

**DRAFT Defined Award Standards for
Pre-nursing Studies
(Major Award, NFQ Level 5: ESCO 5321.1¹)**

Award Title	Pre-nursing Studies
Teideal as Gaeilge	[To be translated]
Award Class	Major
Level	NFQ Level 5 EQF Level 4
Credit Value	120 FET Credits

Purpose

This award is designed to provide a foundational understanding of pre-nursing studies, integrating holistic care and professional responsibilities in a variety of healthcare settings. It is also intended to equip the learner with the relevant knowledge skills and competence to provide person-centred care in a variety of healthcare settings, promoting best practice rooted in holistic, diverse and cultural care across the lifespan.

Qualification Requirements

Learners are eligible for the major award following the successful completion of the Minor Awards as outlined below:

Award Class	Requirement	Title	Credit Value	NFQ Level
Major	3 mandatory + 3 electives	Defined Award Standards for Pre-nursing Studies	120	5
Minor	Mandatory	Defined Award Standards for Anatomy, Physiology, Human Growth, Development & Biology	25	5
Minor	Mandatory	Defined Award Standards for Principles and Practice of Nursing Skills	25	5

¹ European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO). The ESCO taxonomy is a system created by the European Commission to classify skills, competences, qualifications, and occupations. It has two main parts: the Occupations pillar and the Skills & Competences pillar, which includes knowledge, skills, and competences. The Occupations pillar is also linked to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) to help organise job roles in a clear and structured way. For more information please see: <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/classification>

Award Class	Requirement	Title	Credit Value	NFQ Level
Minor	Mandatory	Defined Award Standards for Pre-nursing Care Skills	25	5
Minor	Elective	Defined Award Standards for Child Health and Development for Pre-Nursing	15	5
Minor	Elective	Defined Award Standards for Holistic and Wellbeing Care of Older Adults	15	5
Minor	Elective	Defined Award Standards for Intellectual Disability Care and Support	15	5
Minor	Elective	Defined Award Standards for Maternity Pre-nursing Care Skills	15	5
Minor	Elective	Defined Award Standards for Operating Theatre Support Care Skills	15	5
Minor	Elective	Defined Award Standards for Palliative Care Skills	15	5
Minor	Elective	Defined Award Standards for Mental Health Care Skills	15	5

Learning Outcomes

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Knowledge Breadth	Demonstrate a foundational knowledge relating to the role, responsibility care, dignity and wellbeing of individuals across the lifespan, in line with person-centred and evidence-informed practice across diverse care settings.
Knowledge Kind	Demonstrate a foundational understanding of the core theoretical principles that underpin nursing and healthcare practice, including health, illness, wellbeing, human development, communication, and professional accountability.
Know How & Skill Range	Demonstrate a range of practical, interpersonal and caring skills to provide holistic, safe and compassionate care in structured environments under appropriate supervision.

Know How & Skill Selectivity	Evaluate information, implement appropriate care strategies and care plans to support decision-making in routine care situations, recognising when to report changes in an individual's condition and responding appropriately within the limits of one's role.
Competence Context	Engage in care practices safely and effectively, using standard precautions, appropriate communication, and ethical awareness in line with relevant guidelines, workplace policies, and under supervision of registered practitioners.
Competence Role	Contribute to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of holistic, person-centred care by working collaboratively with the healthcare team and supporting individuals in maintaining their independence, dignity, and quality of life.
Competence Learning to Learn	Take responsibility for your own learning, reflecting on feedback and experiences to improve personal effectiveness and develop understanding of professional behaviours expected in healthcare settings.
Competence Insight	Reflect on personal values, attitudes, and learning experiences to contribute to the development of an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable care environments.

Access

To access programmes leading to the above awards, learners should have achieved the knowledge, skills, and competence associated with NFQ Level 4 in the areas of literacy, numeracy, digital skills, communication, and personal effectiveness.

Learners must be able to communicate effectively with colleagues in the workplace through speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This may be through a formal qualification or relevant life and work experience demonstrating equivalent learning.

Transfer

Achievement of this award will enable the learner to transfer to other appropriate programmes leading to awards at the same level of the National Framework of Qualifications.

Progression

Achievement of this award will enable the learner to progress to other appropriate programmes leading to awards at the next or higher levels of the National Framework of Qualifications.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Learners may be assessed based on their prior knowledge and experience. This must be conducted in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures of the provider.

Specific Validation Requirements:

- Garda Vetting.
- Access to clinical learning environment (work base learning) with up-to-date equipment, fixtures and fittings, cleaning agents and materials, disinfectants, antiseptics, sterilisers, waste disposal and personal protective equipment.
- Practical work experience/clinical placements min 240hrs².

Sector-specific Requirements:

- CPR and use an automated external defibrillator (AED).
- Assisted Mobility Training (Safe People Moving and Positioning Training) in accordance with current legislation and workplace health and safety policies.

² In certain cases, it may be appropriate to credit learners with 80 hours if they can demonstrate relevant experience in the Irish healthcare system in Ireland in the past 3 years. Evidence of this should be presented to providers.