

13 January 2021

Dear Colleague,

With the pandemic continuing to put enormous pressure on health and care services, questions are again understandably being asked around the role of students and the arrangements for their learning.

Nursing and midwifery students are the future of our profession, and it remains our priority to ensure that students are supported to complete their studies and graduate when expected wherever possible.

Many students will understandably be interested in supporting the workforce alongside their studies. As normal, students are able to undertake paid work as a Healthcare Support Worker in their own time, but these hours will not count as part of their programme.

In response to requests from educators and clinical placement providers to help relieve current pressures, we have already reintroduced one of the emergency standards in relation to Student Supervision and Assessment. Emergency standard E5.1 allows students to be supervised and assessed by the same person during this period. Adoption of this standard is optional.

We hope that this change will bring additional flexibility that supports students, placement providers and services during these challenging times. We are extremely grateful to everyone involved in supporting student education, and to the students continuing their learning, in such tough circumstances. This is vitally important to the future of our professions, as nursing and midwifery professionals will continue to play a crucial role in supporting the health and wellbeing of their fellow citizens during the pandemic and beyond.

We are working with stakeholders across the four countries including the Chief Nursing Officers and the Council of Deans of Health to identify any further arrangements for students which may be needed.

If you have any additional questions, or as usual, if you would like to discuss this with us then please contact Dr Alexander Rhys, Assistant Director (Professional Practice) at [Alexander.Rhys@nmc-uk.org](mailto:Alexander.Rhys@nmc-uk.org), or myself.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Geraldine Walters".

Professor Geraldine Walters CBE PhD RN  
Director of Professional Practice