

NIPEC CLINICAL CAREER PATHWAY



ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER ROLE FRAMEWORK



Career & Development Model
for Nursing & Midwifery



1

1

2

3

4

7

8

13

Contents

Introduction

Background

Who the Framework is For

Partnership Working

Levels and Pillars of Practice

Continuous Professional Development

Knowledge, skills and behaviours for Advanced Nurse practitioner Role (Level of Practice 8)

Appendix 1: Staff Assessment and Development Tool

1

Introduction

As the largest professional group, nurses play a pivotal role in healthcare provision. They contribute to the delivery of safe, effective, compassionate and quality person-centred care. Their unique combination of knowledge, skills, compassion and dedication makes them indispensable in preventing ill-health and promoting and maintaining the health and well-being of individuals and communities across the lifespan.

In June 2025, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) published new principles of practice for [Advanced Nurse Practitioners](#) which align with the role frameworks of each of the four countries of the United Kingdom (UK).

The new NMC Principles for Advanced Practice¹ included within this *Role Framework* will assist all those working in advanced practice roles in community and non-community settings to professionally develop and shape nursing services with a focus on:

- Improving population health;
- Enhancing safety and experience of care;
- Workforce wellbeing;
- Enhancing equity; and
- Ensuring value for all.

2

Background

Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nurses and Midwives (NIPEC) have compiled a suite of Role Frameworks which are building blocks to support career progression and professional development. Examples of Role Frameworks have been regionally agreed for a Nursing Assistant, Senior Nursing Assistant, Ward Sister/Charge Nurse and Team Leader, Registered Nurse, Specialist Nurse, Consultant Nurse and Consultant Midwife.

¹ Nursing and Midwifery Council (2025) *Principles for Advanced Practice*. London: NMC.

This Role Framework has been developed for Advanced Nurse Practitioners and outlines the key knowledge, skills, behaviours and educational requirements which enable high standards of care. It aims to provide consistency, structure, guidance and direction in relation to career progression. The Framework also provides clear expectations for advanced nursing practice across a range of roles settings. These roles can span wide areas of health and social care aligned to local and national legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements. This includes but is not limited to the delivery of safe and effective care for a range of people across the continuum of care with an understanding of the wider determinants of health to promote wellbeing, protect health and prevent ill health. All nurses and midwives on the NMC register must practise in line with the NMC Code².

This Advanced Nurse Practitioner Framework in conjunction with the relevant standards, policies and guidance will support our nurses undertaking advanced practice roles to confidently and safely provide high quality evidence-based care within the Clinical Practice career pathway³ For more information on Career Pathways visit our Careers Website at <https://nursingandmidwiferycareersni.hscni.net>.

3 Who the Framework is For

This Role Framework for Advanced Nurse Practitioners supersedes the 2018 Advancing Nursing Practice Framework in Northern Ireland. It provides a guide for nurses working in Advanced Nurse Practitioner roles, regardless of the area of practice. It supports them with preceptorship, revalidation, appraisal, supervision and career planning. Advanced Nurse Practitioners should use this Framework in conjunction with:

- NMC principles for Advanced Practice¹;
- Specific competencies for the relevant area of practice;
- Other relevant competency frameworks, for example^{4,5,6,7,8};

²NMC (2018) *The Code. Professional Standards of Practice and Behaviour for Nurses and Midwives*. London: NMC.

³ In the NI Career and Development Model there are three overarching career pathways which Nurses and Midwives have the opportunity to progress along, these are: Clinical Practice, Operational Management and Education and Research

⁴ NIPEC (2022) *Northern Ireland Preceptorship Framework for Nursing and Midwifery*. Belfast: NIPEC.

⁵ NIPEC (2022) *Reflective Supervision A Framework to Support Nursing and Midwifery in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: NIPEC.

⁶ Public Health Agency (2022) *Reflective Supervision Regional Safeguarding Supervision Policy and Standards for Nurses and Midwives*. Belfast: PHA.

⁷ HSC and DHCNI (2022) *All-Ireland Digital Health Capability Framework for Health and Social Care*. Belfast: DHCNI.

⁸ NIPEC (2023) *A Collective Leadership Framework for Nursing and Midwifery*. Belfast: NIPEC.

- Competency framework for all prescribers⁹; and
- Relevant clinical practice career pathways.

The Framework is also designed to be used by:

- nurses interested in pursuing a career in Advanced Practice;
- strategic nursing leaders, to develop the Advanced Nurse Practitioner workforce;
- managers to inform workforce planning by assessing the competence of the workforce required to meet population health and service needs and identify gaps based on the assessment to support implementation of an improvement plan;
- commissioners of services to inform service development and service delivery;
- AEs to inform the development of learning opportunities necessary for Advanced Nurse Practitioner roles;
- Regional Nursing and Midwifery Education Commissioning Group (ECG) to inform them in making decisions about learning opportunities to be commissioned; and
- people who use services and other Health and Social Care (HSC) professionals as a guide to the core competencies required by Advanced Nurse Practitioners and to assure the quality of governance processes and service delivery for all nurses practising at this advanced practice level.

4 Partnership Working

This Framework was developed by NIPEC in collaboration with key stakeholders at a workshop in July 2025 comprising Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Senior Nurses in HSC Trusts, Education Providers and DoH. In addition, relevant frameworks from other jurisdictions were reviewed along with a wide range of relevant resources.

⁹ Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2021) *Competency Framework for all Prescribers*. London: RPS.



Levels & Pillars of Practice

Levels of Practice¹⁰ outline the expectations of roles at practice levels 2–9 for nurses, midwives and related support roles. They span from Level 2 Support Worker/Assistant to Level 9 Consultant Nurse/Consultant Midwife/Director/Professor (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Levels of Practice

Level	Role Overview
2	People at level 2 require basic factual knowledge of a field of work. They may carry out clinical, technical, scientific or administrative duties and provide safe, effective, person-centred care under the direction of a registrant.
3	People at level 3 require knowledge of facts, processes and general concepts in a field of work. They may carry out a wider range of duties than a person working at level 2 and will have more responsibility, with supervision by a registrant.
4	People at level 4 require factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work. Work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols or systems of work and they may have responsibility for supervision. BSc (Hons) or MSc (Hons) to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife.
BSc (Hons) or MSc to Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife	
5	People at level 5 will have a comprehensive, factual and theoretical knowledge on registration. They use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service development, supervision or training.
6	People at level 6 require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, are specialist and/or have management, education and leadership responsibilities. They demonstrate initiative and creativity in finding solutions with responsibility for team performance and development.
7	People at level 7 have a critical awareness of knowledge and issues in the field and at the interface between different fields. They are innovative and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment.
8	People at level 8 require highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work. They are leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes. They may lead policy, research, education or service delivery and improvement and have a clinical, management or education responsibilities.
9	People working at level 9 require knowledge at the most advanced frontier of the field of work and at the interface between fields. They will have responsibility for the development and delivery of a service to a population or leading research at the highest level of the organisation.

Source of Figure 1: Adapted from www.skillsforhealth.org.uk

¹⁰ Skills for Health (2010) Key Elements of the Career Framework. Bristol: Skills for Health.

The **Levels of Practice** reflect role development and progression similar to the Knowledge and Skills Framework¹¹. The **Level of Practice** does not equate to the banding of Agenda for Change, which is related to remuneration.

The levels are aligned to four **Pillars of Practice**¹²: Clinical Practice, Education and Learning, Leadership and Research and Development (Figure 2). It is the underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the four **Pillars of Practice** which determine the **Level of Practice** of each role. This will enable a standardised approach to design and delivery of models of nursing and midwifery roles across service provision to support delivery of safe and effective person-centred care.

Figure 2: Pillars of Practice



Source of Figure 2: Adapted from Post Registration Career Development Framework (NES 2010)

The **Pillars of Practice** outline the breadth and range of knowledge and skills and behaviours required to practice safely and effectively across the wide variety of roles and settings. The competence statements are described under:

¹¹ DoH (2004) *The NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework* (NHS KSF) and the development review process. London: DoH.

¹² NHS Education for Scotland (2010) *Post Registration Career Development Framework*. Edinburgh: Scotland: NES.

Clinical Practice: It is important that individuals acquire key clinical knowledge, skills and behaviours appropriate to their specific job to ensure the delivery of safe and effective person-centred care. This will support workforce planning and workforce modelling to enable the right people, with the right skills are in the right place at the right time.

Education and Learning: The pillars of practice will define educational requirements to support individuals to maintain and advance their knowledge, skills and behaviour throughout their career journey.

Leadership: The Leadership Pillar of Practice promotes the importance of the role of registrants in inspiring and managing practice, demonstrating professionalism and accountability at every level.

Research and Development: This pillar focuses on advancing nursing and midwifery practice through evidence-based care, continuous learning and dissemination of practice to improve healthcare outcomes.

The four pillars of practice and descriptors for Advanced Nurse Practitioner roles are presented in Figure 3, although the balance of each of the pillars may vary depending on the role and practice setting.

A Staff Assessment & Development Tool (Appendix 1): This tool will help staff, with their line manager, reflect on their current job role and identify areas where further training and development could enhance or advance their skills in each Pillar of Practice.



6 Continuous Professional Development

In addition to the educational requirements specific to the roles, individuals should also have access to a range of ongoing professional development activities to enable them to continue to enhance their knowledge and skills throughout their career. Induction specific to the role and area of practice will be completed which will complement the core education requirements for the role.

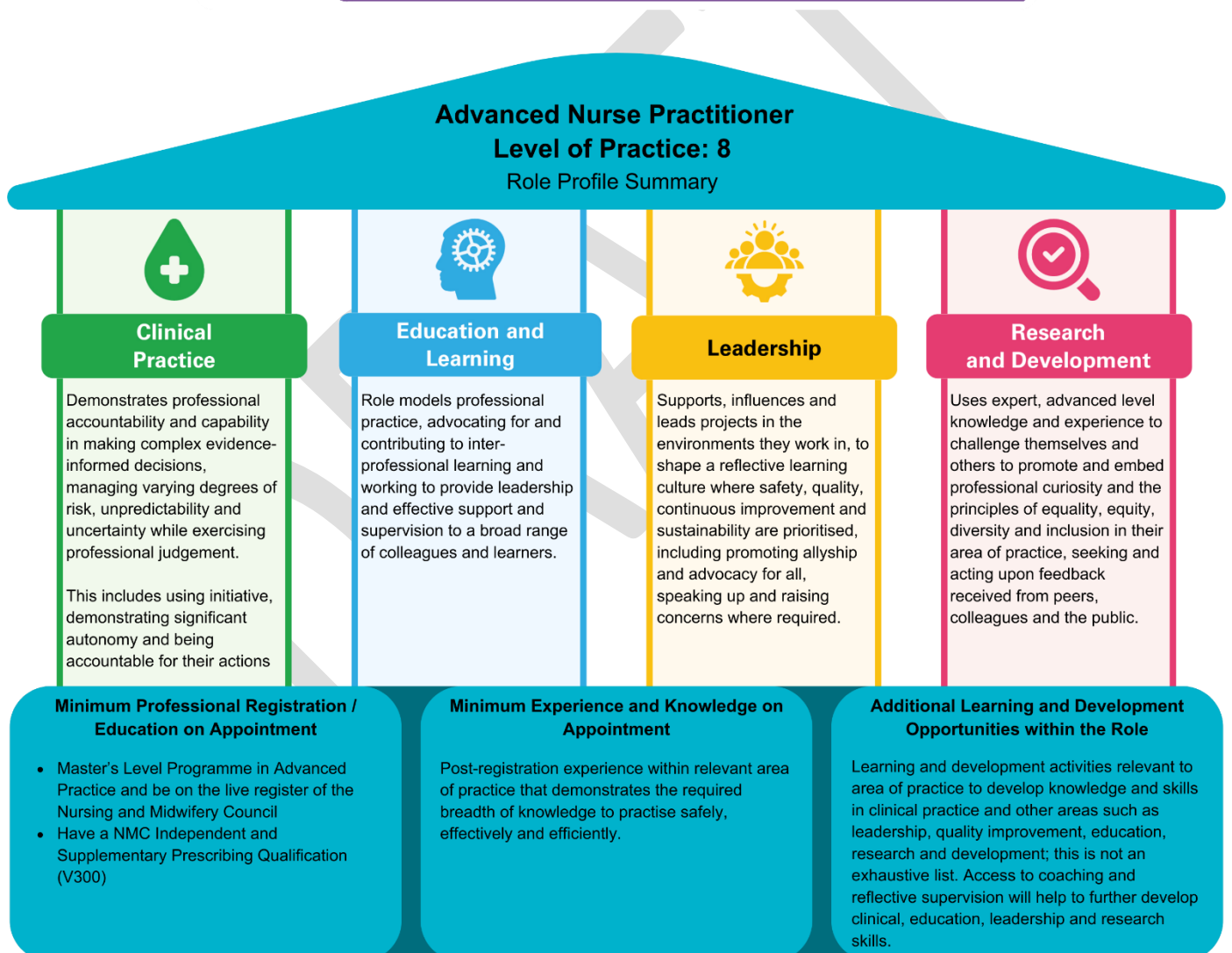
These include:

- Mandatory training;
- Learning through practice;
- Appraisal, preceptorship (where relevant) and personal development planning;
- Access to post graduate commissioned and non-commissioned training and development programmes available through a range of education providers.

Further information and support can be found on the Learning and Development Section of the Careers Website available at <https://nursingandmidwiferycareersni.hscni.net>

A profile summary for the role of Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Level of Practice 8, is outlined in Figure 3:

Figure 3: Advanced Nurse Practitioner Role Profile Summary





Role Descriptor

Nurses employed in Advanced Nursing Practice roles are guided by the NMC Code and NMC Principles for Advanced Practice. The NMC define Advanced Nursing Practice as:

“A registered nurse or midwife working at an advanced level is an expert professional with additional post-graduate education and experience. They use their evidence informed knowledge, skills and capability to influence, shape, deliver and lead safe and effective care, while managing risk, uncertainty and complexity¹”.

The NMC Principles for Advanced Practice apply to individual professionals who have attained the capabilities of advanced level practice and are employed in an Advanced Practice role, rather than those developing the knowledge and skills to practise at an advanced level. They recognise that nurses working at an advanced level, practise across a variety of settings, both clinical and non-clinical, and across all four pillars of practice.

The principles enable them to achieve their full potential and to optimise their contribution to meeting population health needs, delivering person centred care and improving quality, safety and efficiency. They also ensure the service is delivered effectively for the benefit of the people, families and communities they serve.

Advanced Nurse Practitioners have developed expert, high-level knowledge and skills through substantial additional post-qualification education – both theoretical (in an academic learning environment) and applied (in both clinical and non-clinical learning environments) and with supervision and professional support from employers.



Principles for Advanced Nurse Practitioner Roles

The NMC Principles for Advanced Practice are set out under two headings. The first, presented below, relates to individual professionals and the second are for employers of advanced practitioners (see Appendix 1):

Advanced Level Practitioners will:

- 1.1** Practise within their individual scope of practice and in line with their level of knowledge, experience, qualifications, training and employment role;
- 1.2** Demonstrate expertise, confidence, critical thinking, and evidence appraisal and synthesis within their individual scope of practice to lead and influence education, research and practice;
- 1.3** Demonstrate professional accountability and capability in making complex evidence-informed decisions, managing varying degrees of risk, unpredictability and uncertainty while exercising professional judgement. This includes using initiative, demonstrating significant autonomy and being accountable for their actions;
- 1.4** Demonstrate self-awareness with compassionate and inspirational leadership within inter-professional teams to influence practice for effective, holistic, person-centred care;
- 1.5** Demonstrate use of evidence-informed expert knowledge to practise reflectively, identifying areas for self-improvement and improved outcomes for a diverse range of individuals, teams and people;
- 1.6** Role model reflective and reflexive practice and advocate for access to individualised support and clinical supervision to ensure continuous learning, improvement and professional development across the four pillars;
- 1.7** Role model professional practice, advocating for and contributing to inter-professional learning and working to provide leadership and effective support and supervision to a broad range of colleagues and learners;
- 1.8** Use their expert, advanced level knowledge and experience to challenge themselves and others to promote and embed professional curiosity and the principles of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion in their area of practice, seeking and acting upon feedback received from peers, colleagues and the public;

- 1.9** Support, influence and lead projects in the environments they work in to shape a reflective learning culture where safety, quality, continuous improvement and sustainability are prioritised, including promoting allyship and advocacy for all, speaking up and raising concerns where required;
- 1.10** Evidence continued capability, reflective and reflexive practice, ongoing learning and professional development at an advanced level, relevant to their scope of practice through local appraisal processes and through professional revalidation requirements;
- 1.11** Utilise their expertise and experience to minimise environmental impacts, enhance economic growth and embed sustainable approaches to service planning, delivery and implementation;
- 1.12** Lead and contribute to the proactive identification and resolution of challenges to health, safety and wellbeing for individuals and population groups, shaping the design and delivery of effective services and policies that promote holistic health and wellbeing.

NB: NIPEC will map the advanced practice standards, when developed by the NMC, against each of the four pillars of practice. Until these standards are published Advanced Nurse Practitioners should use the NMC Principles which NIPEC has mapped to the four pillars of practice in NIPEC's self-assessment and development tool (Appendix 2) to prepare for revalidation, appraisal/ supervision.



Minimum Professional Registration/ Education on Appointment

The Advanced Nurse Practitioner role requires the nurse to have acquired:

- Master's Level programme in Advanced Practice and be on the live register of the Nursing and Midwifery Council;
- Have an NMC Independent and Supplementary Prescribing qualification (V300).



Minimum Experience & Knowledge on Appointment

Post-registration experience within relevant area of practice that demonstrates the required breadth of knowledge to practise safely, effectively and efficiently.



Additional Learning and Development Opportunities within the Role

Learning and development activities relevant to area of practice to develop knowledge and skills in clinical practice and other areas such as leadership, quality improvement, education, research and development; this is not an exhaustive list. Access to coaching and reflective supervision will help to further develop clinical, education, leadership and research skills.



**NI Career & Development Model
for Nursing & Midwifery**

Staff Assessment and Development Tool Level of Practice 8 – Advanced Nurse Practitioner

Getting Started

The Staff Assessment and Development Tool is designed to help you reflect on your current job role and identify areas where further training, education, and development could enhance or advance your skills. It has been aligned to the NMC Principles for Advanced Practice (NMC 2025).

Upon completion, you will have a list of specific knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) you wish to develop, along with evidence statements to support your competence. If you have additional KSBs, university modules, or competency statements to include, there is a blank section for this purpose.

To access the assessment tool, please visit the Career Pathways/Role Frameworks section on the Careers Website and select the tool relevant to your level of practice. [Learning & Development Framework | Nursing and Midwifery Careers NI](#)

Sign Off

This tool is designed to support you in your appraisal and Personal Development Review (PDR) process, while also providing evidence of your ongoing continued professional development (CPD). There is a Sign Off template at the end of the tool to enable this, if relevant.

Self-assessment of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour (KSB) Statements

In relation to your role, select your Level of Practice and the Pillars of Practice to review

You can complete this exercise for all 4 pillars at once or individually, there is no set order for this.

***Best Practice
Tips:***

**Assess yourself against the knowledge,
skills and behaviours required in relation
to each Pillar of Practice.**

For each, rate yourself using the following scale:

1. You need a lot of development
2. You need some development
3. You feel you are well developed

You should assess yourself against ALL the knowledge, skills and behaviour (KSB) statements relevant to your role/level of practice for each of the four pillars.

As you assess yourself, consider how you might demonstrate proficiency and provide evidence. Your thoughtful evaluation will help guide your development plan. There is an Action Planning and Priority Rating Tool that you may find helpful to support you.

Evidence

If you have rated yourself as having a development need in this area, make a brief action note on “how” you would anticipate meeting this development need and any evidence you may already have. This might be detailing what you are going to do, what actions you might need to take, how you are going to do this and when. You may find [the action planning and priority rating included in the assessment tool](#) helpful with this.

You need to provide evidence for ratings **1 & 2** only.

The evidence should be clear and concise and relevant to the KSB demonstrating proficiency in the area of practice. It should contain detail of the relevant learning and how this is applied in your practice. Evidence can be sourced from many areas of your practice like a reflection, training undertaken, supervised practice, reflective discussion/clinical supervision activity, feedback from colleagues and/or service users, reports.

For more information visit the Continuous Professional Development section of the Careers Website: [Learning & Development Framework | Nursing and Midwifery Careers NI](#)



STAFF ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TOOL - LEVEL 5

Please review the knowledge, skills and behaviour statement and rate yourself using the rating scale below. Give careful thought to your assessment and how you might demonstrate proficiency of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours.



1.	I need a lot of development
2.	I need some development
3.	I feel I am well developed

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Generic	1	2	3		
1.1 Practise within their individual scope of practice and in line with their level of knowledge, experience, qualifications, training and employment role.					

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Generic	1	2	3		
1.3 Demonstrate professional accountability and capability in making complex evidence-informed decisions, managing varying degrees of risk, unpredictability and uncertainty while exercising professional judgement. This includes using initiative, demonstrating significant autonomy and being accountable for their actions.					
1.5 Demonstrate use of evidence informed expert knowledge to practise reflectively, identifying areas for self-improvement and improved outcomes for a diverse range of individuals, teams and people.					
1.11 Utilise their expertise and experience to minimise environmental impacts, enhance economic growth and embed sustainable approaches to service planning, delivery and implementation.					

You may wish to add additional KSBs from other profession specific or role specific frameworks relevant to your role. Below is a blank template for you to cut and paste these into.

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Role or profession specific competencies/KSBs	1	2	3		

Please review the knowledge, skills and behaviour statement and rate yourself using the RAG rating scale. Give careful thought to your assessment and how you might demonstrate proficiency of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours.



1.	I need a lot of development
2.	I need some development
3.	I feel I am well developed

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Generic	1	2	3		
1.6 Role model reflective and reflexive practice and advocate for access to individualised support and clinical supervision to ensure continuous learning, improvement and professional development across the four pillars.					
1.7 Role model professional practice, advocating for and contributing to inter-professional learning and working to provide leadership and effective support and supervision to a broad range of colleagues and learners.					

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Generic	1	2	3		
1.10 Evidence continued capability, reflective and reflexive practice, ongoing learning and professional development at an advanced level, relevant to their scope of practice through local appraisal processes and through professional revalidation requirements.					

You may wish to add additional KSBs from other profession specific or role specific frameworks relevant to your role. Below is a blank template for you to cut and paste these into.

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Role or profession specific competencies/KSBs	1	2	3		

Please review the knowledge, skills and behaviour statement and rate yourself using the RAG rating scale. Give careful thought to your assessment and how you might demonstrate proficiency of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours.



1.	I need a lot of development
2.	I need some development
3.	I feel I am well developed

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Generic	1	2	3		
1.2 Demonstrate expertise, confidence, critical thinking, and evidence appraisal and synthesis within their individual scope of practice to lead and influence education, research and practice.					
1.4 Demonstrate self-awareness with compassionate and inspirational leadership within inter-professional teams to influence practice for effective, holistic, person-centred care.					
1.9 Support, influence and lead projects in the environments they					

work in to shape a reflective learning culture where safety, quality, continuous improvement and sustainability are prioritised, including promoting allyship and advocacy for all, speaking up and raising concerns where required.					
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You may wish to add additional KSBs from other profession specific or role specific frameworks relevant to your role. Below is a blank template for you to cut and paste these into.

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Role or profession specific competencies/KSBs	1	2	3		

Please review the knowledge, skills and behaviour statement and rate yourself using the RAG rating scale. Give careful thought to your assessment and how you might demonstrate proficiency of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours.



1.	I need a lot of development
2.	I need some development
3.	I feel I am well developed

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
	1	2	3		
Generic					
1.8 Use their expert, advanced level knowledge and experience to challenge themselves and others to promote and embed professional curiosity and the principles of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion in their area of practice, seeking and acting upon feedback received from peers, colleagues and the public.					

You may wish to add additional KSBs from other profession specific or role specific frameworks relevant to your role. Below is a blank template for you to cut and paste these into.

Knowledge, skills, behaviours	Rating			Evidence to support achievement	How you will achieve this outcome
Role or profession specific competencies/KSBs	1	2	3		

Action planning and priority rating

You should now take some time to reflect on your learning needs assessment and complete the action planning and priority rating tool to assist you in planning and prioritising your development.

It can also be helpful to discuss your learning and development needs with your line manager or practice assessor and update your personal development plan (PDP).

Pillar of Practice	KSBs Code	Action of “how” to achieve this KSB	Support required within Practice	Time Frames

Sign off

Name	Date of review	Comments
Sign off		
Name	Date	Job title
Name	Date	Job title
Name	Date	Job title



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For further information, please contact



4th Floor James House
2 -4 Cromac Avenue
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Tel: 0300 300 0066

Web: nipec.hscni.net