

## The Regulation of Nurses, Midwives, and Health Visitors

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### Professional development post-registration

79. As the regulation is primarily about maintaining threshold standards and the development of accountable individual practitioners, the role of the Council in post-registration education and development is necessarily much less prescriptive than in pre-registration. The same two broad roles apply: defining standards in terms of outcomes, and assuring that those standards are achieved. However this is more complex than for pre-registration, because of a much wider range of circumstances involved. We can distinguish three main areas.

#### higher levels of practice

80. The Council could specify outcomes required for entry on the Register of a record indicating a higher level of practice. This implies someone who has demonstrated by a combination of experience, practice and knowledge that he or she is able to make a significantly enhanced level of contribution. The relevant entry would be recordable rather than registerable. This facility would be voluntary and registrants should pay a fee.

81. The principles to guide the implementation of this should be set by the Council, but the work may be delegated. It will involve the accreditation of the portfolios of individuals - (not courses). A charge might be made for this service - within limits laid down by the Council.

#### Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

82. Unlike voluntary higher level recording, CPD is a requirement for all nurses and midwives and evidence of appropriate activity will be a condition of renewed registration. PREP is a good initiative, for which the UKCC deserves credit. It is part of a broader development of lifelong learning throughout society. We would encourage all registrants and employers to treat CPD seriously; to link it to current clinical requirements; and not to be narrow in their interpretation of what constitutes appropriate development activity. The new Council should develop policies for the evidence required from registrants, for the audit of CPD, and the action to be taken in cases where registrants are not keeping up-to-date professionally. We would expect any such policies to be flexible and supportive of registrants, and in the first instance to be based on guidance and remedial action, rather than punitive sanctions.

#### other levels of post-registration development

83. This third area is the broadest, and so most difficult to specify. Many developments are local or specific to particular areas of practice. They can be driven by professionals' desire for self-development, by employers' desire for help in categorising posts, or by commercial opportunities perceived by education providers. We see this as an area where the Council would be largely re-active using its function of influencing and facilitating to help to ensure sensible, harmonised developments that improve public protection.