

NIPEC CAREER AND DEVELOPMENT MODEL

2 December 2025

Professor Linda Kelly, Chief Executive NIPEC

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework | Real Life Stories

Career and Development Model for Nursing and Midwifery

A continuous journey towards maximising individual impact and growth

Career and Development Model for Nursing and Midwifery

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A continuous journey towards maximising individual impact and growth

Career and Development Model

- Access the Model**
 This section includes the structure of the model, levels and pillars of practice, who the model...
- Career Pathways**
 This section includes the routes to becoming a registered nurse or midwife and the different...
- Learning & Developing Framework**
 This section includes guidance to identify needs/areas for professional development and the range...

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework | Real Life Stories

Nursing and Midwifery Information

[Want to become a Nurse or Midwife?](#)

To pursue an exciting career in Nursing or Midwifery choose your career...

[Information for Overseas Nurses and Midwives](#)


Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom (UK). The requirements for working...

[Are you returning to Practice?](#)


Now is an exciting and challenging time to be part of the professions and a good time...

[Maintaining your Registration?](#)


To continue working as a Nurse or Midwife in the UK (including Northern Ireland) you must renew...



Real Life Stories



FAQs & Myth Busting




Feedback

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework

Home

Access the Model

Welcome to the Career and Development Model for Nursing and Midwifery which is designed to support professional development and practice.



The Career and Development Model offers a structure with key knowledge, skills and behaviours to inform career, learning and workforce development.

It can help to benchmark knowledge and skills and support professional development at every level across a career journey.

It can also be used by practitioners, managers, educators and commissioners to support the development of a suitably skilled and resourced workforce.

It focuses on the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to underpin good practice at all levels of the workforce, supporting safe and effective care delivery.

It recognises how complex roles have become and helps to explain the difference in expectations and learning for all levels of practice across the nursing and midwifery workforce.

Who the Model is For

The Career and Development Model is intended for the wider nursing...

Model Structure

The Career and Development Model is intended for the wider nursing...

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework | Real Life Stories

Home > Access the Model

Who the Model is For

The Career and Development Model is intended for the wider nursing and midwifery family including Nursing or Midwifery Assistants/Support Workers, Students and Registered Nurses and Midwives.

This includes those working in a range of settings and sectors across Northern Ireland, such as, hospital, community, primary care, general practice or the independent sector.

It can also be used to provide a structure for managers, educators and commissioners to support workforce planning and service delivery models which are linked to effective learning and development strategies, programmes and activities.

Examples of who the model is for are presented below.

- Practitioners
- Managers
- Educators
- Strategy and Policy Leads

Also in this area [Access the Model](#)

[Model Structure](#)

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework

Home > Access the Model

Model Structure

The Career and Development Model is intended for the wider nursing and midwifery family, including Nursing or Midwifery Assistants/Support Workers working in a range of settings and sectors across Northern Ireland.

It can also be used to provide a structure for practitioners, managers, educators and commissioners to guide individual career journeys, support workforce planning and service delivery models which are linked to effective learning and development strategies, programmes and activities.

The Career and Development Model is presented in the diagram below and is further explained on each page of the website.

Northern Ireland Career & Development Model for Nursing & Midwifery

A continuous journey towards maximising individual impact and growth

2


COMPONENTS




Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework

Home

Nursing & Midwifery Careers



The nursing and midwifery careers structure and guidance will support the establishment of a dynamic, future-ready nursing and midwifery workforce through three integrated career pathways: Clinical Practice, Operational Management, and Education & Research. Each pathway will provide structured progression and competency frameworks across all Levels of Practice—from non-registered staff, newly registered to advanced/expert roles. The careers resources will empower nursing and midwifery professionals to develop expertise, meet the reform agenda and deliver optimum care through having the *right person* deliver the *right care*. By investing in these pathways, we will strengthen workforce resilience, enhance patient/population outcomes and position nursing and midwifery as cornerstone professions in a modern health system.



Core Career Pathways

There are three Core Career Pathways to help prepare and develop the nursing...

Roles Frameworks

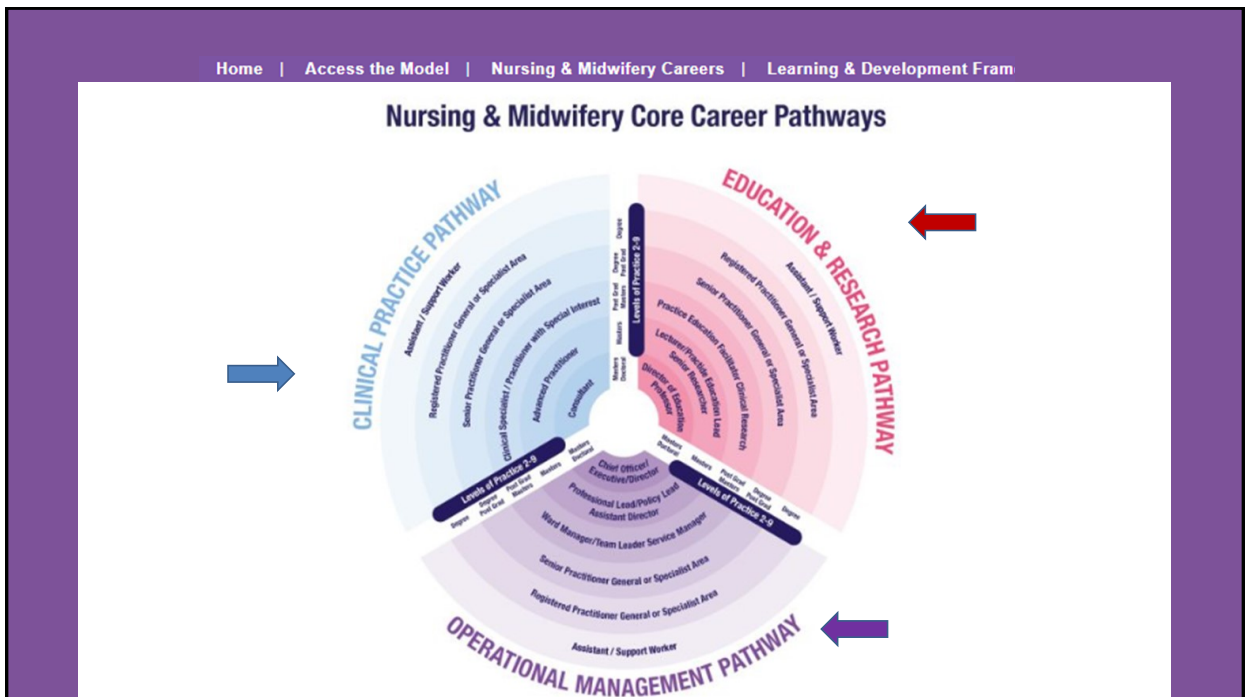
There are a range of roles (aligned to the levels of practice) along each of the three...

Levels and Pillars of Practice

Welcome to the Levels of Practice section. The Levels of Practice outline...

Service Specific Clinical Pathways & Frameworks

As a nurse or midwife, you can choose to specialise within a chosen...






Home Access the Model Nursing & Midwifery Careers Learning & Development Framework Real Life Stories					
Clinical Practice Pathway		LEVEL OF PRACTICE	ROLE FRAMEWORK	INDICATIVE EDUCATION REQUIREMENT	ASSESSMENT TOOL
	Assistant / Support Worker	2 – 4	Nursing Assistant Maternity Support Worker: Standards Competencies Core Skills		
	Registered Practitioner General or Specialist Area	5	Registered Practitioner	Degree	Level 5
	Senior Practitioner General or Specialist Area	6	Senior Practitioner	Degree Post Grad	Level 6
	Clinical Specialist/ Practitioner With Special Interest	7	Specialist Nurse	Post Grad Masters	Level 7
	Advanced Practitioner	8	Advanced Nurse Practitioner	Masters	Level 8
	Consultant	9	Consultant Nurse	Masters Doctoral	Level 9

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework | Real Life Stories

CLINICAL PRACTICE CAREER PATHWAY



ROLE FRAMEWORKS PRACTICE LEVEL 2 - 9

NURSING ASSISTANT/SUPPORT
REGISTERED STAFF NURSE/SENIOR
STAFF NURSE


SPECIALIST NURSE

ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER

CONSULTANT NURSE &
CONSULTANT MIDWIFE

NIPEC Career & Development Model
for Nursing & Midwifery

NIPEC CLINICAL CAREER PATHWAY




REGISTERED STAFF NURSE
&
REGISTERED SENIOR STAFF NURSE

ROLE FRAMEWORK

NIPEC Career & Development Model
for Nursing & Midwifery


NIPEC CLINICAL CAREER PATHWAY



SPECIALIST NURSE ROLE FRAMEWORK

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NIPEC CLINICAL CAREER PATHWAY



ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER ROLE FRAMEWORK

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NIPEC CLINICAL CAREER PATHWAY



CONSULTANT NURSE & CONSULTANT MIDWIFE ROLE FRAMEWORK

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Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework

Home > Nursing & Midwifery Careers

Roles Frameworks

There are a range of roles (aligned to the levels of practice) along each of the three career pathways. A Role Framework for defined roles at each level of practice outlines: summary profiles, competencies/proficiencies (knowledge, skills and behaviours) and is supplemented with a learning and development framework.

Each level includes associated Role Frameworks which contain key information including:

- Role Profile Summary
- Professional Registration Requirements (Levels 5-9)
- Expected Education and/or Experience
- Competencies
- Additional Learning and Development Opportunities
- Assessment and Development Tools

NIPEC

NI Career & Development Model
for Nursing & Midwifery

Staff Assessment and Development Tool

Level of Practice 5 – Staff Nurse

Getting Started

The Staff Assessment and Development Tool is designed to help you reflect on your current job role and identify areas where further training, education, and development could enhance or advance your skills.

Upon completion, you will have a list of specific knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) you wish to develop, along with evidence statements to support your competence. If you have additional KSAs, university modules, or competency statements to include, there is a blank section for this purpose.


To access the assessment tool, please visit the Career Pathways/Role Frameworks section on the Careers Website and select the tool relevant to your level of practice. [Learning & Development Framework | Nursing and Midwifery Careers NI](#)

Sign Off

This tool is designed to support you in your appraisal and Personal Development Review (PDR) process, while also providing evidence of your ongoing continued professional development (CPD). There is a Sign Off template at the end of the tool to enable you to sign off your assessment.

STAFF ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TOOL - LEVEL 9

Please review the knowledge, skills and behaviour statement and rate yourself using the rating scale below. Give careful thought to your assessment and how you might demonstrate proficiency of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours



	1	2	3
1. I need a lot of development			
2. I need some development			
3. I feel I am well developed			

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating	Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
1.1 Practise within their individual scope of practice and in line with their level of knowledge, experience, qualifications, training and employment role.			
1.3 Demonstrate professional accountability and capability in making complex evidence-informed decisions, managing varying degrees of risk, unpredictability and uncertainty while exercising			

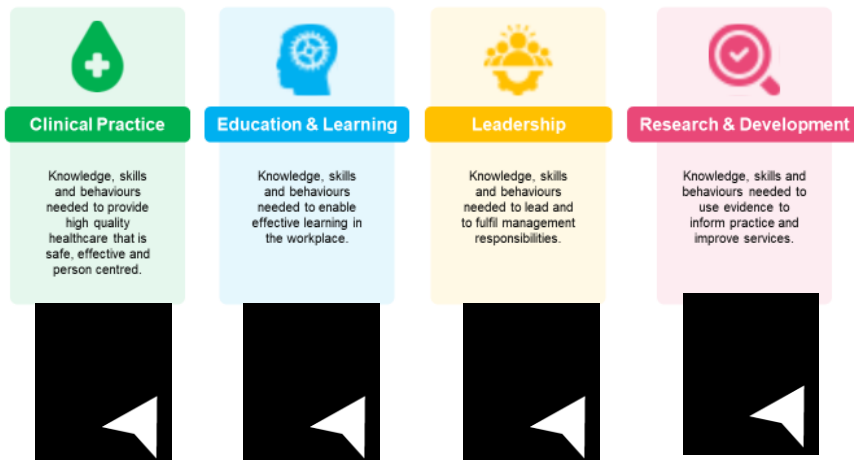
Levels of Practice

Level

Role Overview

2	People at level 2 require basic factual knowledge of a field of work. They may carry out clinical, technical, scientific or administrative duties and provide safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registrant.
3	People at level 3 require knowledge of facts, processes and general concepts in a field of work. They may carry out a wider range of duties than the person working at level 2 and will have more responsibility, with supervision by a registrant.
4	People at level 4 require factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work. Work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols or systems of work and they may have responsibility for supervision. BSc (Hons) or MSc to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife.
BSc (Hons) or MSc to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife	
5	People at level 5 will have a comprehensive, factual and theoretical knowledge on registration. They use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service development, supervision or training.
6	People at level 6 require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, are specialist and/or have management, education and leadership responsibilities. They demonstrate initiative and creativity in finding solutions with responsibility for team performance and development.
7	People at level 7 have a critical awareness of knowledge and issues in the field and at the interface between different fields. They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment.
8	People at level 8 require highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work. They are leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes. They may lead policy, research, education or service delivery and improvement and have clinical, management or education responsibilities.
9	People working at level 9 require knowledge at the most advanced frontier of the field of work and at the interface between fields. They will have responsibility for the development and delivery of a service to a population or leading research at the highest level of the organisation.

Pillars of Practice



Service Specific Clinical Pathways & Frameworks

As a nurse or midwife, you can choose to specialise within a chosen area or field during your career.

Service Specific Career Pathways outline additional competencies (knowledge, skills and behaviours) for roles (at each level of practice) within a specific clinical area/service, building on the relevant Core Career Pathways and associated Role Frameworks.

This approach facilitates career progression, workforce planning and design within a field of practice/service area.

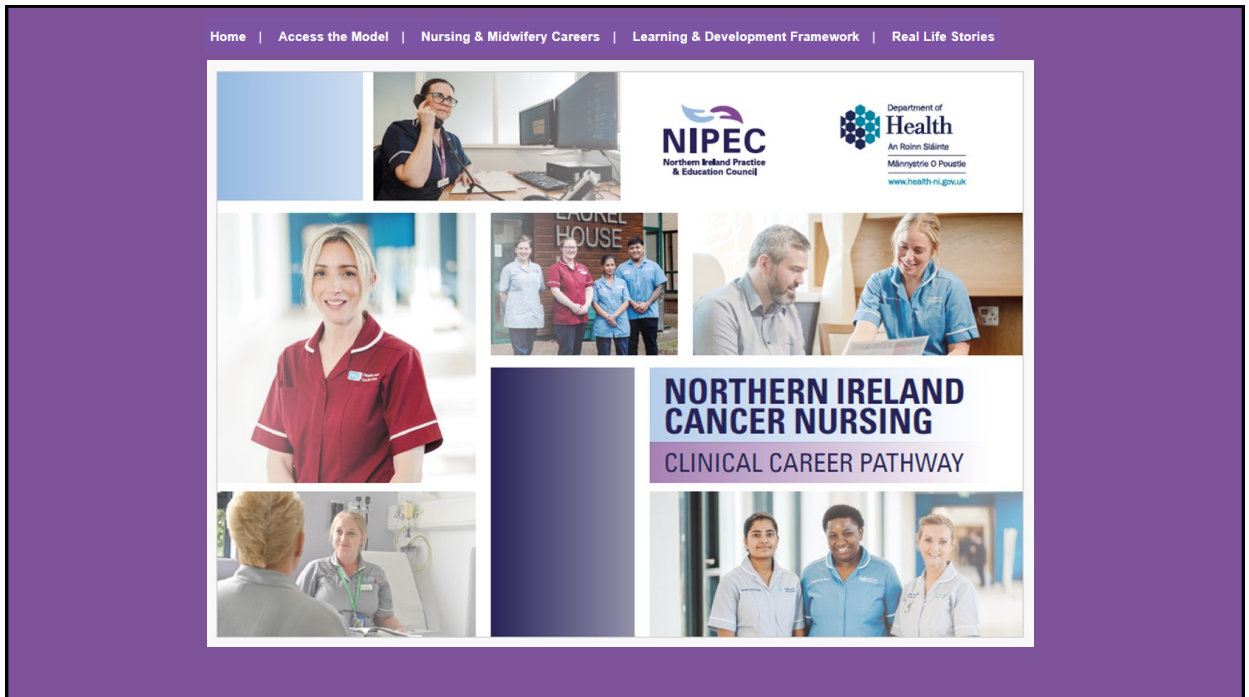
Examples of Service Specific Pathways are listed below:

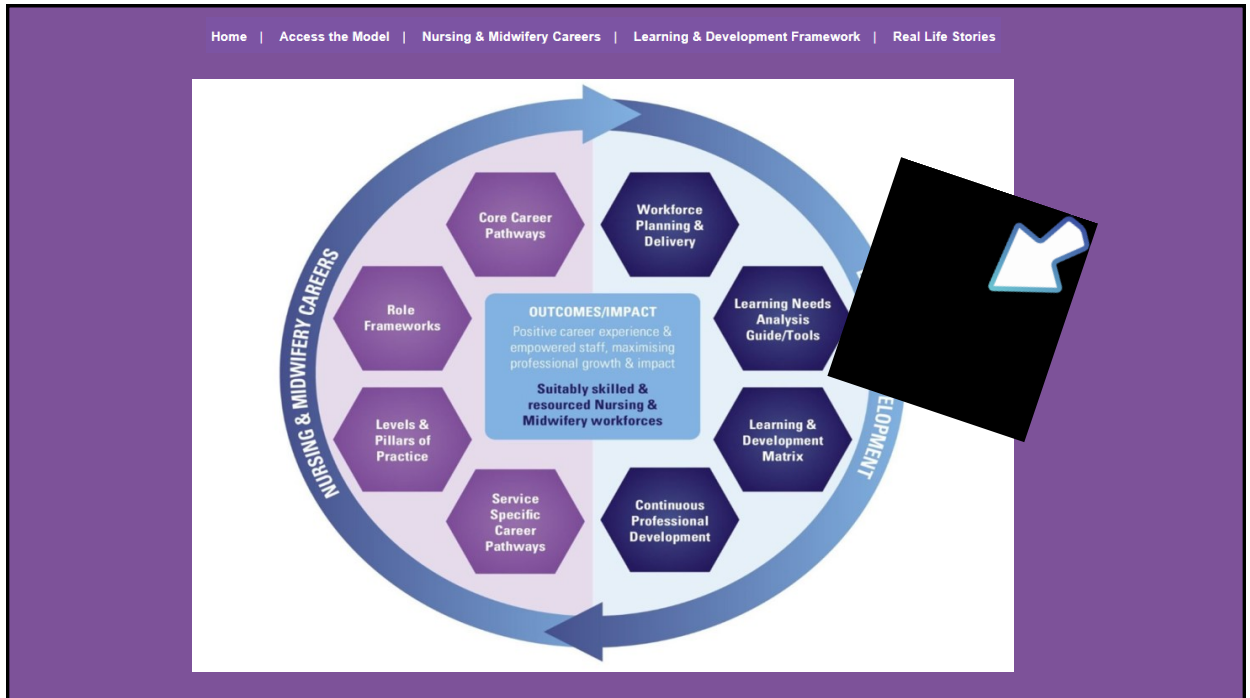
Clinical Practice Pathway

- [Cancer Nursing](#)
- [Critical Care Nursing](#)
- [District Nursing](#)
- [General Practice Nursing](#)
- [Perioperative Nursing](#)



CAREER PATHWAY FOR CRITICAL CARE NURSING





Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework | Real Life Stories

[Home](#)

Learning & Development Framework

A Learning and Development Framework is a critical tool for organisations seeking to develop and implement effective employee training and development programmes and activities.

It provides a plan and structured approach to build workforce capacity and develop capabilities, skills and competencies, resulting in better staff performance and outcomes for patients.

Workforce Planning & Delivery

Workforce planning and design of delivery models need to ensure an adequate...

Learning and Development Matrix

A Regional learning and development matrix provides information...

Learning Needs Analysis

Managers, at all levels, are responsible for identifying and prioritising...

Continuous Professional Development

The ongoing process for acquiring required knowledge, skills and...

[Home](#) | [Access the Model](#) | [Nursing & Midwifery Careers](#) | [Learning & Development Framework](#) | [Real Life Stories](#)

Workforce Planning & Delivery


need to ensure an adequate staffing resource and ongoing supply to ensure people, communities and population health care needs are met. This requires employing: the right people, with the right skills, working in the right place, at the right time.

At the 31st March 2025 there were 29,966 Nurses and Midwives on the NMC register in Northern Ireland. Understanding the workforce learning and development needs is essential to support future service delivery models.

As the health and social care system reforms in response to evolving patient and population needs, technology and pharmaceutical advancements, the multi-professional workforce needs to develop knowledge and skills to work within existing and new models of care.

 [New Roles](#)



 [Six Steps Methodology to integrated Workforce Planning](#)

[Home](#) | [Access the Model](#) | [Nursing & Midwifery Careers](#) | [Learning & Development Framework](#) | [Real Life Stories](#)

[Home](#) > [Learning & Development Framework](#)

Learning Needs Analysis

Staff at all levels, are responsible for identifying and prioritising the Learning and Development needs of their Service Area(s) and the professional development goals of individuals and teams – ensuring these are aligned with their organisational priorities and the health needs of the population they serve.

Learning Needs Analysis Guide & Tool

The Regional Learning Needs Analysis Guide offers guidance, context and a framework for carrying out an effective Learning Needs Analysis that aligns with strategic policy, workforce planning, and service needs.

The Learning Needs Analysis Tool is a practical resource designed to help managers at all levels, to capture, organise, and prioritise their learning needs in a consistent and structured way.

These resources will support the development of the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours aligned to Levels of Practice 2–9 for nurses, midwives and healthcare support workers.

[Learning Needs Analysis Guide](#)



[Learning Needs Analysis Tool](#)

These documents will be available on the NIPEC website in late December 2025.

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework | Real Life Stories

Home > Learning & Development Framework

Learning and Development Matrix

<p><u>Entry Pre-Registration Nursing and Midwifery Programmes</u></p> <p>Entry into Pre-Registration Nursing and Midwifery programmes</p>	<p><u>Mandatory Training</u></p> <p>What mandatory training is, who is it for, and where it can be accessed</p>
<p><u>Post-Registration Academic Study</u></p> <p>What Post-Registration academic study is, who is it for, and where courses / programmes can</p>	<p><u>Clinical Education</u></p> <p>The HSC Clinical Education Centre (CEC) provides high-quality, evidence-based</p>
<p><u>Additional Learning and Development Resources</u></p> <p>Additional Learning and Development resources including the HSC Clinical Education Centre (CEC)</p>	

Home | Access the Model | Nursing & Midwifery Careers | Learning & Development Framework | Real Life Stories

Nursing

Queens University Belfast (QUB)

- 3 year undergraduate nursing degree programme
- 2 year general entry masters (GEMS) programme for those who hold an Honours degree in any subject and who have experience in caring.
- Programmes cover Adult Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Learning Disability Nursing, and Children and Young People.
- QUB Entry criteria can be found at [Undergraduate Courses | School of Nursing and Midwifery | Queen's University Belfast](#) by selecting the relevant programme.

Ulster University (UU) (Derry-Londonderry Campus)

- 3 year undergraduate nursing degree programme
- Programmes cover Adult Nursing and Mental Health Nursing.
- Entry Criteria can be found at [Ulster University School of Nursing and Paramedic Science](#) by selecting the relevant programme.

The Open University

- 4 year undergraduate nursing degree programme in partnership with all five Health and Social Care Trusts across Northern Ireland to provide Department of Health funded student nursing opportunities for staff employed in the Trusts.
- Partnered with the independent sector to provide employer-funded places on the Pre-Registration Nursing Programme for staff employed in the independent sector.
- Programmes cover Adult Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Learning Disability Nursing, and Children and Young People.

Entry Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Programmes

Midwifery

A Pre-registration Midwifery Programme is solely delivered by QUB. Applications are via UCAS. The QUB website will provide guidance of the entry criteria including which GCSE's, A-level's or further education qualifications are required. Following completion of the UCAS requirements, prospective students will be invited to an interview before being offered a place on the programme.

Pre-Registration Midwifery

This is a 3 year full time programme of which 50% takes place in university to prepare students for practice-based learning environments across a range of clinical settings including hospital and community and accounts for the other 50% of education.

This programme has fully funded commissioned places made available by the Department of Health for home students, including full fees and a bursary, subject to eligibility criteria. Students on this programme are ineligible to apply for funding from the Student Loans Company.

Queens University Belfast

- [The Ultimate Guide to UCAS Applications | Student Blog | Queen's University Belfast](#)
- [Nursing and Midwifery Interviews | Study | Queen's University Belfast](#)

Those who have previously commenced or completed a Department of Health paid place/bursary for a pre-registration nursing, midwifery or AHP course in Northern Ireland will not be eligible for a funded place on this programme.

On successful completion of the programme, graduates are eligible to register with both the [Nursing and Midwifery Council \(NMC\)](#) in the UK and the [Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland \(NMBI\)](#) in ROI.

Entry requirements can be found at [Midwifery | Courses | Queen's University Belfast](#)

Masters in Midwifery

This is a 2 year programme for NMC registered adult nurses currently employed in a HSC Trust in Northern Ireland who want to move into a career in midwifery. Entry requirements can be found at [Masters in Midwifery | School of Nursing and Midwifery | Queen's University Belfast](#)

Education Commissioning Group (ECG)

A limited amount of post-registration academic study can be accessed through the Department of Health (DoH) Post-registration Nursing and Midwifery Education Commissioning Group (N&M ECG) for staff employed within HSC Trusts, however it is also possible for nurses/midwives to self-fund their own academic study. Programmes can be delivered at degree level which is academic level 6 or at Post-graduate level which is academic level 7.

The DoH Post-registration N&M ECG budget is allocated on an annual basis to the Chief Nursing Officer. The budget is managed through the N&M ECG where an annual education commissioning plan is developed to support the post-registration education and development needs of the N&M workforce in line with strategic priorities and organisational workforce planning.

There are three key objectives for Post-registration education commissioning: maintaining current services, enabling transformation of services, and retention and continuous professional development of staff.

Post-registration education commissioning is a cyclical process consisting of 4 key phases (see Diagram 1) which commences a minimum of one year in advance of programmes commencement.

To secure a place on a DoH commissioned post-registration education programme, requests can be submitted via the organisation's Education Lead to DoH ECG by the required timeline (usually late December/early January) each year. Requests received after the deadline cannot be considered as part of the annual ECG planning cycle.

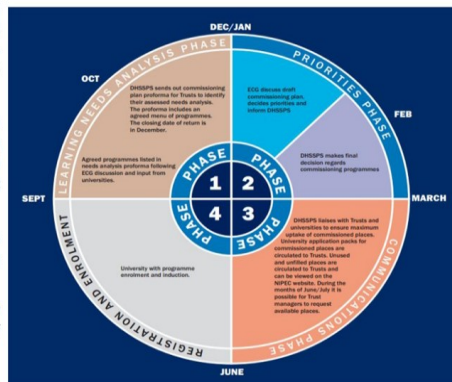


Diagram 1

Operational Management

[Back to main menu](#)

Course Name	Provider
Collective Leadership	UU
Developing person centred service improvement	RCN
Understanding human factors	RCN
What do you do when things go wrong	RCN
Improving Patient Safety: Developing skills to enable delivery of safe, effective patient centred care (4 day programme)	RCN
Understanding Workforce Planning (1 day programme)	RCN
Leading in a crisis for Nurse Managers in HSC Trusts and Nursing Homes (4 day programme)	RCN
Supporting and Developing Senior Nurses/ midwives Senior Nurse Managers' Toolkit Programme (4 day programme delivered over 3 months)	RCN
Managing Performance – Managing the Performance of Individuals, Teams and Organisations (1 day programme)	RCN
Preparing for a Post as Sister, Charge Nurse, Team Leader Developing Skills for the Complex World of Today's Healthcare Settings	RCN
Delegation of Care for BAND 8A, 8B and 8C.	RCN
Band 8 Senior Nurse Leaders Programme (4 day programme delivered over 3 months)	RCN
Aspiring Nurse & Midwifery Director	Florence Nightingale Foundation

Education & Research

Course Name	Type of Course	Academic Delivery Level	Provider
Academic Skills for Nursing and Paramedic Science Post Graduate Study	Stand alone module	Level 6	UU
Post Graduate Cert in Education for Healthcare Professionals	PgCert	Level 6 & 7	UU
Advanced Methods in Research and Development in Health and Social Care	Stand alone module	Level 7	UU
Motivational interviewing in Practice	Stand alone module	Level 7	UU
MSc Nursing	Masters	Level 7	UU
Practice Education in Health Care	PgCert	Level 7	QUB
Preparation for Degree Level Study	Short Course	Level 2	QUB
Theories and principles of Practice Education	Stand alone module	Level 7	QUB
Facilitating Learning in Practice	Stand alone module	Level 7	QUB
Enabling Interprofessional Practice	Short Course	Level 7	QUB
Practice Teaching and Learning for Health and Social Care Professionals (facilitating learning in practice)	Stand alone module	Level 7	QUB
Simulation based education, theory and practice in health care	Stand alone module	Level 7	QUB
Research Development in Clinical Practice	Stand alone module	Level 6	QUB

Clinical Practice

[Back to main menu](#)

[Generic Clinical Practice Courses –
applicable to all service areas](#)

[Peri-operative](#)
[Diabetes](#)
[Mental Health](#)
[Midwifery &
Women's Health](#)
[Orthopaedics](#)
[Cardiology](#)
[Dementia](#)
[Cancer & Palliative
Care](#)
[Emergency &
Critical Care](#)
[Respiratory](#)
[Learning Disability
& Intellectual
Disability](#)
[Public Health](#)
[Urology &
Continence](#)
[Neuroscience](#)
[Forensics](#)
[Primary Care &
Older People](#)
[Children & Young
People \(CYP\)](#)
[Skin & Burns](#)
[Imaging](#)
[Other](#)


Cancer & Palliative Care

Course Name	Type of Course	Academic Delivery Level	Provider
Palliative and End of Life Care	Stand alone module	Level 6	QUB
Understanding Cancer Treatment	Stand alone module	Level 6	QUB
Administration of Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapies	Stand alone module	Level 6	QUB
Haematology and Haematopoietic Stem Transplantation	Short Course	Level 6	QUB
Cytotoxic and Biological Therapies in the non-oncology setting	Stand alone module	Level 6	QUB
Specialist Practice in Nursing - Cancer Care - Oncology (not NMC recordable)	Specialist Practice	Level 7	QUB
Symptom Management in End of Life Care (30 credits)	Stand alone module	Level 7	UU
Advanced Knowledge in Symptom Management in Palliative Care (30 credits)	Stand alone module	Level 7	UU
Specialist Practice Nursing Qualification with integrated prescribing Palliative Care 1 year Full Time or 2 years Part Time	PgDip	Level 7	UU
Developing Awareness in End of Life Care	NA	NA	RCN
Princess Alice European Certificate in Essential Palliative Care	NA	NA	NI Hospice
Principles of Breast Cancer *Breast CNS (screening)	NA	NA	Royal Marsden School
Dermoscopy * Skin CNS online	Stand alone module	TBC	TBC

Clinical Practice

[Back to main menu](#)

[Generic Clinical Practice Courses –
applicable to all service areas](#)

[Peri-operative](#)
[Diabetes](#)
[Mental Health](#)
[Midwifery &
Women's Health](#)
[Orthopaedics](#)
[Cardiology](#)
[Dementia](#)
[Cancer & Palliative
Care](#)
[Emergency &
Critical Care](#)
[Respiratory](#)
[Learning Disability
& Intellectual
Disability](#)
[Public Health](#)
[Urology &
Continence](#)
[Neuroscience](#)
[Forensics](#)
[Primary &
Older People](#)
[Children & Young
People \(CYP\)](#)
[Skin & Burns](#)
[Imaging](#)
[Other](#)

Primary Care & Older People

Course Name	Type of Course	Academic Delivery Level	Provider
Diabetes Management in Primary Care	Stand alone module	Level 6 & 7	UU
Telephone Triage in Healthcare/Telephone Consultation for Healthcare / Telephone Consultation for Healthcare	Stand alone module	Level 6 & 7	UU
V150 Community Practitioner Nurse Prescribing	Stand alone module	Level 6 & 7	UU
V150 Community Practitioner Nurse Prescribing	Stand alone module	Level 6 & 7	UU
Advanced / Post Grad Certificate in General Practice Nursing	PgCert	Level 6 & 7	UU
Advanced / Post Grad Certificate in General Practice Nursing	PgCert	Level 6 & 7	UU
Adult Specialist Nursing: District Nursing (with integrated nurse prescribing)	Specialist Practice	Level 7	UU
PG DIP Specialist Practice Nursing Qualification with integrated prescribing Adult 1 year Full Time or 2 years Part Time	PgDip	Level 7	UU
Advanced Practice - Nursing Primary Care	Masters	Level 7	UU
Breast and Cervical Screening for Nurses, Midwives and Health visitors	Stand alone module	Level 6	QUB
Advanced Nursing Practice - Adult Medicine and Older People Care	Masters	Level 7	QUB
Specialist Practice in Nursing - Nursing Care of Older People (not NMC recordable)	Specialist Practice	Level 7	QUB
Asthma Diploma Level 5	NA	NA	Barrett McGrath
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) update	NA	NA	Barrett McGrath

[Home](#) | [Access the Model](#) | [Nursing & Midwifery Careers](#) | [Learning & Development Framework](#)

[Home](#) > [Learning & Development Framework](#) > [Learning and Development Matrix](#)

Mandatory Training

- What it is?
- Who it's for?
- Where can it be accessed?







Clinical Education Centre

Business Services Organisation




Language

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Brochure](#) | [Programmes](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Quality Statement](#) | [Guidance Documents](#) | [Resources](#)



Supporting your Learning Journey



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CEC design and deliver education that supports Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals across Northern Ireland.

[Home](#) | [Access the Model](#) | [Nursing & Midwifery Careers](#) | [Learning & Development Framework](#) | [Real Life Stories](#)

Additional Learning and Development Resources

- [Health and Social Care Modules | Health and Social Care | The Open University](#)
- [The home of free learning from the Open University | Open Learn – Open University](#)

There are 9 Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland with courses applicable to health and social care, they are listed below.

- [Belfast Met](#)
- [From Here To Career | North West Regional College](#)
- [Northern Regional College](#)
- [South Eastern Regional College – SERC](#)
- [SWC | South West College](#)
- [Southern Regional College](#)

- HSC Leadership Centre
- Health and Social Care Quality Improvement (HSCQI)
- Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
- Royal College of Midwifery (RCM)
- Northern Ireland Social Care Council

[Home](#) | [Access the Model](#) | [Nursing & Midwifery Careers](#) | [Learning & Development Framework](#) | [Real Life Stories](#)

Continuous Professional Development

Ethnic Diversity – equal access to education and leadership opportunities for all

Reflection

Preceptorship Framework NI

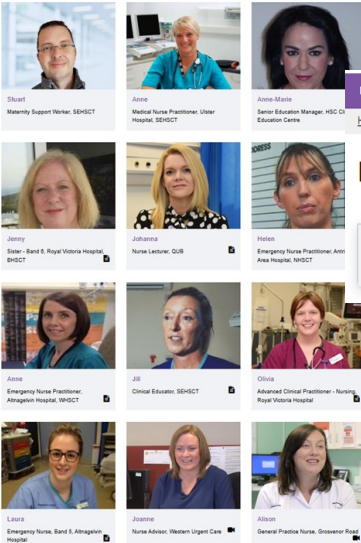
Quality Excellence Framework

Leadership: A Collective Leadership Framework for Nursing and Midwifery

[Home](#) | [Access the Model](#) | [Nursing & Midwifery Careers](#) | [Learning & Development Framework](#) | [Real Life Stories](#)

Listen to the videos

Hear stories from nurses and midwives working in Northern Ireland



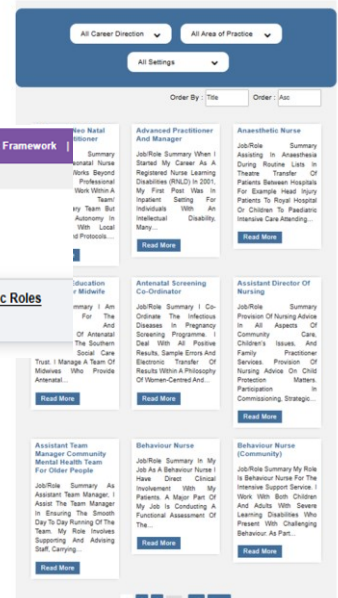
[Home](#) | [Access the Model](#) | [Nursing & Midwifery Careers](#) | [Learning & Development Framework](#)

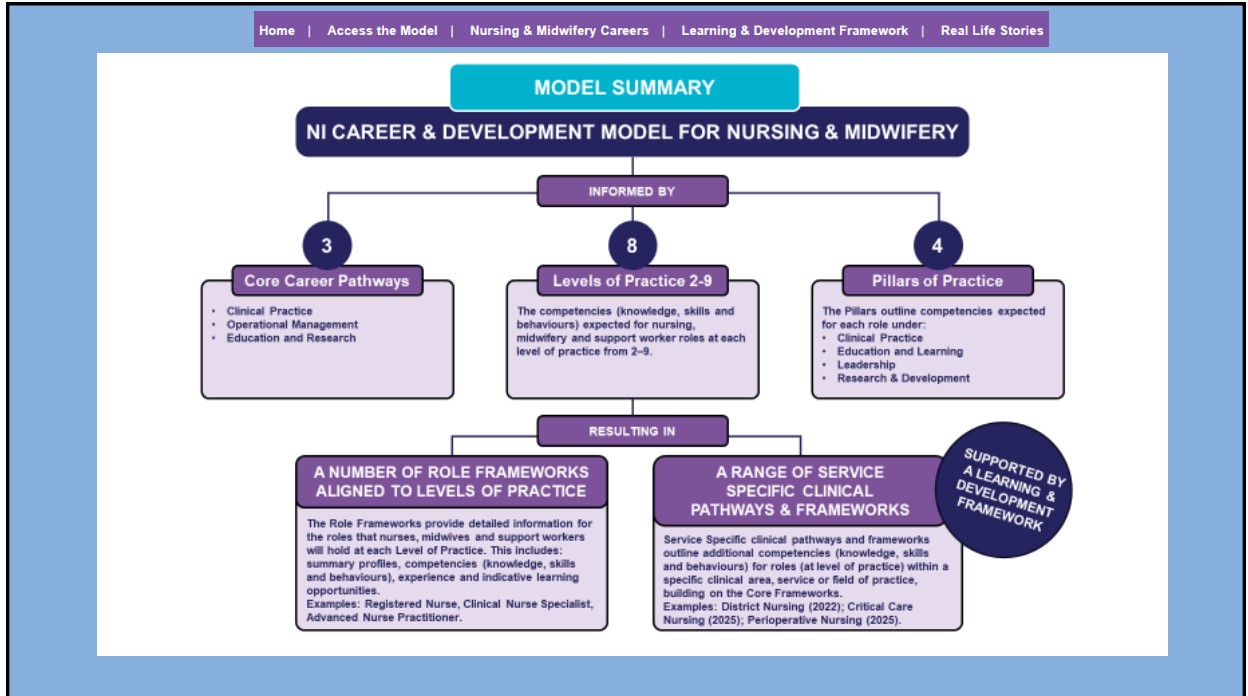
[Home](#)

Real Life Stories

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[Read about the Specific Roles](#)





CAREER AND DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

A continuous journey towards maximising individual impact and growth



NIPEC

Career & Development Model for Nursing & Midwifery

A continuous journey towards maximising individual impact and growth

Thank You for listening!



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