and forty generic competencies/elements that must be achieved by all students by the end of the programme and before entry to the NMC register.

The framework is designed as an integrated approach to competence and will allow for the development of integrated, flexible curricula. Learning outcomes may span more than one domain where concepts are repeated. For example, person centeredness and team work are repeated themes as they relate to professional values, communication skills, nursing practice and leadership. Outcomes relating to these aspects may be integrated to reflect different aspects or may be at different levels depending on the stage of the programme and the context in which they are assessed.

Areas that must be demonstrated as a minimum requirement by progression point 1

Areas that must be demonstrated at appropriate levels by progression point 1 to allow progression to the next stage of the course are highlighted in a grid at the end of the four Domains. The remaining essential skills clusters will act as guidance for the development of further learning outcomes and programme providers will be required to identify specific learning outcomes for progression point 2, to allow progression to the next stage of the course and for entry to the register.

Essential content

A list of essential content is identified to identify areas of underpinning knowledge considered absolutely essential for public protection and to support achievement of all the competencies and skills required within the generic competency framework.

The Domains

Domain: Professional values. Standard for generic competence.

The graduate nurse must demonstrate a high level of professionalism, integrity and caring characterised by a willingness to work collaboratively and effectively with people and their carers and other health and social care professionals and agencies, within an ethical, legal and person centred framework, to provide compassionate, patient focused nursing care and interventions.

Competencies/elements

1. Practises confidently within the context of political, professional, ethical, regulatory and legal codes, recognising and responding appropriately to situations in day-to-day practice.
2. Practises in a holistic, non-judgmental, caring and sensitive manner that recognises and respects diversity and the beliefs, rights and wishes of individuals of all ages, groups and communities and where necessary, challenges inequalities or exclusion from access to care.

3. Facilitates, supports and promotes the health, wellbeing, comfort and dignity of individuals, groups, communities and populations whose lives are affected by disability, mental capacity, ill health, distress, disease, ageing or death.

4. Works in partnership with patients, carers, groups, communities and other organisations, taking account of their strengths and needs, seeking to empower people to make choices and decisions to promote self-care and safety while managing risk and promoting health and wellbeing.

5. Within the scope of his/her professional practice and accountability, fully understands the different roles, responsibilities and functions of a nurse, and can adjust his/her role proactively to meet changing needs of individuals, communities and populations.

6. Understands the roles and responsibilities of other health and social care professionals and seeks to work with them collaboratively for the benefit of all people in need of care.

7. Practises at all times in accordance with principles, policies and within boundaries of confidentiality for people, carers and professional colleagues.

8. Accepts responsibility for keeping his/her own knowledge and skills up-to-date through continuing professional development and life-long learning, using evaluation, supervision and appraisal to reflect and improve upon his/her performance and to enhance the safety and quality of care and service delivery.

9. Reflects on and recognises the limits of his/her own competence and knowledge questioning practice and seeking appropriate advice from or referral to other professionals where required.

10. Practises autonomously within scope of own practice and applies relevant theoretical and research underpinnings to their professional practice recognising how different research methodologies are used to further knowledge in nursing.
Domain: Communication and interpersonal skills. Standard for generic competence.

The graduate nurse must be able to communicate safely and effectively, demonstrating a variety of skills and interventions including the use of technologies. Communication must be characterised by respect for individual differences, care, compassion and the maintenance of dignity at all times.

Competencies/elements

1. Uses communication skills safely and effectively to establish partnerships with people, family members and social groups, taking into account individual differences, capability and need, and responding in a non-discriminatory way.

2. Utilises a range of communication skills and technologies and applies them to support person centred care and enhance the quality and safety of healthcare.

3. Uses verbal, non-verbal and written communication skills to listen, recognise and interpret people’s knowledge and understanding of their needs sharing information with others respecting individual rights to confidentiality.

4. Is aware and takes account of non-verbal communication and how this can be affected (for example by, disability, ill health, culture, age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status) and responds in a helpful way towards people, their carers and their families.

5. Recognises and responds effectively, using therapeutic principles, to people who are anxious or in distress, in order to promote wellbeing and manage personal safety. Identifies when other specialist interventions may be needed and makes the necessary referral.

6. Uses therapeutic principles to engage, maintain and, where appropriate, disengage from professional caring relationships respecting professional boundaries at all times.

7. Recognizes and meets the need for an interpreter to assist people whose first language is not English and for others who need support to communicate.

8. Identifies appropriate methods of communicating and promoting healthy behaviours including promoting positive behaviour change through health education activities with people, their families and local communities.

9. Maintains accurate, legible and complete written/electronic records using appropriate terminology, avoiding jargon, and using plain English in order to achieve ‘shared meaning’ between all participants in the care process.

10. Maintains security and confidentiality of information in accordance with legislation and ethical and regulatory frameworks, taking account of local protocols, guidance and information governance.
Domain: Nursing practice and decision making. Standard for generic competence.
The graduate nurse must be able to practise a range of technical skills from basic to highly complex, in a safe and confident manner and in a variety of care settings. Delivery of all technical skills will be based on current evidence and up-to-date technological advances. Decisions will be made through a process of critical analysis and in collaboration with those involved in the care process. All nursing practice and decision making must be person-focused and must be characterised by compassion and respect, while maintaining the dignity and wellbeing of all concerned.

Competencies/elements

1. Uses a range of skills to work collaboratively with individuals, groups and carers to complete comprehensive, systematic and holistic assessments taking into account current and previous physical, social, cultural, psychological, spiritual and environment factors of relevance to the individual and/or their families.

2. Applies nursing skills when listening, recognising and responding to people’s needs and through skilled intervention, plans, delivers and evaluates technically competent, person-centred care in partnership with people and their carers, families and other professionals where relevant.

3. Uses a range of, technologies and innovations to confidently assess and respond to people’s needs and improve their experiences of healthcare.

4. Is confident and safe in using and evaluating a range of technical nursing skills, activities, interventions and equipment in a variety of care settings, (including complex, technical, diverse environments) to provide effective person-centred care for people of all ages and backgrounds.

5. Recognises, and interprets signs of normal and changing health/ill health, distress, or capability and acts promptly to maintain or improve health status and/or the safety of others.

6. Improves the health care of individuals by utilising a range of information and data sources to facilitate decision making and to support people in making choices about their health care needs.

7. Recognises when any person of any age is at risk and in a vulnerable situation and in need of additional support and protection and acts to safeguard them against abuse of any kind.

8. Makes sound person-centred, evidence-based judgements and decisions to ensure quality care is delivered in partnership with others involved in the care process.
9. Selects up-to-date knowledge to inform decisions needed to deliver safe, evidence based care across the life span

10. Uses knowledge of research processes and current nursing and associated knowledge to evaluate care, communicate findings, influence change and promote best practice.

**Domain:** Leadership, Management and Team Working. **Standard for generic competence.**

The graduate nurse must be able to respond with autonomy to planned and uncertain situations confidently, manage themselves and others effectively, create and maximise opportunities to improve services and be prepared to develop further management and leadership skills during their preceptorship and beyond.

**Competencies/elements**

1. Supports and improves the well-being and health care experience of people, communities and populations through quality improvement, leadership and collaborative working practices.

2. Works both as an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively as part of a team taking a leadership role when required.

3. Is self aware and recognises how their own values, principles and assumptions could impact on their practice and is able to learn from experience, feedback and through processes of reflection and evaluation.

4. Prioritises and manages time effectively ensuring quality care is maintained and enhanced and standards are met.

5. Engages in continuing professional development facilitating the professional and personal development of others, demonstrating leadership, reflective practice, supervision, quality improvement and teaching skills.

6. Plans and manages care applying the principles of health and social care funding, using resources effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of people, their families and carers, promoting cost consciousness in the provision of safe and effective care.

7. Uses own initiative and practises, autonomously and assertively either as an individual practitioner, or as part of a team, managing and prioritising competing demands and, where appropriate, acting as an agent of change to enhance and improve quality of care.

8. Works effectively across professional and agency boundaries, respecting and maximising the contributions made by others to achieve integrated person centred care.
9. Works within local policy to assess and manage risk effectively reporting risk, while maintaining the rights, well being, security and safety of all people involved in the care process.

10. Draws on a range of resources to evaluate and audit care and uses this information to contribute to making continued improvements in people’s experience and outcomes of care and the shaping of future services.

**Areas that must be demonstrated as a minimum requirement by progression point 1**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas associated with safety and safeguarding people of all ages, their carers and their families</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides safe person centred care under supervision, or makes safe provisions, for those who are unable to maintain their own physical and psychological needs including emotional, physical and personal safety and care relating to comfort, elimination, nutrition and fluid maintenance and personal hygiene.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts promptly and responsibly where people’s needs are not being met, questioning and seeking clarification in order to maintain safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts quickly in an emergency or where faced with sudden deterioration in people’s physical or psychological condition to minimise harm, by implementing emergency procedures, seeking assistance or where appropriate administering basic first aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts within legal and professional frameworks and local policies in relation to safeguarding adults and children who are in vulnerable situations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shares information with colleagues and seeks advice from appropriate sources whenever there is concern or uncertainty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works within the limitations of own knowledge and skills and professional boundaries in providing safe holistic care, accepting responsibility for own decisions and actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works collaboratively as a team member within required protocols, follows instructions and takes appropriate action consistent with the plan of care, sharing information to minimise risk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safely uses and disposes of medical devices under supervision and in keeping with local and national policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adheres to legal requirements for Health and Safety at Work reporting concerns in order to reduce risk to self and others, working within required policies including those for manual handling, infection control and the use of standard infection control precautions.</td>
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<td>Recognises signs of aggression and responds appropriately to keep self and others safe.</td>
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<td>Is competent in basic medicines calculation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicates safely and effectively both orally and in writing and through the use of different technologies, so that meaning is always clear and interpreted correctly in order to maintain safety and confidentiality in the exchange of information. Maintain full and accurate records.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under supervision actively participates in the assessment, planning, delivery and evaluation of health need and nursing care, including prioritisation and re-assessment.</td>
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<td>Actively seeks to extend knowledge and skills using a variety of methods to enhance safe evidence based practice</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas associated with professional values and expected attitudes and behaviours towards people, their cares and their families</th>
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<tr>
<td>Promotes a professional image, including appropriate dress, showing respect for diversity and individual preference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engages and communicates with people of all ages in a way that ensures they are listened to, kept well informed, are involved in their care and that dignity is maintained through appropriate use of the environment, self and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeks consent and respects people’s rights</td>
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<td>Is attentive and acts with kindness, sensitivity and compassion within professional boundaries in a non-discriminatory manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applies the principles of confidentiality and meets requirements for data protection. Treats information as confidential except where sharing is required for the purposes of safeguarding and / or public protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practices honestly and with integrity applying the principles of the NMC code and adhering to the Guidance on professional conduct for nursing and midwifery students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responds to feedback and shares messages and learning with other members of the team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values others’ roles and responsibilities within the team and interacts appropriately</td>
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Essential Content

Knowledge underpinning practice

This is a list of essential content which identifies only those areas of underpinning knowledge considered absolutely essential for public protection and to support achievement of all the competencies and skills required within the generic competency framework above.

This is intentionally minimal and acts as a regulatory benchmark to safeguard the public. The programme provider will be left to determine additional content through curriculum development determined by local need to support achievement of the programme outcomes, drawing on the most recent evidence bases.

Theory and practice must be integrated within the new Standards, whilst realising that European Directive 2005/36 continues to make an artificial distinction between theoretical and clinical instruction.

To provide a knowledge base for nursing practice, contemporary theoretical perspectives should be explored with regard to:

- Theories of nursing and nursing practice
- Professional codes, ethics, law and humanities
- Communication, technology and health care informatics
- Life sciences (including genetics, and pharmacology)
- Social, health and behavioural sciences
- National and international health policy
- Principles of leadership and management
- Organisational structures, systems and processes
- Principles of research and enquiry

In addition there will need to be specific reference to Annexe 5 (4.2.1) of Directive 2005/36 EU Training programme for nurses responsible for general care the requirements of which would also need to be met by students in the adult nursing field.