

If you are thinking about Returning to Practice, you may have a number of questions. Below are a number of questions with answers which we hope you find useful.

Programme

Can I get help with study skills? Will I get support to do this?

Returnees will be supported in identifying their study skills and in accessing the relevant level of support before they start the programme. All returnees will have access to online study skills resources and face to face support will be provided during the programme. The universities have libraries on campus with books, journals and online access is available from home. Students who have extra learning needs are also given further support.

What is the content of the Return to Practice programme provided by UWE/PU?

The theoretical element of the Return to Practice programme is delivered by Plymouth University and University of the West of England at the Glenside or Gloucester campuses. The programme is taught over 6 days with additional blended learning days such as tutorials and seminars. It is expected that returnees attend all taught sessions. Elements of the taught days are:

- Professional and ethical practices
- Patient safety
- Quality care
- Reflective practice
- Changing face of health care provision
- Resilience and personal action planning
- Study skills

Successful completion of the Return to Practice programme included achieving the NMC competency standards in the placement which will be assessed and your competency signed off by the sign off mentor, completion of a portfolio, a 2000 word reflective assignment and additional numeracy assessment.

How many taught days will there be at the University?

6 taught days with additional blended learning days such as seminars and tutorials. There will be additional days for induction onto the placement this will be provided by the employer.

What Return to Practice programmes are available?

All employers that are supporting Return to Practice are available on the HESW website, <http://southwest.hee.nhs.uk/ourwork/return-to-practice/> you can contact the employer or go onto NHS Jobs to apply for a Return to Practice place. You may also see Return to Practice placements advertised locally. The two Universities providing the courses are Plymouth University and the University of the West of England. Which University you attend will be dependent upon where you secure your placements. If you secure a placement in an organisation in Cornwall and Devon then you will attend Plymouth University, all other organisations will send their returnees to The University of the West of England.

Placement

I have heard that Return to Practice can be either full time or part time, what will 'Full Time' and 'Part Time' look like?

The programme has the theory element front loaded and is flexible so that the returnee is able to work full or part time in their placement area.

The length of the programme will depend on the returnees experience and their length of time out of practice. It will also depend on the number of hours they are able to spend each week in their placement area, this allows for flexibility for both the organisation and returnee.

The minimum length of the programme from the first day of the course to point of reregistration is 22 weeks

The maximum length of the programme from the first day of the course to point of reregistration is 45 weeks.

How long will it take to complete?

The period of time for supervised clinical practice will be discussed and agreed at interview as this can depend upon the number of years that the returnee has been out of clinical practice, what employment history the returnee has, and whether they have been working as an assistant or support role within a health care environment before application. A suggested guide for negotiating hours and days that are needed to be assessed as competent and confident to return to practice has been informed by the guidance published by the Department of Health (DH, 2011).

Years out of practice	Guidance for hours for nurses	Guidance for hours for Health Visitors	Guidance for hours for Midwives
5-10	minimum practice hours required = 100 (maximum 200)	minimum practice hours required = 150 (maximum 250)	450
11-20	minimum practice hours required = 200 (maximum 300)	minimum practice hours required = 300 (maximum 400)	450
>20	minimum practice hours required = 300 (maximum 400)	minimum practice hours required = 450 (maximum 550)	450

What mandatory training is covered by Return to Practice courses?

The placement organisation will carry out induction training this is usually 3 days, the university will support the placement organisation with the training provision if necessary. This training is on top of the practice placement hours that you will have to undertake.

Pay and Employment

What salary will I hope to attract if I am employed by the organisation whilst on a Return to Practice programme?

This will depend on the organisation. Some organisations will recruit returnees and employ during the programme, other organisations support returnees with an honorary contract; this may be something you wish to discuss at interview. However Health Education South West will provide a returnee bursary to help towards travel and study costs.

If I am employed by the organisation as Band 3 whilst on a Return to Practice programme how will I get exposure to Band 5 skills, which are required to demonstrate fitness to practice?

You are supernumerary whilst on the programme, therefore you would have your protected hours to undertake Band 5 work, it is important that you agree and negotiate this time and the opportunities available to you to achieve competences required for registration.

Can I work on the bank whilst on placement?

It is possible that returnees will also undertake other work such as clinical bank shifts whilst on the programme. This will be undertaken on a separate contract.

Will I be paid an hourly rate of pay whilst attending classroom teaching at UWE/PU?

A bursary is provided to support study and associated costs. There is no additional payment for attending the university.

Process

Who can apply for the programme?

Adult Nurses, Mental Health Nurses, Children's Nurses, Learning Disability Nurses, School Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors can apply.

Do you need a degree to undertake the programme?

No, however as Nursing is now only studied at degree level, the NMC require the Return to Practice programme to be undertaken at level 6 (degree level). The Return to Practice module is worth 20 credits. You will be given support in identifying your study skills needs when you start the programme. As a part of the programme materials and study skills packages are delivered through online learning resources, some familiarity with using a computer is useful.

Who will provide my wage or cover my expenses?

Normally there are no allocated wages for Return to Practice returnees, however a bursary provided by Health Education South West is currently available to cover study and other associated expenses.

I currently work as a health care assistant and my employer is interested in supporting my returning to practice is this possible?

All placement areas need to have an up to date educational audit and to ensure that the learning outcomes can be met and you will also need to access a sign off mentor. The University will be able to advise further if these are not in place.

If your organisation meets the above criteria, they should contact Health Education South West <http://southwest.hee.nhs.uk/ourwork/return-to-practice/> to ensure they are allocated a commissioned place.

Who does the Health and Disclosure Barring (DBS) checks?

All applicants offered a place are required to undergo an Occupational Health and DBS check and this forms a condition of acceptance. This will be a part of the recruitment process.

The placement organisation will be responsible for the OH and DBS checks.

My NMC statement of entry is in my maiden name does this matter?

You will need to ensure that the names on your application form and on your NMC statement of entry are the same. As differences such as surnames recorded differently on your application form can delay the processing of your re-registration after successful completion of the programme as we use this information to process registration applications with the NMC.

What do I need to do before applying?

As your NMC registration will have lapsed, you will need to provide evidence that you have been on the NMC register and that your registration has lapsed. The quickest way to obtain this information is to register with the NMC Online Service <http://www.nmc-uk.org/Registration/NMC-Online/> and print a copy of your lapsed registration status to bring to your interview. You will need to prepare for a numeracy test, you can practice for this by using SNAP, which is available on the Health Education South West Website <http://southwest.hee.nhs.uk/ourwork/return-to-practice/>