**Faculty of Health and Life Sciences**

**The Leicester School of Nursing & Midwifery**

**Handbook information for practice supervisors and practice assessors**

**PG Dip District Nursing V300 Prescribing**

**October 2025**

**Contents page**

|  |
| --- |
| Contacts 3  Introduction to the programme(s) 4  Programme Structure 4-5  Exit points 5  V300 Prescribing 5  Roles within the programme 6-8  Practice Assessment Document (PAD) 8  Managing a student not meeting the progress expected 9  Communication between practice learning partners 10  Guidelines for Unsafe Practice in Both Practice and Academic 11  Guidelines for professional practice 12  APPENDIX 1 – Student Assessment Timetable 13  References 14 |

The aim of this Handbook is to highlight the key aspects of the role and responsibilities of practice supervisors, practice assessors, and academic assessors involved in these Programmes. The PG Dip District Nursing V300 Prescribing Programme (apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship routes) are NMC approved Programmes; therefore practice supervisors, practice assessors and academic assessors are required for student support and assessment as determined in the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)(NMC, 2023e) *Standards for student supervision and assessment*, available at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards-for-education-and-training/standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/>

**CONTACTS**

**PG Dip District Nursing V300 Prescribing**

* **Programme Leader,** **Academic Assessor, Module Leader and Personal Tutor:**

Donna Edwards, Senior Lecturer

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The **Programme Leader** takes overall responsibility for the programme and the students enrolled on the programme. They will attend the relevant Programme Exam Boards and Programme Management Boards within the Faculty to ensure students who are enrolled on the programme are progressing. Any aspect of Programme delivery/assessment should be discussed with the Programme Leader. They will have responsibility for the ongoing management of the programme(s).

* **Programme leader (Apprenticeship) Academic Assessor, Module Leader, and Personal Tutor:**

Helen Layton, Senior Lecturer

Email: [helen.layton@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:helen.layton@dmu.ac.uk)

* **Programme Administrator:**

Sarah Wotherspoon

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Email: [swotherspoon@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:swotherspoon@dmu.ac.uk);

**The Programme Administrator** will be the first point of contact for student on the *PG Dip District Nursing V300 Prescribing* for administrative issues. They will ensure all of the administration, application and enrolment information is correct, and will manage the presentation of module results to the assessment board, and liaise with the NMC for the accreditation of the district nursing and prescribing qualification.

**Introduction to the District Nursing Specialist Practice Programmes**

**PG Dip District Nursing V300 Prescribing (with or without apprenticeship)**

District nurses are registered nurses who undertake additional qualifications to become specialist community nursing practitioners, with specialist practice qualifications (SPQ). The District Nurse (DN SPQ) is required to work autonomously in people’s homes, or in the community to provide care alongside interdisciplinary teams, often in unpredictable, unconventional and complex settings. They are required to work independently, and require specialist knowledge and skills in order to work effectively as autonomous, accountable practitioners.

The Dip District Nursing V300 Prescribing (PGD DN)(with or without apprenticeship) programme has been mapped to and complies with the Nursing and Midwifery Council’s (NMC) ‘Standards of proficiency for community nursing specialist practice qualifications’ (NMC, 2022); the Queen’s Nursing Institute (QNI) field specific standard ‘District Nursing’; and the ‘Standards for Prescribing Programmes’ (NMC, 2023), and the ‘Royal Pharmaceutical Competency Framework for all Prescribers’ (RPS, 2021). For those undertaking the apprenticeship route the apprentice will gain the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet the occupational standard of ‘Community Nurse Specialist Practitioner’ (ST1419).

On successful completion of the programme, learners will be able to apply for registration as a Specialist Community Nursing Practitioner (District Nurse) with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). They will be awarded with a formal digital accreditation and certificate from the Queen’s Nursing Institute (QNI), as well as becoming an Independent and Supplementary Prescriber (V300), and achievement of the Postgraduate Diploma.

**Programme structure**

The PGD DN Programme has been designed to support experienced nurses who wish to advance their knowledge, skills and behaviours in community nursing specialist practice, and become registered as a District Nurse and independent and supplementary prescriber.

The total programme length meets the requirements as set by the NMC for the ‘Standards of proficiency for community nursing specialist practice qualifications’ (NMC, 2022) which is a minimum of 45 weeks (FTE).

The learner enrolled onto the PGD DN programme will study over a 2-year period. The PGD DN programme is made up of the following modules:

Year one:

SPEC 5620 **Specialist Practice in District Nursing** - 30 credit module to develop expert skills, knowledge and behaviours to become a community nursing specialist practitioner: district nurse.

SPEC 5621 **Clinical Skills for Community-Based Patients** – 30 credit module to develop practical skills and knowledge of assessment, consultation and examination of a community-based patient.

Year two:

SPEC 5623 **Leadership and Innovation in Specialist Nursing Practice** – 15 credit module to explore communication, leadership and problems solving skills to enhance specialist practice.

PRES 5006 **Pharmacology for Prescribers** (one of the 2 prescribing modules) – 15 credit module to enhance knowledge of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics and therapeutic uses of drugs when prescribing.

PRES 5005 **Applied prescribing** (second of the 2 prescribing modules) – 30 credit module to explore and critically appraise the skills, competencies and knowledge required to make a safe prescribing decision.

Plus completion of a Practice Assessment Document (see page 8)

(For student assessment timetable and year 1 planner see Appendix 2 and 3)

**Exit points within the programme**

The PGD DN consists of modules that amount to 120 credits; once these modules have been achieved the student will be recommended to the NMC to be recorded with the District Nurse Specialist Practitioner Qualification, plus the V300 Independent and Supplementary Prescriber.

There are three possible exit points within the Programme:

1. Institutional Credits
2. PG Certificate in Community Nursing (60 credits) If a student should exit the programme at the end of year one, the 60 credits gained (SPEC 5620 and SPEC 5621) would see the student being awarded PG Certificate in Community Nursing; this award is not recognised or accredited to the NMC.
3. PG Dip District Nursing V300 Prescribing allows the student to achieve the DN SPQ with the NMC, and V300 prescribing with the NMC.

**V300 Prescribing**

## Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (V300) is integrated into the programme(s). If a student enrolled onto the programme(s) already holds the V300 Prescribing qualification they will not undertake the prescribing modules; they will demonstrate application of their prescribing skills, knowledge and competencies in relation to the DN SPQ role within the PAD.

## Students on the programme may need additional practice supervisors and practice assessors who hold and practice the V300 prescribing qualification to supervise and assess the student’s achievement in relation to the prescribing portfolio. Additional prescribing application forms and appendices will need to be completed by the student prior to undertaking the prescribing modules (around November in year 1)

## If a student fails any part of the prescribing module assessments, they may have one further attempt in that component as per the assessment guidelines for the programme. In exceptional circumstances they may be given one additional attempt at the numeracy exam. Only when the student has passed all modules, including the PAD, can the student be recommended to the NMC for the SPQ in District Nursing, and as an Independent and Supplementary Prescriber.

**Roles within the programme**

**Student**

By the end of the Programme, students will be able to exercise higher levels of judgement, discretion, and decision making in clinical care (NMC, 2022). As the students’ are already registrants with the NMC they are expected to take responsibility for their learning and should inform their practice supervisor, practice assessor, academic assessor or personal tutor as soon as they have any concerns about meeting the practice or academic requirements, or that may influence their professional approach to their learning. Students should also raise any issues which may affect their attendance on the programme. Following discussion with the practice learning partners, the student should inform the Programme Leader in writing should they wish to request a period of interruption or withdrawal or deferral from the Programme.

**Personal Tutor**

DMU provides all of its students with a named personal tutor who can be contacted regarding general academic matters or personal concerns; the role within the District Nursing programme is mainly one of providing pastoral support, and signpost the student to appropriate support services provided by the university.

**Practice Supervisor for students on district nursing programme(s)**

In order for registrants to advance their knowledge and skills in the specialist practice of district nursing each student is required to have a named practice supervisor who holds a district nursing specialist practitioner qualification (for the duration of the prescribing modules the learner will be required to have a practice supervisor and practice assessor who has the V300 prescribing qualification, and is a practising prescriber). In collaboration with other practice supervisors such as community staff nurses, specialist nurses and other registered health care professionals, practice supervisors will provide the student with learning experiences within the practice learning environment. Learning experiences could include:

* Organise and facilitate welcome, introduction and orientation of the placement area within the first 2 weeks
* providing and facilitating opportunities for students to practise skills
* sharing knowledge with the student and effectively demonstrating how to put that knowledge into practice safely
* observing the student and giving constructive feedback on their performance
* empowering students to take advantage of available resources and learning opportunities, this will include working with the wider multi-disciplinary team
* delegating learning opportunities to other practice supervisors and anyone else who may suitably enable learning
* providing opportunities for students to learn ‘independently’ through less ‘hands on’ supervision, where appropriate
* empowering students to take responsibility for their own learning
* to raise and respond to any identified student competence or conduct concerns
* developing skills, knowledge and experience in relation to prescribing. The practice supervisor will need to need ensure that the student receives adequate supervision relevant to V300 prescribing.
* Contributing to student assessments will be an integral role of the named practice supervisor. Responsibilities of the practice supervisor will include:
* direct communication with practice and academic assessors to share their views on student achievement, underachievement or areas to continue to work on; this will include action planning (see section below: managing a student not meeting the progress expected)
* inputting into student documentation with their views on student achievement (PAD)

**Practice Assessor** **for students on district nursing programme(s)**

Each practice assessor is responsible for the assessment and confirmation of the achievement of proficiencies and programmes outcomes in practice learning for the student(s) they are assigned to, for the period they are assigned to them. The practice assessor must be a qualified district nursing specialist practitioner (for the duration of the prescribing modules the learner will be required to have a practice supervisor and practice assessor who has the V300 prescribing qualification, and is a practising prescriber).

A good assessment is [evidenced based](https://www.nmc.org.uk/supporting-information-on-standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/practice-assessment/what-do-practice-assessors-do/assessment-of-practice/evidenced-based-assessment/), [objective and fair](https://www.nmc.org.uk/supporting-information-on-standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/practice-assessment/what-do-practice-assessors-do/assessment-of-practice/objective-and-fair-assessments/), taking into account a variety of views and inputs, and student diversity, such as different learning styles, cultural backgrounds and communication styles. Assessment should be continuous throughout the time in which a practice assessor is assigned to a student. The practice assessor should be up to date on the progress of the student they are assigned to; collation of information on a student’s performance should be managed in a way that enables this.

Feedback to the student about their achievement and collaborating with them to review possible areas for improvement also forms a fundamental part of the assessment process. Responsibilities of the practice supervisor will include:

* protect and ensure supernumerary status of the DN student
* to meet at specified points during the student’s programme to assess achievement (see section below: scheduled meetings with the student)
* Liaise with academic assessor to confirm achievement and progression

**Academic Assessor**

The academic assessor will work with the practice assessor to make recommendations for student progression. The two assessors must take this decision collaboratively, taking into consideration the student’s learning and achievement across theory and practice. Collation and confirmation should be continuous throughout the time in which an academic assessor is assigned to a student. Feedback to the student about their achievement, and working with them to review possible areas for improvement, also forms a fundamental part of the collation, confirmation, and assessment process. The process and form of feedback should follow the relevant academic educational institution (AEI) processes that can be found at: <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/quality-management-and-policy/academic-quality/learning-teaching-assessment/assessment-feedback-policy.aspx>

More detailed information on the roles of practice supervisor, practice assessor or academic assessor can be found on the NMC website:<https://www.nmc.org.uk/supporting-information-on-standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/>

**Practice Assessment Document (PAD)**

The PAD is a 0-credit pass/fail electronic portfolio of evidence to demonstrate achievement of the NMC proficiencies, and the QNI standards. Over the 2-year period of the DN SPQ programme, the student will use the PAD to:

* Document a record of practice hours
* Demonstrate progression during learning periods, including Learning Agreement
* Confirm professional values in practice, and adhere to NMC Code
* Demonstrate learning by uploading supportive evidence
* Act as a Reflective Journal
* Record of meetings in practice with PS and PA
* Record alternative/multi-disciplinary learning experiences
* Demonstrate engagement with, and seek feedback from, Service Users
* Document completion of NMC and QNI proficiencies. The proficiencies can be assessed by the PA in an incremental way, from participation at the beginning of the programme, to identification at mid-point, to internalisation at the end of the programme
* Record end of programme approval
* Document action plans as required

The PAD has been designed as a hybrid e-practice assessment document within a Microsoft Office 365 Word file. One file can be accessed via the University’s Digital Skills Hub. Due to the size of the file it is not likely that it can be emailed within the NHS Trust; access between PS/PA/AA and the student will be via the shared onedrive.

The student is responsible for the ongoing completion and maintenance of the PAD.

Practice supervisor (PS) and practice assessor (PA) responsibilities are detailed in the PAD.

**Learning Periods**

There are 4 learning periods within the DN SPQ programme:

1. Year 1 - October to the end of March
2. Year 1 - April to the end of September
3. Year 2 - October to the end of March
4. Year 2 - April to the end of September

Each learning period:

* The student will complete a self-assessment to inform their learning agreement– Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Barriers (SCOB).
* A learning agreement is agreed and documented between the student, PS and PA; timescales are decided for completion.
* Towards the end of each learning period the PA will discuss with the student their progress, together their PS, and document progress in the Formative Assessment, including any changes to the student learning plan.
* The academic assessor (AA) will meet with the student, PS and PA at the end of each learning period to oversee and monitor student progression.
* Following this meeting the student will reflect upon learning during this period, and document this in SPQ Student Reflection in the PAD.

The same process is completed for each learning period.

**At the end of learning period 4** the Practice Assessor will discuss and document progress with the student, PS, PA, and AA, to confirm progression to registration. This assessment will take place at the end of the final summative learning period. At the summative sign-off the student may have an additional PA for the V300 prescribing, they too will be expected to meet and confirm the student has met the standards for the Competency Framework for all Prescribers [A Competency Framework for all Prescribers | RPS (rpharms.com)](https://www.rpharms.com/resources/frameworks/prescribing-competency-framework/competency-framework)

It is expected that the PS, PA and student meet on a monthly basis; these meeting will be documented in the Record of Meeting pages in the PAD.

**Managing a student not meeting the progress expected**

Through reading this handbook practice supervisors and practice assessors have clear guidelines with regard to their function and responsibilities (under section ‘Roles within the programme’). Part of their responsibility is to highlight to the academic assessor if there are any concerns regarding the student’s performance, including any concerns that may have been raised in the practice environment. If any concerns are raised regarding student’s performance, including any concerns that may have been raised in the practice environment, the practice supervisor and practice assessor will communicate and/or meet with the student.

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| **Communication pathway regarding student performance concerns** |
| In the first instance the practice supervisor will discuss any concerns with the student and communicate these concerns to the practice assessor. |
| The student, practice supervisor and practice assessor will meet to devise an action plan to enable the student to improve their performance (action plan in PAD) |
| The practice assessor will communicate the action plan with the academic assessor. The academic assessor will make recommendations and utilise policies or procedures within the AEI to assist the student to improve their performance. As appropriate the practice supervisor, practice assessor and academic assessor will meet with the student to review the action plan and review the student’s progress. |
| The academic assessor will liaise with the student’s personal tutor (if appropriate) to enable the personal tutor to provide pastoral support, guidance and sign posting. |
| If a student has not met the required actions in the action plan and it becomes apparent that they will not improve, the academic assessor should take any appropriate action, which may include recommending the student be failed on that part of the programme, or that they do not progress (see section on assessment for progression). This should be done through discussion with the nominated practice assessor, following any academic processes set in place by the AEI and their practice learning partners |
| If there is an immediate concern or risk to the public from the student’s performance the academic assessor must take appropriate action, such as recommending the student for removal or suspension from a learning environment or course. This should be done through the appropriate process (such as fitness to practice) as set out by the university and should involve the practice assessor. |

The University, with its practice learning partners, should have appropriate resources and staff in place to manage student performance. No student should progress through a course, or enter the register, who is not fit to do so. The university, with their practice learning partners, is responsible for putting in place the right processes to ensure this does not happen.

**Communication between practice learning partners and the university**

In order to generate a collegiate approach to student learning between the university and practice learning partners, effective communication between practice supervisors, practice assessors, academic assessors and programme lead is crucial. To inform and update practice learning partners regarding the adoption on the NMC supervision and assessment standards the following preparatory opportunities and events are provided for practice supervisors and practice assessors specifically supporting DN SPQ students:

* Once yearly practice supervisor/practice assessor updates run by the programme team at DMU. This update is open to practice educators, practice supervisors, practice assessors, and academic assessors who are supporting DN SPQ students, and will be held at the beginning of the academic year. Programme documents, roles to supervise and assess learners, PAD, apprenticeship learners will be covered, and the session will allow for discussion.
* DMU Placement HUB, providing online information available at: [District Nursing – DMU Placement Hub](https://placementhub.our.dmu.ac.uk/district-nursing/)

There are also NHS Trust led events for practice supervisors and practice assessors, these can be accessed through local practice learning partners:

* Tailored practice supervisor/practice assessor training and updates with the local NHS Trust
* The Midlands, Yorkshire and East of England Practice Learning Group (MYEPLG) collaborative practices in response to the NMC Education Standards (2018), available at: <https://www.myeplg.ac.uk/pan-midlands-practice-document.aspx>

**Guidelines Indicating an Automatic Failure for Unsafe Practice in Both Practice and Academic Assessment**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **UNSAFE BEHAVIOURS** | **PRE-REGISTRATION**  **YEAR 1** | **PRE-REGISTRATION**  **YEAR 2 & 3** | **POST-REGISTRATION**  **(this programme)** |
| LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY, UNPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE | Deliberately covers up errors | Does not admit mistakes, deliberately covers up errors | Does not accept responsibility for own actions, does not admit mistakes, covers up errors |
| Is dishonest | Is dishonest | Is dishonest |
| Does not recognise potential for doing harm, lack of insight  ACTION PLAN REQUIRED | Does not recognise potential for doing harm, lack of insight. | Does not recognise potential for doing harm, lack of insight. |
| Breaks confidentiality i.e. identifies a patient/ client/woman/staff member, and/or names the placement or place of work  ACTION PLAN REQUIRED | Breaks confidentiality i.e. identifies a patient/ client/woman/staff member, and/or names the placement or place of work | Breaks confidentiality i.e. identifies a patient/ client/woman/staff member, and/or names the placement or place of work |
| INCONSISTENT COMMUNICATION AND LACK OF RESPECT | Aggressive with clients and/or staff | Aggressive with clients and/or staff | Aggressive with clients and/or staff |
| LACK OF JUDGEMENT | Evidence of misuse of drugs and/or alcohol | Evidence of misuse of drugs and/or alcohol | Evidence of misuse of drugs and/or alcohol |
| PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT |  |  | Evidence of breaking the Code of Professional Conduct e.g. NMC or HPC |

**Guidelines for professional practice**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student performance | Behaviours reflecting satisfactory professional conduct | Behaviours reflecting unsatisfactory professional conduct | Guidelines for  un-satisfactory evaluations |
| Work in accordance with the NMC Code (NMC 2018):   1. Demonstrates appropriate individual professional behaviour 2. Professional behaviour is appropriate when working with clients patients 3. Professional behaviour is appropriate when working within the care team | Student demonstrates awareness of the NMC Code (NMC 2018) and for example, through practice:   * Behaves in a responsible, positive and co-operative manner * Adheres to all relevant policies and procedures * Acknowledges own limitations and accepts constructive criticism * Time keeping and related action are appropriate and fulfils on-duty requirements on placement * Dresses appropriately for the place of work * Maintains patient/client confidentiality * Respects patients/clients, their property and the environment * Safeguards clients’ well-being * Is considerate, sensitive and responsive to patients’/clients’ needs * Treats all patients/clients with dignity at all times * Is respectful, co-operative and makes positive contributions within the team * Is reliable, communicates and works collaboratively in the team * Takes appropriate due regard to health & safety measures | Student lacks awareness of the NMC Code (NMC 2018) and for example, in practice student:   * Is irresponsible, uncooperative and displays negative attitudes * Disregards relevant policies and procedures * Lacks insight into own limitations and does not accept constructive criticism * Time keeping, related action and information is poor * Dresses inappropriately for the place of work * Breaches patient/client confidentiality * Is disrespectful to patients/clients, their property and the environment * Places patients’/clients' well-being at risk * Is inconsiderate, insensitive and unresponsive to clients’ needs * Is disrespectful, uncooperative and reluctant to contribute to the team effort * Is unreliable, fails to communicate appropriately and does not work well in the team * Lacks insight into appropriate health & safety measures | Failure due to gross professional misconduct (which for example places clients at risk) will result in immediate dismissal from the programme and recommendation as such to the student’s line manager. |

**APPENDIX 1 – Student Assessment timetable 24-26**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year One | Sem 1 | Sem 2 | Sem X | Assessment boards |
| Specialist Practice in District Nursing:   1. Poster presentation |  | 11 and 12 Feb 26 |  | Early March 26 |
| Clinical Skills for Community-based Patients:   1. Clinical Skills Log 2. Reflection 3. OSCE |  |  | 5/8/26  19/8/26  2/9/26 | Early November 26 |
| Year Two |  |  |  |  |
| Leadership and Innovation in Specialist Nursing Practice:   1. Narrated PowerPoint | 5/2/27 TBC |  |  | Early March 27 |
| Pharmacology for Prescribers:   1. Numeracy Test 2. Assignment 3. Pharmacology Exam |  | March 27 TBC  June 27 TBC  June 27 TBC |  | Early September 27 |
| Applied Prescribing:   1. PebblePad Portfolio 2. Assignment |  |  | Sept 27 TBC  Sept 27 TBC | Early November 27 |
| Practice Assessment Document (PAD) |  |  | 23/9/27 | Early November 26 |
| End Point Assessment (Apprenticeship) |  |  |  | November 27 Assessment board |

**References**

The programme will meet the following Standards to meet PRSB requirements:

* Standards for Prescribing Standards (NMC, 2024), available at:

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-post-registration/standards-for-prescribers/standards-for-prescribing-programmes/>

* Royal Pharmaceutical Competency Framework (RPS, 2021) Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2021) Prescribing Competency Framework, available at:

<https://www.rpharms.com/resources/frameworks/prescribers-competency-framework>

* Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards of proficiency for community nursing specialist practice qualifications (NMC, 2022), available at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-post-registration/standards-of-proficiency-for--community-nursing-specialist-practice-qualifications/>
* Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education (NMC, 2023), available at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards-for-education-and-training/standards-framework-for-nursing-and-midwifery-education/>
* Queen’s Nursing Institute (QNI) Field Specific Standards (not in public domain) <https://qni.org.uk/nursing-in-the-community/standards/consultation-on-qni-field-specific-standards/>

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards for student supervision and assessment (NMC, 2018) NMC (2023), available at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards-for-education-and-training/standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/>

* Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards of proficiency for registered nurses (NMC, 2024), available at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-nurses/standards-of-proficiency-for-registered-nurses/>
* Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards for Post-registration programmes (NMC, 2024), available at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-post-registration/standards-for-post-registration-programmes/>