An Exploration of the Interpretation and Application of the use of Due Regard in Pre-registration Nursing Programmes

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Project Aims

- Review each institution’s experiences of due regard in their pre-registration programmes.

- Consideration of the evidence base for ‘Due Regard’ and what additional value this requirement brings, for example, is due regard required to protect the public?

- Clarification of criteria used by NMC (or their agents) to measure Due Regard in pre-registration programmes.

- Make recommendations to the National Strategic Group for Practice Learning for a Scotland wide approach to Due Regard.
If ‘Due Regard’ is required, the assessor must be registered on the same part of the NMC register, and have a mark in the same field of practice that the student intends to enter (NMC 2010a).
What do the NMC 2010 Standards Offer?

- Mentor available 40% of the time
- Use of other registered healthcare professionals in both the supervision and assessment of students
- Increased flexibility
No examples of where Due Regard has worked well in implementing the flexibility offered by the NMC to providers in the standards and guidance.

Other professionals, and the international perspective: there is little evidence to indicate that professionals other than the professional discipline of the student, participates in the assessment process in anything other than a most nominal manner.

Assessment and supervision: student learning in practice must operate beyond the more traditional boundaries of secondary and acute care practice learning settings if they are to develop the skills required to work in contemporary health and social care settings.

However it seems that this is very new territory for both academic and clinical partners and that the principle of ‘Due Regard’ is interpreted as an absolute rather than in accordance with the softer and more flexible advice provided by the NMC guidance and advice document.
Aims of On-line Survey

To review each institution’s experiences of Due Regard, and the use of other registered professionals in their pre-registration nursing programmes:

- HEI’s interpretation of the NMC (2010a) standards, recommendations and guidance in relation to Due Regard, and how this is measured at institution level;

- Instances where HEI’s believe ‘Due Regard’ or the use of ‘other registered professionals’ has been successfully applied;

- Instances where it has not been possible to apply ‘Due Regard’ and how this was addressed;

- Any specific challenges encountered by HEI’s and how they had been resolved.
It is clear from the responses to the survey that there is indeed a degree of inconsistency throughout Scottish HEI’s:

- Regarding the definition of Due Regard;
- When application of Due Regard is a requirement within pre-registration nursing programmes;
- The appropriate use of suitably prepared other registered professionals who can be involved in both the supervision and assessment of students.
Recommendation 1: Due Regard

Due Regard is only required at sign off, however individual HEI’s may specify other points in their programme where they would want the principle of Due Regard to be applied.

These specific points should be clearly articulated in programme specifications and approval documentation.
Table 1: Summary of who can make assessment decision at various stages of pre-registration nursing programmes (NMC 2011a).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Throughout each part of the programme</th>
<th>At the first progression point</th>
<th>At the second progression point</th>
<th>For entry to the register</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A registered nurse mentor or, where decisions are transferable across professions, <strong>an appropriate registered professional</strong>, who has been <strong>suitably prepared</strong></td>
<td><strong>Normally</strong> a mentor who is a registered nurse from any of the four fields of practice.</td>
<td>A mentor who is a registered nurse from any of the four fields of practice.</td>
<td>A sign-off mentor who is a registered nurse from the same field of practice as that which the student intends to enter</td>
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Recommendation 2: Suitable Preparation

To fulfil the NMC requirements to act as a mentor, the ‘suitably prepared’ other registered professional must:

- Be aware of the learning needs, objectives and outcomes that the student is required to meet;
- Have evidence of completing preparation for supervision or coaching associated with his/her own professional development;
- Have evidence of professional assessment skills and competencies from non-nursing professions;
- Have participated in the assessment and supervision of students within their own profession;
- Have been inducted into the student nurses programme, their module, and the practice assessment documentation to be used to assess the student.
To promote flexibility, a process is developed by which third sector and voluntary organisations can be measured as suitable for student nurse supervision and assessment.

An action from this would be that the SCEPRN group should develop a national assessor’s equivalency tool for these environments.
Recommendation 4: Measuring Suitable Preparation of the Person to act as a Mentor

Suitable preparation may be assessed/measured by:

- Use of an APEL/RPL tool, such a tool to be developed for use by all HEI’s nationally in Scotland;

- Quality assuring the process using a tripartite relationship of:
  - Liaison lecturing staff who support students in practice such as the Practice Education Facilitators and/or the Care Home Education Facilitators;
  - The other Registered Professional;
  - The student;
  to ensure that mentorship is appropriate.
The aim of the project:

To promote flexibility in practice learning by which third sector and voluntary organisations can be measured as suitable for student nurse supervision and assessment in line with the NMC Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Education (SPNE) (NMC 2010a).
Due Regard Project 2: Assessing the Validity of a National Assessors Equivalency Tool

4 Recommendations:

1. Equity for Supervisors (Non-NHS and Non-Nurse)
2. Employing the Equivalency Tool
3. Recognition of Preparation Routes
4. Managing Risk
The Way Forward?
Questions
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