

Students' experiences of an Overseas Nurses Programme

The Bournemouth University Overseas Nursing Programme

From September 2005 the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) introduced new arrangements for the registration of non-EU overseas nurses, which required all applicants to undertake '20 days of protected learning' time in the UK and for some, a period of supervised practice.

The NMC (2005) states that the requirement to undertake the ONP is not intended to reflect adversely on the quality of the applicants' original professional training but recognises that this training was designed to prepare nurses to practice in another country, where health care delivery may be very different.

BU offers a 20-day protected learning programme via a flexible learning route whereby nurses are required to successfully complete a distance learning study guide and multiple-choice test. The study guide follows the NMC curriculum and asks nurses to access numerous websites to complete activities, and support for this via three study days and email contact.

The programme has been running since April 2006 and has been accessed by over 600 nurses, the majority coming from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States and South Africa.

The Study

As part of a Masters dissertation a member of the ONP team decided to look at the experiences of Overseas Nurses undertaking our ONP programme.

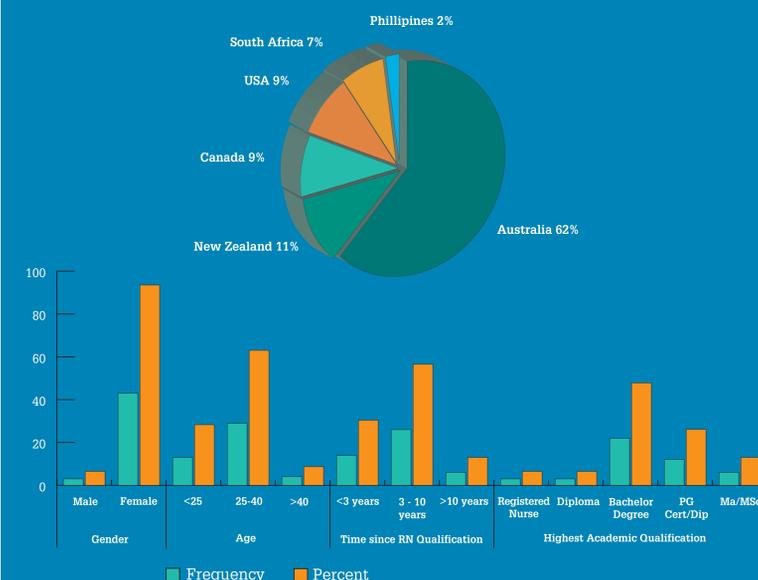
The study comprised an online questionnaire which was sent to nurses who had completed the programme a minimum of three months previously. The response rate was 46 out of 343 (13.4%), which although disappointing, is representative of online surveys.

Principle Findings

Demographic details

Although small numbers are represented in the study, the demographic statistics mirror the overall number of nurses who have completed the programme.

Country of Pre-Registration Nurse Education



Student Comments about Bournemouth University Course

"At a time when we all felt belittled and frustrated by the UK system, the BU course at least gave us a chance to work at our own pace, and more importantly not have to travel for hours to listen to a lecturer on what multiculturalism is (for example)."

"Heavy influence of online content encouraged us to use the resources and pages that we would also need to access in practice and before job interviews."

"Meeting with other people doing the course was terrific when new to UK, extra study days would assist with the meeting of new peers and help with the settling in!"

Student Comments Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) requirements to do course

"It helps foreign nurses to adapt with the health care systems in the UK and to provide up to date information on current issues in nursing-government initiatives, policies and laws pertaining to the profession etc."

Complete from home prior to UK relocation

"Preference for experiential learning rather than academic learning"

"This was purely a paper exercise that was dictated by the NMC. The content and delivery was good but there was very little of any use to me as an individual or professional; I suspect that some of the content would be repeated within the NHS at orientation. The reality is that having to do a lot of this was an insult to my 25 years in nursing; this is not a criticism of BU as you are supplying a service, but directed at the sheep herding mentality of the NMC."

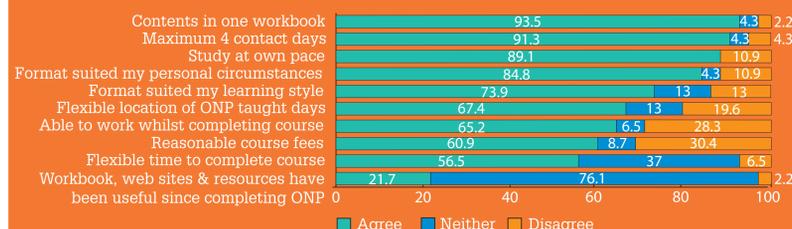
"Due to the differing nursing standards of nursing in other parts of the world, where the standards may be very low compared to the UK and the ONP at least gave me an idea of the standards and requirements I will be facing working as a nurse in the UK."

"The ONP was a repeat of topics I have learned in my undergraduate training. I have a degree in nursing and a postgraduate diploma. I also worked at a multicultural hospital and had a big understanding of cultural issues. The NMC code of conduct is similar to my Nurses board code of conduct. My hospital that I worked at had clinical supervision and professional profiles as part of professional development."

"It showed me that basic nursing is the same no matter where you are."

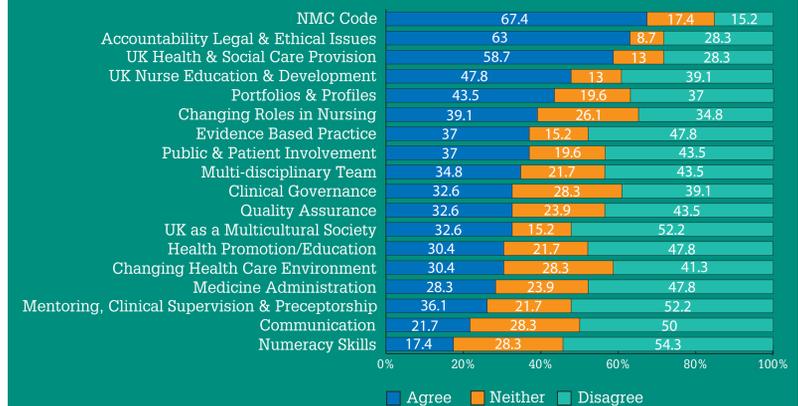
Principle Findings

Do you agree with these comments about the course structure?

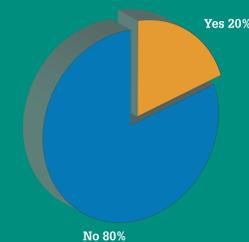


Principle Findings

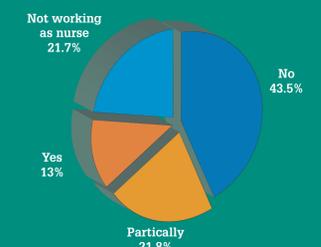
Which of the NMC prescribed sections of the ONP do you consider have had a significant impact on your practice as an Overseas Nurse?



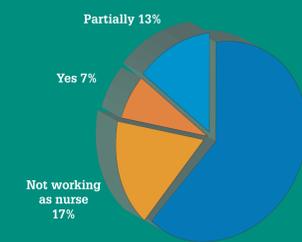
Do you feel it was necessary for you to complete an ONP to nurse in the UK?



Has the ONP met your learning needs?



Has the ONP had a significant impact on your subsequent practice?



Conclusion

The data was collected from nurses who undertook the ONP when then process for registering with the NMC was in its infancy. Many comments were directed at the system of UK registration for Overseas Nurses rather than the programme offered by BU.

Overall nurses from the countries studied did not see the necessity to undertake an Overseas Nurses Programme, although most accepted the knowledge of the Health System in the UK was beneficial. Nurses' comments about the BU programme were positive and have encouraged us to continue developing and delivering our programme.

Contact Details

Petra Brown PG Dip, Bsc (Hons) RN - Lecturer
Gill Jordan MA, BSc (Hons) RN - Senior Lecturer
Bournemouth University
onp@bournemouth.ac.uk