

Draft Guidance
QNI Endorsement of
SPO Programmes





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1. Purpose of this document

This document sets out the purposes behind QNI Standards and rationale for seeking endorsement. It outlines the procedures and process of the endorsement. It also outlines the criteria and evidence required to gain endorsement.

QNI endorsement is primarily intended for SPQ programmes that are validated utilising the NMC standards of proficiency for community nursing specialist practice qualifications (NMC, 2022), with field specific pathways in:



This document also includes guidance on achieving and maintaining QNI endorsement and the option of retrospective endorsement for courses which have already been validated.

2. Purpose of QNI Endorsed Standards for SPQ Programmes

The QNI standards aim to enhance the core NMC SPQ standards with defined fields of practice and to develop greater clarity on the mapping of SPQ programmes to the four pillars of Advanced Practice (HEE, 2017).

The implementation of QNI standards and QNI-endorsed programmes seeks to establish a nationally recognised level of high-quality knowledge and proficiency across specialist fields of practice and mapped to the four pillars of Advanced Practice (HEE, 2017).

The SPQ is a key part of the continuing professional development of community nurses, these programmes are tailored to deliver the field specific skills and knowledge required for specialist community nursing practice. Each pathway will be aligned to the specific needs of individuals, communities, and populations as well as contemporary and continuously evolving clinical and therapeutic approaches.



For Nurses	For HEIs	For Future Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The QNI standards set out the essential skills and experience necessary to practice autonomously in situations that are complex and challenging. ✦ They support community nurses who are striving for excellent patient care in the community and leading teams of regulated and unregulated staff to deliver the best care possible. ✦ Completing a QNI-endorsed SPQ programme will help to build a field specific career pathway for community nurses. ✦ At the end of the programme, successful students will be issued with a certificate and digital asset to demonstrate their proficiency level and specialism at an advanced level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ QNI endorsement will give prestige to the institutions running the programmes. ✦ It will provide a vision for pre-registration nursing students of a clear career post-registration NMC approved pathway, which explicitly includes endorsement of an advanced level of practice for community nurses, by a professional nursing organisation. ✦ HEIs offering QNI-endorsed programmes will have an attractive offer for post-registration students wishing to return to the University to progress their career and develop their practice at an advanced level. ✦ The QNI standards offer a framework for the delivery of field specific pathways within one SPQ programme, including field specific modules, lectures and seminars alongside shared learning approaches. ✦ Endorsed courses and universities will also be promoted by the QNI to our various networks and wider audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The QNI-endorsed SPQ programmes enable employers to know that nurses applying for posts have the necessary advanced level of skills and knowledge required.

3. Procedure involved in gaining QNI endorsement, including retrospective endorsement where relevant:

- ✦ Endorsement takes place in line with the HEI's validation process with the NMC, which is normally every five years.
- ✦ The request for QNI endorsement takes place following successful NMC validation of the SPQ programme, including all fields of practice which may be added, with NMC approval, after initial validation.
- ✦ The endorsement process will require HEIs to provide an application form alongside evidence documentation outlined in Appendix A to prove that the institution and the programme meet the criteria and requirements of the QNI Education Committee.

- ✦ A representative from QNI will be available to offer support to HEIs throughout the process and can assist with any queries or problems that occur.
- ✦ The HEI will be required to advise the QNI of their planned request for endorsement at least 6 months before the validation event.
- ✦ The endorsement process is desk-based and will not require the QNI to be present at the HEI validation event.
- ✦ Documentation must be up-to-date and include all required criteria and provided to the QNI with sufficient time for review.
- ✦ Upon receipt of documentation the QNI undertakes to assess for endorsement within 6 weeks.
- ✦ In the instance that the evidence provided fully meets the QNI endorsement requirements, the endorsement will be awarded.
- ✦ In the instance that the programme or HEI does not meet the standards and criteria, QNI endorsement will not be granted. The QNI may require further evidence before a programme and all Fields of Practice can be endorsed.
- ✦ After endorsement has been awarded, the HEI will receive official confirmation documentation and will be able to use the provided QNI logo (or variant) on the programme documentation.
- ✦ Endorsement can be retrospective subject to meeting the criteria set out in Appendix B.

4. Maintaining QNI endorsement:

Once QNI endorsement has been gained, HEIs are expected to confirm annually that they continue to maintain the agreed standards and have made no significant changes to the SPQ programmes.

Where changes have been made that require NMC involvement in approval of the changes, the QNI is to be notified and endorsement reviewed.

- ✦ The QNI will require evidence of the programme evaluation and student feedback which are already collected as part of the internal HEI processes.
- ✦ This will all be provided through a single report, submitted through a QNI portal.
- ✦ Confirmation of endorsement will be given annually.

5. Relationship with Students and Issuing of Certificates at end of course:

- ✦ Once students are enrolled on the course, HEIs will provide the QNI with the number of students on each field specific pathway of the SPQ.
- ✦ HEIs will be invited to provide students enrolled on the SPQ programme with information supplied by the QNI about QNI endorsement in relation to the field of practice.
- ✦ Upon notification by the HEI of a student's successful completion of its course the QNI will formally issue students with a digital certificate & digital asset and update its register accordingly subject to appropriate data sharing.
- ✦ For students in Scotland the ongoing relationship will be with QNI Scotland who will issue digital certificates & digital assets in conjunction with the QNI.



Appendix A – Application for Endorsement:

The QNI will require:

1. All documents that were presented for validation and NMC approval of the SPQ programme, including the programme specification.
2. A mapping document for each Field of Practice in the SPQ programme which includes evidence of how all the QNI Field Specific Standards will be met in the SPQ programme.
3. An indication of the number of students anticipated to be enrolled on the SPQ programme for each of the Fields of Practice.

Fields of Practice added to the SPQ after the initial endorsement process:

- ✦ The QNI will request the documentation on which the validation and NMC approval of the additional Field or Fields of Practice were added.
- ✦ A mapping document for each additional Field of Practice in the SPQ programme which includes evidence of how the additional QNI Field Specific Standards will be met in the SPQ programme.
- ✦ An indication of the number of students anticipated to be enrolled on the SPQ programme for the additional Fields of Practice

Appendix B – Fee Model

The fee model is calibrated to support institutions to take on the course at minimal cost and to ensure that institutions with different student numbers can still adopt endorsement:

- ✦ An annual fee of £1500 for the endorsement of the SPQ programme, to include one field of practice.
- ✦ An annual fee of £500 per year for each additional field of practice.

The QNI will charge an additional £50 for each enrolled student (£25 per year for part-time students).

This model is designed so that HEIs are charged flexibly, based on the number students rather than on a flat rate for all.

As part of the cost the QNI will undertake to hold a register of those qualified on its endorsed courses and their specialist field of practice. It will also formally issue those individuals with its endorsement through a digital certificate and asset.



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