



NORTHERN IRELAND PRACTICE AND
EDUCATION COUNCIL
FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

LEARNING AGREEMENT TEMPLATE

for

DoH/ECG COMMISSIONED COURSES

CONTENTS

	Page
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Purpose of a learning agreement	1
3.0 Learning Agreement Process	3
Appendix 1: Learning Agreement Proforma for Commissioned Programmes	4

1. INTRODUCTION

As a Nurse or Midwife you are accountable and responsible for practicing in line with the best available evidence and keeping your knowledge and skills up to date, throughout your working life (NMC, 2015¹). Appraisal, personal development planning and supervision are processes available to nurses and midwives to support them to enhance their practice, education and professional development. There are many ways to learn and often a blend of different approaches will facilitate the nurse or midwife to best meet their learning needs.

2. PURPOSE OF A LEARNING AGREEMENT

The purpose of a learning agreement is to ensure that both the registrant and line manager agree the learning activity which will best meet the needs of the individual and service, and enable evaluation against the agreed learning outcomes. This learning agreement template is for use with courses funded by Department of Health (DoH) and commissioned by the Education Commissioning Group (ECG).

It is important before submitting an application for a commissioned course, that the registrant and the line manager are clear about the relevance of the course to the staff member's job. Consideration should also be given as to how the registrant will apply the knowledge and skills learned, to improve their practice and service delivery.

Annual appraisal or personal development planning meetings provide the ideal opportunity for the nurse/midwife and their line manager to identify ways to enable the individual to develop relevant knowledge and skills to improve their practice and service delivery.

The nurse/midwife with their line manager need to:

1. Have a clear vision of the learning requirements of the nurse/midwife
2. Decide on the knowledge and skills required
3. Work out how best to achieve this
4. Look at the relevant courses and content – will the individual's learning needs be met?

¹ Nursing and Midwifery Council. (2015). *The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives*. London. NMC. www.nmc-uk.org/code.

and also consider:

5. How to evidence learning achievements.
6. How will learning impact on the individual's practice?
7. How will the benefits be measured?
8. How to ensure improvement is maintained.
9. Does the course fully meet the individual's learning requirements?
10. If relevant, how will any additional learning requirements be addressed?

Sometimes individuals can start a course but due to unforeseen circumstances do not complete it; others complete their course only to realise that it did not actually meet their needs. It is important that the nurse or midwife fully understands what the course entails and how it may impact on them before they commit to it. Consideration should be given, therefore, to the following aspects:

- Course content, including aim and learning outcomes.
- The duration and design of the course, this includes issues such as: how much of the course is based in a learning setting, in the individual's work place or on placement; will there be a requirement to travel, be away from home, work anti-social hours?
- What are the personal cost implications in relation to finance, time and quality of life?
- Do they need a supervisor or mentor in practice; if so consideration should be given as to how this will be managed
- What is the assessment strategy, for example: number and level of assignments; number and content of examinations, practical assessments.
- Does the individual need to address other areas of development prior to commencing the course?
- Are there alternative learning activities to be considered? Visit the Learning Section of NIPEC portfolio website for information <https://nipecportfolio.hscni.net/>
- Can the individual meet the demands of the course in relation to ability, time and support (at work and home)?

3. LEARNING AGREEMENT PROCESS

Phase 1

Nurse/midwife to complete Section1: **Preparatory information of the learning agreement pro forma for commissioned programmes (Appendix 1)**, and arrange to meet with his/her line manager to discuss the options to meet learning needs as identified.

Phase 2

Complete Section 2: **Agreed learning outcomes and commitment (Appendix 1)** at meeting with line manager. Record and sign the decisions made about the agreed / anticipated learning outcomes, anticipated impact on practice and identified support during the educational programme, including the learner commitment.

Phase 3

Complete Section 3: **Evaluation by Nurse /Midwife Learner (Appendix 1)**. Post completion of the course the nurse/midwife should meet with his/her line manager and review the impact of the learning and development on the individual's practice and how this relates to improvements in patient/client care or service. This will be normally take place at that member of staff's next appraisal meeting with his/her line manager. In the event of a learner identifying any shortcomings regarding an educational programme it is his/her responsibility to alert the line manager as soon as possible. The Line Manager must advise through the relevant Trust operational/professional process any shortcomings identified regarding an educational programme which requires escalation for operation/service or professional lines to address accordingly.

Learning Agreement Proforma for Commissioned Programmes

Section 1: PREPARATORY INFORMATION

Must be completed by staff member *before* discussion with line manager

<p>Duration: How long will the education programme last?</p>	
<p>Design: Is the programme full-time/part-time and location of course</p>	
<p>Course content: Brief overview, refer to learning outcomes / module descriptors, published proposed education provider website</p>	
<p>Cost implications for student: Financial, include being away from home; subsistence; time, include travel and personal study; quality of life, include anti-social hours, impact on family</p>	
<p>Cost: Implications for service: Time away from unit, what cover is needed, are there training implications for other staff.</p>	
<p>Assessment of learning by: Assignments, examinations, mentor/supervisor practical assessments, placements (location and duration) etc.</p>	
<p>Other Factors: Areas for development necessary prior to undertaking the course and areas for development not covered by the course</p>	
<p>Personal statement of commitment to achieve learning outcomes: Statement should reflect academic ability, time and support to complete the course.</p> <p>Consider how learning links to NMC Code (2015)</p>	

Section 2: AGREED LEARNING OUTCOMES

For completion by nurse/midwife and line manager prior to commencement of educational programme:

Name of course participant:

Name of line manager:

Date of meeting:

1. What are the anticipated learning outcomes/objectives of undertaking the educational programme ?

2. What is the proposed impact of learning on practice and/or service development?

3. Select one or more of the four themes within the NMC Code and explain how it relates to this learning opportunity.

4. Agreed methods for evidencing learning in practice.

5. Agreed study leave required to meet programme outcomes.

6. Agreed resources for supervision/mentoring, if required.

7. Planned meetings with line manager or allocated supervisor/mentor

8. Agree to undertake a reflection exercise post completion of the course.

Signature:

Date:

LEARNER COMMITMENT

I have read the course content and learning outcomes and believe that I have the ability and commitment to complete the programme in the allocated time frame.

I am prepared to undertake the identified learning activities and course assessments and to meet the above agreement. Should exceptional circumstances arise which prevent this, I will inform my line manager immediately so that the situation can be considered/reviewed and managed through the relevant procedures.

I will return my completed application form to Line Manager by the relevant deadline. I have agreed the following arrangements with my line manager:

1. I will meet with my line manager or allocated supervisor/mentor, at the following points in the programme to discuss progress; a record will be kept of the discussions.
 - Prior to starting programme (where the preparatory information, agreed learning outcomes and learner commitment are addressed)
 - Following completion of the programme (generally at personal appraisal meeting, which will be informed by my reflection exercise).
2. Throughout the programme I will evaluate the programme quality and content and if I have concerns, I will inform my line manager or allocated supervisor/mentor and the education provider at that time.

SIGNATURE REGISTRANT/PARTICIPANT _____ Date _____

SIGNATURE LINE MANAGER _____ Date _____

Section 3: EVALUATION

To be completed by nurse/midwife with their line manager post completion of the programme; this should generally coincide with the learner's appraisal meeting. This is an opportunity to evaluate if the learning outcomes of the programme were met and provides a contributing reflection tool for the purpose of the appraisal process.

Please refer to the learning outcomes documented prior to undertaking the course. Compare what was actually achieved from the undertaking the educational programme with what was expected.

Any barriers to achievement of learning outcomes should be escalated through the appropriate education provider or via HSC Trust procedure.

NURSE/MIDWIFE LEARNER EVALUATION

Please tick all that apply and provide comments as appropriate.

1. Now that you have had time to reflect, in your opinion, have the intended learning outcomes of the course been achieved?

Yes No

Please give details:

2. Has the course enabled you to address the particular patient/client and/or care/service improvements you expected?

Fully Partially Not at all

Please give details:

3. Has the course equipped you to become more involved in introducing changes and / or improvements in practice?

Yes No

Please identify how you will evidence these changes and / or improvements:

SIGNATURE STAFF MEMBER _____ **DATE** _____

SIGNATURE LINE MANAGER _____ **DATE** _____



For further Information, please contact

NIPEC

Centre House

79 Chichester Street BELFAST, BT1

4JE

Tel: 0300 300 0066

This document can be downloaded
from the NIPEC website

<https://nipec.hscni.net/>

Updated July 2016