Getting the most out of revalidation
Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Code makes clear that each registered nurse and midwife is required to put the interests of those people using or needing nursing or midwifery services first. Nurses and midwives must make the care and safety of people their main concern, ensuring that their dignity is preserved and their needs are recognised, assessed and responded to. Revalidation will help to raise awareness of the Code and the professional standards expected of nurses and midwives. It will provide you with the opportunity to reflect on the role of the Code in your practice and demonstrate that you are ‘living’ the standards set out within it.

Revalidation is not a new concept; it helps nurses and midwives demonstrate their ongoing competence in ensuring that people who are using services are safe and at the centre of all care provision. This booklet aims to help you with the process. It provides you with the what, how and why and includes a series of case studies from practitioners like you who have successfully revalidated with the NMC. Revalidation, if carried out appropriately, can bring together the practitioner, the manager and the public making this a more meaningful exercise for all parties.

There are eight requirements associated with the new process and you must demonstrate to the NMC that all of the requirements have been met in order to complete your revalidation and renew your registration every 3 years with the NMC. Revalidation is your responsibility; it is a part of existing renewal procedures, replacing the previous Prep process. You are still required, however, to pay your annual fee in order to retain your registration with the NMC.

Revalidation should not be seen as a test either by yourself or your manager. It is not to be used as an excuse for criticising a nurse or midwife for something that a manager does not like or approve of, nor is it an assessment of your fitness to practice, a new way to raise concerns regarding fitness to practice or an assessment against the requirements of your employment, past or present.

This booklet can help you as you strive to improve practice and protection of the public.

Ian Peate, Editor in Chief, British Journal of Nursing
Following the introduction of revalidation in April 2016, tens of thousands of nurses and midwives from across the UK have already successfully revalidated with the NMC.

I am delighted to say that the feedback we have received so far has been extremely positive and we have been hearing how the process is simple and straightforward but also how it is bringing real benefits to you as professionals.

Revalidation builds on the previous registration renewal process and introduces a range of new requirements that focus on CPD, feedback and reflection.

One of the most significant benefits of revalidation is the opportunity to reflect on your practice and discuss it with another nurse or midwife. Revalidation is the opportunity to reflect on your practice and discuss it with another nurse or midwife. We are hearing how the reflective discussion is proving to be a really valuable tool in helping to reduce professional isolation.

To help support you on your revalidation journey the NMC have produced lots of useful resources and our dedicated revalidation website (revalidation.nmc.org.uk) contains everything you will need in order to revalidate. There are forms and templates to help you record how you meet the requirements, and films and case studies where you can hear from other nurses and midwives about how they've found the process. In the 12 months leading up to your revalidation application date you will also receive a series of supporting emails from the NMC, with useful hints and tips to help you in meeting the requirements and making your application.

It’s important to remember that revalidation is an ongoing process and you can meet the requirements throughout the 3 years leading up to your application date. If you’re unsure when you’re due to revalidate, make sure you visit NMC Online to find out your date.

Much of the success of revalidation so far has been down to the engagement from nurses and midwives, and it’s clear from your feedback that you recognise the value of the process. We want to ensure that revalidation continues to be a success and we will continue to listen and respond to your feedback throughout the coming months.

Jackie Smith, Chief Executive, Nursing and Midwifery Council
In order to be able to renew your registration, you must demonstrate that you have completed the following activities during the three-year period since joining the register or renewing your registration:

- **Practice hours**
  You must have practised for a minimum of 450 hours (900 for dual-registered nurse/midwife).

- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**
  You must have undertaken 35 hours of CPD relevant to your scope of practice, of which at least 20 hours must include participatory learning.

- **Feedback**
  You must have obtained five pieces of practice-related feedback.

- **Written reflective accounts**
  You must have prepared five written reflective accounts, relating to your learning or practice and how they relate to the Code.

- **Reflective discussion**
  You must have had a reflective discussion with another NMC registrant, covering your five written reflective accounts on your CPD and/or practice-related feedback and/or an event or experience in your practice and how this relates to the Code.

- **Health and character**
  You must provide a health and character declaration.

- **Professional indemnity**
  You must declare that you have professional indemnity cover.

- **Confirmation**
  The record of the above requirements must be discussed with a suitable person who will confirm that you have completed the revalidation requirements.

For full details on these requirements, and about revalidation in general, visit revalidation.nmc.org.uk
You are required to undertake 35 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) relevant to your scope of practice every three years, and accurately record this activity. Of the 35 hours, 20 hours must be participatory, meaning they have to involve interaction with one or more professionals. The NMC has not set any specific activities on what constitutes CPD: it’s up to you to decide what is the most relevant to further your professional development.

Here are some of the ways in which you can achieve your CPD requirements with MA Healthcare.

- **CPD Launchpad**
  CPD Launchpad is a brand new resource from MA Healthcare. Drawing on our extensive archive of peer-reviewed clinical and professional articles from journals like *British Journal of Nursing* and *British Journal of Midwifery*, CPD Launchpad offers an ever-growing range of content that tests your clinical and professional knowledge and guides you through the process of reflecting on your practice.

  What’s more, CPD Launchpad gives you a personalised online portfolio to help you record and manage your revalidation requirements throughout your professional life.

  CPD Launchpad is free for nurses and midwives – simply register today to create an account and start using it.

  [www.cpdlaunchpad.co.uk](http://www.cpdlaunchpad.co.uk)

- **Reading and reflecting on articles**
  Reading clinical and professional journals is a great way to keep up with current thinking and new developments; to find out about relevant research and its application to your practice or specialty; and to get updates on new procedures and equipment.

  By making time to reflect on your reading and discuss it with your colleagues, you’re making headway on your CPD.

  [www.magonlinelibrary.com](http://www.magonlinelibrary.com)

- **Conferences and study days**
  Attending conferences, study days and training courses is a useful way to gain valuable participatory CPD hours. MA Healthcare’s events for nurses and midwives, from major conferences and exhibitions to small specialist events, each provide opportunities for several hours’ participatory CPD as you learn and discuss with colleagues.

  [www.mahealthcareevents.co.uk](http://www.mahealthcareevents.co.uk)
Captain Alison Hofman RRC QARNNS
Defence Nursing Advisor to Surgeon General

In my role as the Defence Nursing Advisor to Surgeon General, one of my responsibilities is developing joint policy for the nursing component of the Defence Medical Services. I was well informed and had invested considerable time in developing and communicating our organisations' revalidation policy. The areas I felt I needed to concentrate on were formal reflections and gathering feedback regarding my practice.

The biggest professional impact of the revalidation process was preparing my reflective accounts and the reflective discussion. Reflecting on my practice enabled me to think about how I conducted some areas of my work. Reflecting on the Code is a solid reminder of the impact a senior policy and management role has on patient care. The reflective discussion enabled me to discuss new ideas and resulted in my reflective discussion partner reflecting on her practice. This collaborative sharing is key to practice improvement; revalidation is not just a process for the nurse who is revalidating, but can impact on the practice and revalidation process for nurses sharing the experience. I have found it enjoyable and enhancing for my work.

For nurses who move locations and deploy at short notice, nurse confirmers are nominated at a local level. This is to ensure that our nurses' ability to complete the process is not compromised by virtue of their employment. My confirmer was a senior defence nurse who is in a management position; she also conducted my reflective discussion. Defence policy enables nurses to complete their reflective discussions and confirmation within work time. My reflective discussion and confirmation took around 3 hours to complete. I allocated space in my diary to ensure I could commit the necessary time. This was challenging for me and my reflective partner, but was essential to ensure a high-quality experience.

My top tips would be to complete your portfolio as you go along and allocate time to complete all components of revalidation. I recommend an e-Portfolio; I now have a link on my tablet and this encourages me to complete my log after each session of CPD so that my reflection is fresh in my mind. Also, be proactive collating feedback; don’t be afraid to ask colleagues.

Elinor Clarke
Senior Lecturer in Midwifery, Coventry University

How did you find the process of revalidation?
Easy and straightforward. It was good to have email reminders from the NMC, once you registered on the website.

Were you worried about it beforehand and were your concerns realised?
I was worried because I was one of the first to go through the process as my registration renewal date was 1 April. I was also concerned because my employer was not aware and was not engaged in the new process as most line managers are not NMC registered.

How long did it take?
Preparation, which included reading, watching the NMC’s videos and downloading the documentation templates, took around 3 hours. It took around 3
hours to complete the documentation. Undertaking the discussions and meetings with the confirmer was about 2 hours.

What challenges did you experience?
I wanted to make sure that the reflections demonstrated analysis and robust action plans. Using the NMC Code was a good indication of the breadth of the reflections. As an educationalist, I wished to reflect on my clinical skills, teaching, research and my professional development. This helped to ensure the reflections were meaningful and professional.

How did you fit it in around your workload?
I identified specific scholarly activity in my diary and tried to reserve dedicated time.

Who did you choose as your confirmer?
I chose a Midwife Supervisor (project midwife with the local supervising authority). The rationale was that this midwife was an experienced midwife educator (so knew about the role and responsibilities of a midwife educator); has experience in annual audits (so was used to discussing quality, performance and competence); had attended NMC briefing/training regarding revalidation and had contributed to the revalidation pilots.

Did the process help you focus on your practice?
Revalidation did help me to focus on my practice as well as my behaviour.

What tips would you give to nurses/midwives yet to revalidate?
Ensure that you have all evidence/data so you can support your claims regarding student satisfaction, student achievements or personal development. As a midwife educator it is important to use a variety of metrics to demonstrate all aspects of your role.

Jill Phillips
Senior Lecturer
Bournemouth University

My revalidation was due at the end of June 2016 and I was aware that I was one of the first to undergo this in the faculty. As a full-time senior lecturer involved in the education of undergraduate pre-registration nurses, maintaining my own registration was vital. Successful revalidation was the only option and, to be honest, I felt a bit daunted. I began preparing by reading through the NMC advice online and it appeared that the requirements I needed to concentrate on most were firstly, gathering evidence of my CPD and feedback from others regarding my professional performance over the past 3 years. Secondly I had to reflect upon these aspects, link them to the Code and compile a portfolio.

“ As a full-time senior lecturer, maintaining my own registration was vital ”

In reality, revalidation is not that difficult. Granted, a certain amount of preparation is needed but the actual ‘putting it all together’ didn’t take more than a morning. From my perspective the main challenges were as follows:

1. What exactly do I have to do? Answer: read the NMC advice.
2. Have I done enough CPD (participatory and non-participatory) over the past 3 years?
3. Have I got enough feedback from a good range of sources?
4. How am I going to write my reflections on points 2 and 3?
These challenges required me to be organised and plan in good time to identify and put together my evidence. Compiling my portfolio, with reflections, and arranging for another registered nurse to act as my confirmer only took an hour.

So what did I actually do? First, I made a list of all the CPD I had done over the past 3 years. This included attending conferences, workshops, staff development and – most importantly for me – supervisions for my PhD. I counted up the hours and logged them as participatory (e.g. conferences) or non-participatory. I then wrote reflections using Rolfe, Freshwater and Jasper’s (2011)* reflective model, which fitted well with NMC requirements on the forms that need to be completed.

Next, I put together all my evidence of feedback regarding my performance. This included student evaluations, letters of thanks from personal students and parents (which fortuitously described my strengths as a lecturer and nurse) and peer observations of my teaching. In completing all the necessary forms, the NMC requires registrants to make links to the Code. This was quite a straightforward process and the resultant portfolio was discussed by the registered nurse who revalidated me.

Revalidation has helped me to focus on what I want to accomplish over the coming years.”

into my e-Portfolio. I completed the revalidation templates over a two-week period.

**What challenges did you experience?**
Writing reflective accounts was the most challenging; it required thinking and critical analysis and I wanted to write about everything! I also wanted to reflect on the complexities encountered during my career and how I overcame them. I did not discard valuable learning, but selected a sample to present for revalidation. After all, reflection is the bedrock to professional development and this continues anyway!

**How did you fit it in around your workload?**
Most preparation was in my own time: thinking about what to include and how to present it. However, Dementia UK supports revalidation through monthly practice-development workshops with our peers, including clinical supervision, where reflection and revalidation processes are an integral part.

**Who did you choose as your confirmer?**
My manager, a fellow AN, confirmed my revalidation. It was her first experience of confirming practice under revalidation, so we learnt together. We had three meetings over a two-week period.

**Did the process help you focus on your practice, and if so, how?**
Revalidation has helped me to focus on what I want to accomplish over the coming 3 years. It has been a catalyst to reveal my achievements in practice and how this relates to the Code. I feel empowered and my practice strengthened through a greater consciousness of what I do, why I do it and for whom.

**What tips would you give to nurses/midwives yet to revalidate?**
Embrace your revalidation! It will support your practice development. Use the NMC website for help and guidance and seek feedback from colleagues. Finally, I would say, invest in your future and allow study time to prepare.

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**Conﬁrmer: Mandy Bowler**
Clinical Business Manager

**Revalidee: Tracey Peters**
Head of Learning Disabilities

**Conﬁrmer Account: Mandy Bowler**

Tracey and I combined two of the required activities in one session: a reflective discussion of her written accounts, and conﬁrmation that she had completed all the required activities.

The process of revalidation conﬁrmation was initially a pretty daunting one as it is a new process and I wasn’t quite sure of the expectations. However the revalidation booklet* provided by the NMC is extremely straightforward and easy to understand. Once I realised that this process wasn’t asking me to sign a declaration conﬁrming that Tracey was ﬁt to practice but to conﬁrm that she had met the revalidation requirements, I felt more at ease with the whole process.

I prepared by reading the revalidation materials and familiarising myself with the expectations and the paperwork. Additionally I had to ensure that

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*http://revalidation.nmc.org.uk/information-for-conﬁrmers
Revalidation case studies

this meeting was planned so that we could have privacy and dedicated time scheduled into our working week. We agreed that 2 hours should give us enough time to discuss Tracey’s written reflective accounts and her portfolio. Agreeing a time limit kept us focused. Otherwise I think we could have spent more time discussing each account.

With regard to the reflective discussion, I think the challenge is to ensure relevant discussion and critical reflection which fully explores the safety and efficacy aspects of the reflective account. It could easily become a token exercise if the person was to only recount an incident or issue and discuss the outcomes without delving too deeply into critical analysis. I felt my role was to ask some probing questions to understand more thoroughly the significance of the particular incident or issue highlighted in the reflective discussion and how this changed Tracey’s practice and influenced her behaviour or levels of understanding.

When it came to confirmation, Tracey was able to use her portfolio to demonstrate how she had completed all of the revalidation activities and it was useful for both of us to look through her past and ongoing CPD activities.

At the end of the session we completed the relevant documentation. I think it’s useful for the confirmer to keep a copy of what has been shared and signed off.

Revalidee Account: Tracey Peters

In preparation for revalidation I downloaded all of the materials from the NMC website after registering online. This allowed me time to put together my portfolio and to collect all the relevant supportive information I needed.

Although it was time consuming, gathering details about my past training and development and retrieving copies of certificates and job description etc, it really was a worthwhile exercise. I actually surprised myself when I looked at the completed portfolio and felt a sense of pride in my achievements over the last few years.

I chose Mandy to undertake my reflective discussion with as she is my current line manager and is a registered nurse herself. She is someone I know and trust to challenge and critically appraise in a supportive way.

Thinking about my written reflections wasn’t particularly difficult as I could think of many examples of incidents and issues which have had an effect on how I have grown and developed within my own role. The difficulty was probably keeping the discussion focused as I could have talked about each one for longer had it not been for Mandy keeping us within our agreed time schedule.

Our discussion made me appreciate how past events and incidents have shaped how I have responded to similar issues and how I have been able to adapt to situations based upon past experiences. It was really useful to have had that time put to one side to actually discuss these in detail and again it made me feel quite proud and satisfied with my achievements.

As a registered nurse and my line manager, Mandy was also well-placed to act as my confirmer. After completing the reflective discussion form, we reviewed my revalidation portfolio together and Mandy could complete the form confirming that I had completed all the activities.

Although I may have been a bit apprehensive about the process of revalidation at the start, having now completed it I would say that it was a good experience. I don’t think anyone should worry but I do think you need to prepare before the meeting in order to get the most from the discussions.
The whole process of revalidation can be both worrying and uncertain when you haven’t been through it or experienced it yourself for the first time. One can prepare for revalidation by attending Trust sessions and using both the NMC and Royal College of Nursing (RCN) publications and guidelines. It is also helpful to talk to somebody who knows how the process works. I actually found revalidation fulfilling and an opportunity for a ‘pat on the back’.

It wasn’t until I set off logging my CPD that I realised just how much I had achieved, both personally and professionally. Because I had kept a systematic portfolio of all my CPD, I felt I was half way there.

My main concerns before collating and piecing my evidence together were that I simply hadn’t reflected regularly. I wanted to do better. I managed to create some reflection time in my working day, but found it simpler to type my reflections up once home in the quiet, with nothing to distract me.

I adapted a 360-degree feedback form I found online to get feedback from colleagues. Asking your colleagues who you may work very closely with to complete this also presents challenges, as it brings to light how they perceive you professionally in the workplace.

The process of collating feedback took most of my time, as I wanted to ensure I had a variety of sources.

I chose my line manager as my confirmer; she knows me well and, of course, has conducted my appraisals so she was aware of what my goals, strengths and weaknesses were.

The whole process of preparing for confirmation is a good way of looking at what you have done, not only over the past 3 years, but what you aspire to be doing in the coming years: how you can improve, what you could have done better, or what you have learnt.

For me, I have already learnt that I need and want to reflect more. It makes us examine why things happen the way they do, it makes us question our practice and keeps us focused on being the best we can at what we do.

The best advice I can give to nurses who have yet to complete their revalidation is to start as early as you can: download the forms and templates from the NMC website to your desktop and start adding to them now. The more you feel you can complete now, the happier you will feel as you approach your renewal date.

If you experience something that is not too difficult to revisit again in your own thoughts, get it down on paper and then later type it up … reflection done!

Once you have had your confirmation discussion with your chosen confirmer, and received an email from the NMC confirming your application is open, you can begin your application online via the NMC website. You have 60 days up to your revalidation application date to submit it. Happy revalidating!
**CPD Launchpad** is a brand new, free resource that helps nurses and midwives to document their CPD requirements and prepare for revalidation.

Drawing on an extensive archive of clinical and professional content from a wide range of specialist nursing and midwifery journals such as *British Journal of Nursing* and *British Journal of Midwifery*, **CPD Launchpad** will enable you to:

- Access exclusive peer-reviewed CPD content
- Test your clinical and professional knowledge
- Navigate the process of reflecting on your practice
- Record and securely store your CPD activity

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Register now at: [www.cpdlaunchpad.co.uk](http://www.cpdlaunchpad.co.uk)