

Equality Impact Assessment Report

Title: Learning Resources for users of the Quality Management of the Practice Learning Environment (QMPLE) System

NES directorate or department: NMAHP

Date Report Completed: 23/10/2024 (updated 17/03/2025 and 25/03/2025)

Introduction

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a process that helps us to consider how our work will meet the three parts of the Public Sector Equality Duty. It is an important way to mainstream equality into our work at NES and to help us:

- Take effective action on equality.
- Develop better policy, technology, education and learning and workforce planning solutions for health, social care and a wide range of our partners, stakeholders and employees.
- Demonstrate how we have considered equality in making our decisions.

This EQIA is focused on the review and refresh of the existing learning resources for users of the QMPLE system.

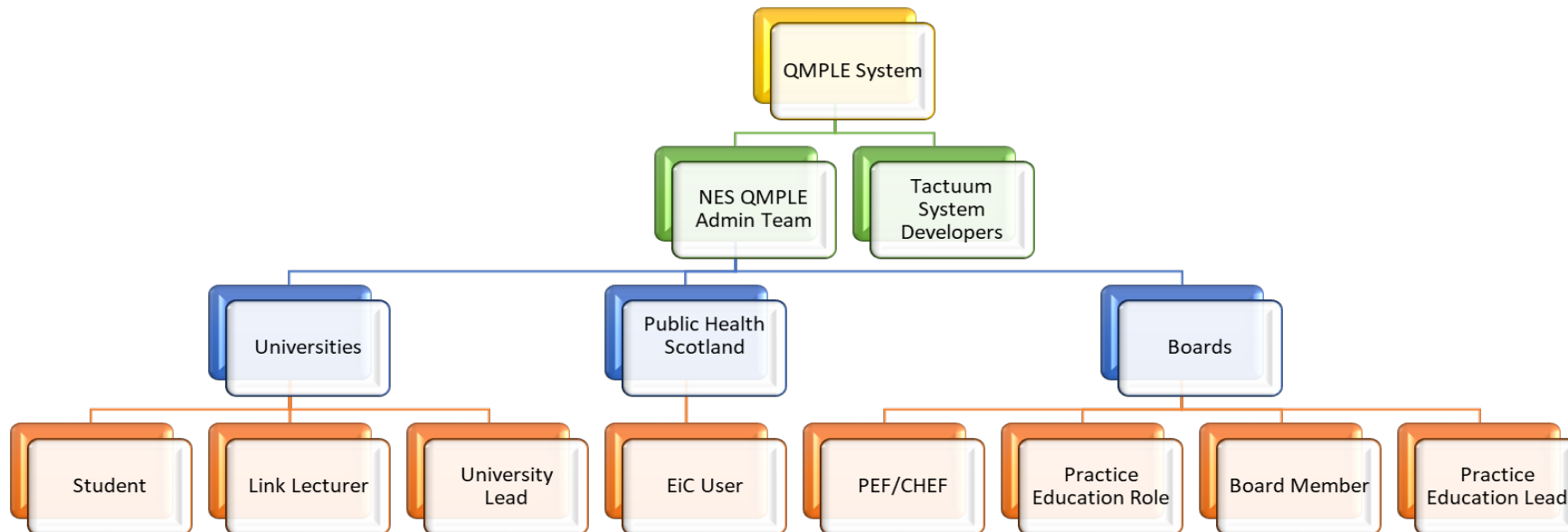
The QMPLE software system is used by all universities and their practice learning partners involved in delivery of Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) approved programmes across Scotland. It provides access to and reporting of data relating to the quality of nursing and midwifery practice learning experiences.

This includes providing nationally consistent approaches to:

- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) educational audits
- Quality Standards for Practice Learning (QSPL) audits and action plans
- Pre-placement information for students
- Student feedback on their practice learning experiences
- “You said we did” section on QMPLE closes the feedback loop for improvement.

The QMPLE software system is developed and maintained by NHS Education for Scotland. The main purpose of these resources is to ensure that users of the QMPLE system (See Organogram 1) have accurate, easy to follow and up-to-date guidance on how to navigate the software system.

Organogram 1 – QMPLE System users who will use the QMPLE learner resources: see glossary



This EQIA is relevant to Outcome 7 of the NES Equality Outcomes

Outcome 7: Access to learning is improved through enabling flexible learner access on any device; delivering resources built to best practice accessibility standards; and providing appropriate and relevant digital literacies development for learners.

In Scotland, the health and social care workforce covers a large geographical area which includes remote and rural populations. The Digital Literacy Research Report - [hcswdigitalliteracyresourcereport-2018.pdf](https://www.hcs.wales.nhs.uk/digital-literacy-research-report-2018) - highlights the use of computers can be challenging, with staff reporting difficulties in accessing computers in the workplace while those working in remote and rural areas often experience challenges with connectivity. These challenges can have a negative impact on staff learning and development.

The diagram below shows how each of these issues will be addressed to ensure access to the refreshed resources is available to all colleagues. The resources will be added to the QMPLE site and available on Turas Learn, allowing for staff to access at any time.

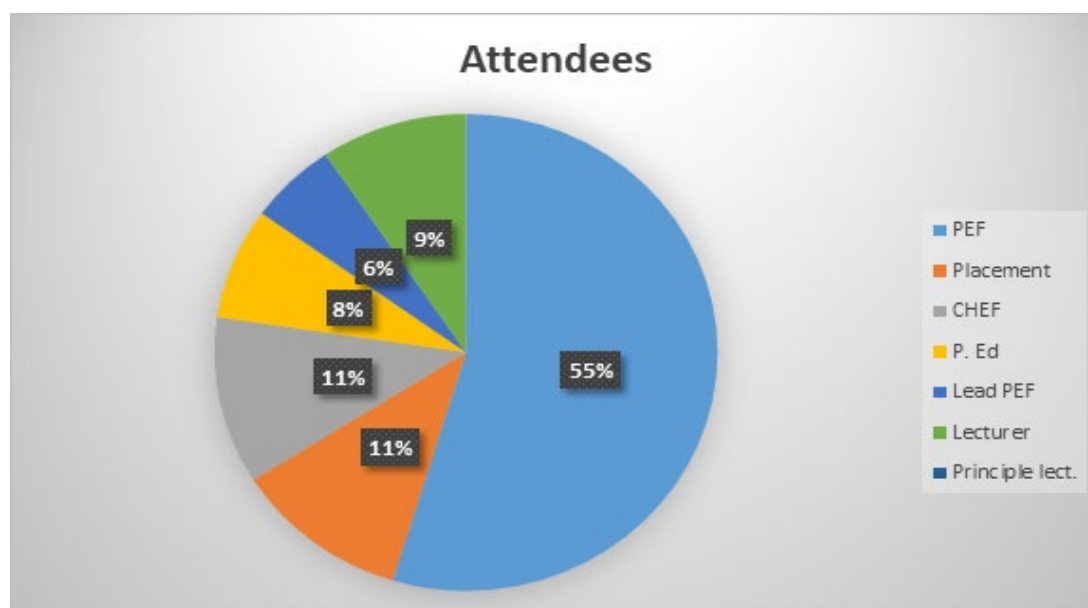
Access to digital devices is a barrier to accessing the resources	Engagement and collaboration with local practice education teams to support access for all QMPLE system users. Resources will be embedded on the QMPLE system and available on all digital devices for ease of access.
Remote and rural colleagues experience connectivity issues	Liaise with the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) team to ensure that all resources are available on multiple devices The resources will be developed in a Sway format enabling staff to download and save to their device, making them accessible when connectivity is reduced.
Digital Literacy is a barrier to accessing the resources/system	Collaborative working with local practice education networks to support access and ensure digital inclusion for all QMPLE system users. Digital access for students in practice is included in the Nursing and Midwifery annual reviews.

It is expected that by meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and working in collaboration with board and university colleagues, the refresh of the existing QMPLE system user resources will have a positive impact on accessibility.

To date, workshops have been facilitated with QMPLE system users who are in a practice education or in a university role which supports practice learning to obtain their feedback on the existing resources and to explore what they consider would be useful to include in the updated resources. The initial draft of the refreshed user resource has been completed, and a workshop for initial feedback from non-student system users was held in December 2024.

Evidence

Four user workshops were facilitated to seek feedback on the current resources and to ensure collaborative working with colleagues who will use the resources in practice. Feedback was also sought via an anonymous questionnaire which was available in different formats on request. These users included practice education facilitators (PEFs), care home education facilitators (CHEFs), practice educators (P.Eds), university lecturers and placement allocation leads. A total of 55 people attended the workshops.



Feedback was themed according to resource specific or generic feedback. This identified areas to be updated and where additional guides are required. These include:

- changes to consider in the resources
- updates on the QMPLE system
- ensuring that all resources meet accessibility and governance requirements.
- ease of use.

Following the initial QMPLE system learner engagement meetings with PEF/CHEF colleagues, university lecturers and placement administration teams, this work has progressed. Further system user stakeholder engagement to include those working across the Health and Social Care setting in a practice education role is planned for early June 2025.

Student nurses and midwives were not included at this stage as their access to the system is only specific to their current and previous placements. There has also been some focused work undertaken with students on practice placement within NES. However, a workshop to obtain student feedback is planned for 2025.

Assessment

We have considered how this work will impact on the Public Sector Equality Duty. This includes how it might affect people differently, taking account of protected characteristics and how these intersect, including poverty and low income. This is important as a national NHS Board in our work to address health inequalities.

A Fairer Scotland Assessment requires public authorities to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome, caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.

We have included our Fairer Scotland Assessment in this Equality Impact Assessment.

The bullet points below are the 3 parts of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- **How will it progress equality of opportunity for people who experience inequalities?**

The refresh of the current guidance and resources aims to reduce barriers to learning for staff who experience inequalities. The QMPLE system has been in place and used since 2015 and during this time stakeholder input and feedback has been sought on a regular basis. However, we are now aware of a greater evidence base around equality, diversity and inclusion. This project will ensure that the content of the resources is easily accessible for all staff and students and adhere to the NES Inclusive Education and Learning Policy.

- **How will it eliminate discrimination, victimisation or harassment or other unlawful conduct?**

We will strive to adhere to the NES Inclusive Education and Learning Strategy by regularly refreshing and updating the QMPLE resources, ensuring that they continue to meet the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. Stakeholders and users of the QMPLE system will be included in this process. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for the system is currently being reviewed and updated in collaboration with university partners who are the joint data controllers. This DPIA will inform the updating of the data sharing

agreement. Students are informed about the data protection process and sign an agreement prior to accessing the QMPLE system. Other system users are encouraged to follow their organisation's governance processes in adherence with the law. Within student feedback there is opportunity for students to provide anonymous feedback on reasonable adjustments being made and supported in the practice learning environment. Improvements are made based on feedback provided and can be documented by those in Practice Education Roles (PERs) in the "you said, we did" section in QMPLE.

- **How can it promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not? For example, think about how we can tackle any prejudice or stigma?**

One of the main aims of the review of the QMPLE resources is to ensure that we embed the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. We will ensure that any images included will be reflective of a diverse workforce and ensure that all aspects of the materials will be easily accessible to all staff. The initial stage invites went out to all PEF/CHEF teams, board education leads, and all university practice learning leads and administration staff associated with the QMPLE system. The next phase in 2025 will go out to those in the practice settings and will also be shared with lecturers within the universities. Resources will adhere to accessibility requirements with signposting to alternative formats available.

Protected Characteristic Impact

As part of the review of the QMPLE resources and completion of the EQIA, outcomes for people with each of the protected characteristics have been considered:

Disability (includes physical, mental health and invisible disabilities)

The QMPLE resources are intended to support both the health and social care and university workforce and student nurses and midwives, therefore, should be accessible to all.

Based on the [NHS Scotland workforce | Turas Data Intelligence](#) - for the year ending, March 2023, 1.4% of the workforce reported having a disability. The Scottish Social Service Council Report on 2022 Workforce Data - [WDR2022_271123.pdf](#) - published September 2023, states that 2% of the social care workforce report having a disability. Given that this is an optional question, it may be that this data is not an accurate representation. However, this must be taken into consideration when developing the QMPLE resources.

We will ensure that guides adhere to the NES Inclusive Education and Learning Policy (2023). All future updates will continue to work to these principles and offer the opportunity for colleagues to feedback on their experiences of using the QMPLE resources.

Other Protected Characteristics (age, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity)

It is anticipated that direct discrimination of other protected characteristics resulting in the review of the QMPLE system resources is unlikely. However, this will be considered at each stage of the work and reviewed as required and gender-neutral terminology will be used throughout due to the resources relating to an online system. The term “QMPLE system user” has been adopted and will continue to be used.

Monitoring and Review

Once the resources have been reviewed, a draft will be shared with colleagues for further feedback prior to finalising. This will include NHS practice education and HEI colleagues but unlike early stages of the system resources development, will also include clinical staff across health and social care who use the QMPLE system. Student nurse and midwife feedback will be sought separately with resources relating to their use of the system. Once completed, we will review again annually to ensure that the content remains relevant and meets requirements. We will encourage colleagues to offer feedback on an ad hoc basis throughout the year via the QMPLE system mailbox. The resources will be available and can be accessed by anyone via the NES webpage, Turas Learn and the QMPLE system [Quality management of the practice learning environment \(QMPLE\)](#). There is a robust governance process in place to add users to the system.

This EQIA will remain a live document as the work is ongoing and updated as required.

Glossary

EiC user – Excellence in Care user

PEF – Practice Education Facilitator

CHEF – Care Home Education Facilitator

Sign-off

Director: Karen Wilson, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Nurse Director

NHS Education for Scotland

Date: 02 April 2025