

Information for placement providers for Return to Practice (Nursing) programme (all fields of Nursing and Health Visiting)

The national return-to-practice scheme for Nurses has been run by Health Education England and participating universities since 2014 and provides experienced nurses with training and a route back into the NHS.

Health Education England (HEE) will pay your students' course and placement fees.

[Returning to nursing | Health Careers](#)

UWE will inform Health Education England that your Return to Practice (RTP) Students have successfully enrolled on the RTP course at UWE, following successful interview with your organisation. HEE will then be in contact with you regarding the placement fees. The tuition or course fees are paid directly to the university.

As part of the support provided by Health Education England (HEE), they pay the organisation providing the student placement £1500, of which a £1000 is payable to those students who are undertaking their placement with an organisation who is **not paying them**. As the placement organisation you are responsible for passing this stipend on to your student, through your finance division and it is intended to assist with the cost of things such as travel and child care, whilst undertaking the RTP programme. The other £500 is for the organisation to support the placement.

However, increasingly healthcare organisations are opting to pay their RTP students, typically on a Band 3. Therefore, in this situation the employing organisation has the choice of either retaining all of the money given to them by HEE or passing on the £1000 as a means of extra support to the student. HEE do not stipulate this, and it is accepted that it is at organisation discretion.

The RTP programme is employer-led and UWE Bristol provides the theoretical part of the programme and supports student's progression through the required learning objectives as per NMC standards and in collaboration with the placement provider. Prospective students are therefore expected to source their own placements, typically through organisation vacancy adverts, employment and recruitment open days and enquiry through contact with the organisation recruitment and development lead or RTP lead.

The course can take between four and eight months to complete, depending on the amount of time the student has available to work in practice. This should be discussed and established during the interview that you will undertake between yourselves and your prospective RTP student. The NMC now requires that all nurses and midwives whose registrations have lapsed and are wishing to return to practice, undertake 450 hours of practice with a recognised placement provider.

Registration	Minimum Practice Hours
Nurse	450
Midwife	450
Nurse & SCPHN	450
Midwife & SCPHN	450
Nurse & Midwife	900 (450 nurse, 450 midwife)

Who can apply for the course?

Adult Nurses, Mental Health Nurses, Children's Nurses, Learning Disability Nurses, School Nurses, Occupational Health Nurses, Midwives and Specialist Community Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors, School Nurses) can apply.

Placement providers lead this process in which their role is to:

1. Advertise for the RTP post or discuss the opportunity when approached by a prospective student.
2. Organise and lead the interviews.
3. Ensure the applicant is eligible for the programme.
4. Discuss and establish the practice hours requirement and time frame for completion.
5. Engage their HR department to complete the documentation which includes occupational health, DBS and contract.
6. Organise student's placement.
7. Provide **educational audit** and complete the paperwork required for student's enrolment onto the programme including the [RTP Placement Information form](#).
8. Supervise and assess the student in practice.

The process of enrolling on the RTP programme:

In order to enrol onto the RTP UWE Bristol programme, the prospective student has to secure an RTP placement with a healthcare provider.

- **Healthcare providers** will periodically advertise vacancies suitable for RTP nurses at key points throughout the year. The dates of the adverts will align to the 3 intakes of the Return to Practice course here at UWE (start dates are in September, January and May every year). Candidates are advised to look for adverts on the [NHS jobs website](#) or through the [local press](#).
- However, some students may **approach smaller local organisations** (via their educational department or for example a GP practice manager) and enquire about the opportunity

for undertaking the RTP programme with them. **This is also a valid approach to securing a placement.** All RTP placements are funded by HEE which also includes the payment of placement fees. Therefore, organisations should contact their HR department and follow their own processes when taking on an RTP student who approached them directly.

- **If the prospective student is currently working for a healthcare organisation,** they may want to discuss the RTP option during their PDR meeting or with the line manager and follow the internal processes for securing their RTP placement.

The interview process

Please download the [RTP Placement Information form](#) and **start completing the form during the interview.**

The interview process is **organised by the placement provider** and should follow the usual protocol that enables you to discuss a candidates background, experiences and professional values in line with those of your organisation.

Working in collaboration, the RTP programme lead Jacqui Caskey often sits on the interview panels and supports the process.

Please contact Jacqui.Caskey@uwe.ac.uk **with an organised interview schedule** if you wish to include her in the selection process. Please note that, due to other work commitments, this may not always be possible.

To prove that the applicant is eligible for the RTP HEE funding, they need to register and log in to [NMC Online](#) and print their statement of entry, which should show that their registration has lapsed. The applicant should bring (or for an online interview scan and email) their NMC entry to the placement provider prior to the interview.

*** The RTP programme is predominantly for those whose registration has lapsed, however individual circumstances will be considered for those who wish to utilise the RTP programme to regain skills and competence following a significant period away from clinical practice and whose registration is active at present.**

The programme leader Jacqui Caskey is more than happy to discuss this with you, should you think it applies to a prospective applicant. Both the NMC and HESW are willing to support this as an option for individuals.

If the applicant was successful at the interview, they should then follow the standard path through your organisations HR (occupational health etc.) and request for the DBS check.

At this stage, you as the placement provider and the RTP student should discuss and agree on the following:

- The time span for completing the practice hours (part or full time)
- The clinical area/s they will be working in
- The supervisors (registered nurses they will work with) and assessor in practice (registered nurse who will sign off their practice assessment competency document)
- Planning the rota (shift lengths, pattern etc.)
- Decision about their uniform (this will depend on the organisation/ placement as some may wish the student to wear their organisation uniform, some may not require uniform, or UWE Bristol student uniform).

The contract

There are various options, as an organisation you will be aware of how you are required to proceed, see below:

Some placement providers choose to include a conditional offer of employment within the honorary contract used for the duration of practice placement support, following successful completion of the RTP programme if there is a vacancy for a post and the applicant meets the criteria.

If the applicant already works for your organisation (i.e., as a healthcare assistant or similar) they can continue to do so under the original contract and **separate to the placement hours under the programme**. This may mean that while undertaking the RTP course their contracted hours may need to be reduced to allow them to complete the placement hours. In this case the RTP student will have two separate working agreements: one as an employee and one as RTP student or as per your organisation's HR policies. If considering this option, please ensure that you and the individual are clear about how their hours and commitments are distinguished and each parties expectations are clear. It is not viable for an individual already employed with you to remain in full time paid hours as an HCA and also have the expectation of meeting 450 practice hours as a student nurse.

Increasingly organisations are employing their RTP students on a band 3 contract whilst undertaking their programme with the guarantee of a band 5 on successful completion and re-registration with the NMC.

If successful at the interview, and the DBS and the HR process have been completed, the student should be signing an employment or honorary contract / temporary agreement with yourselves as the placement provider. Please note that the applicant's role in this contract should be RTP student (not HCA or similar). This is because the NMC standards apply to the programme which considers them to be a student and as such, they are working under supervision of another registrant.

The placement provider should then finalise the [RTP Placement Information form](#) and send it back to the applicant.

Applying to UWE Bristol

Once the applicant is in possession of the completed [RTP Placement Information form](#), they can apply for the UWE Bristol programme via <https://courses.uwe.ac.uk/UZUSCR203/return-to-practice>.

Please note, the applicant would need to upload the [RTP Placement Information form](#) no later than 2 weeks before the programme starts. Failure to upload this form will mean that due to the lack of information, we will not be able to approve their application.

The outline of the programme

The theory part of the programme runs over six consecutive weeks with a mix of face to face and live online sessions. Typically, the programme follows this pattern:

Weeks 1, 2 and 4 are face to face on campus, 09.00 – 16.30 on a Monday or Friday

Weeks 3, 5 and 6 are online between 09:00 and 12:30 taking place on the Monday and Friday of that week.

Please be aware the days may change to allow for public holiday or other specific restrictions and will be specific to the timetable for the individual cohort, either September, May, or January as appropriate.

The practical part of the programme can vary in length depending on how soon they are going to be able to complete the 450 practice hours. Therefore, the entire programme will take approximately 4 or 8 months to complete depending on:

1. Are they working the practice hours part or full time?
2. How many hours a week can you as the placement provider offer?
3. They may be on the COVID 19 Temporary Register and have hours that can be used towards their 450-hour requirement.

They can start working on the placement as soon as they start the programme. For those organisations employing their RTP students they may wish to commence their employment prior to the start of the course, to allow them to integrate in to the clinical team.

Assessment:

The RTP programme is assessed in several ways, as set out below:

1. **Assessed using an Objective Structured Clinical Examination or OSCE** at the end of the programme (not at the end of the theory but close to the time you are about to finish your placement).
2. They will also prepare for and **sit a numeracy assessment in approximately week ten** of the course.

(The exception to this requirement, is those just doing the RTP SCHPN course)

3. **The practice part of the programme** will be assessed and documented by a Practice Assessor via the electronic Practice Assessment Document.

The programme is theory heavy for the first 6 weeks, therefore the taught university days should be included in the students weekly hours allocation. This will also apply to the date that the student is scheduled to sit their numeracy assessment as well as their OSCE. However, their OSCE takes place at the very end of their programme, and it is likely that they have almost completed their 450 hours requirement by this time. However, the taught university sessions do not count toward the 450 practice hours requirement, but students may use clinical training, such as IPC mandatory training towards their practice hours.

Supporting your Return to Practice students

For more information about standards for student supervision in practice, please visit:

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/standards-of-proficiency/standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/student-supervision-assessment.pdf>

You will need to ensure that the clinical area supporting the RTP student is able to allocate them a Practice Assessor as well as ensure the support of Practice Supervisors, so that their learning and practice is supported in accordance with the NMC standards for supervision of students (see link above).

During the programme, each student will also be allocated to an Academic Personal Tutor who will be their point of contact for any academic or practice related support, offering guidance and collaborating with the assessors and supervisors in practice.

Please be aware that recommendation for registration with the NMC can only take place once all aspects of the course are successfully completed, theory, practice hours, and assessments as outlined earlier. Therefore, NMC recommendation takes place following the university Award Board where the students mark for their work are presented. The student will be informed of their submission dates and subsequent Award Board dates on starting the course.

For any further information or if you would like to discuss how you can best support your RTP students please contact the module leader Jacqui Caskey at: Jacqui.Caskey@uwe.ac.uk

Regards

Jacqui Caskey
Adult Nurse Senior Lecturer,
Programme and Module Leader Return to Practice

