

**DRAFT Defined Award Standards for
Principles and Practice of Nursing Skills
(Minor Award, NFQ Level 5)**

Award Title	Principles and Practice of Nursing Skills
Teideal as Gaeilge	[To be translated]
Award Class	Minor Award
Level	NFQ Level 5 EQF Level 4
Credit Value	25 FET Credits
Mandatory/Elective	Mandatory

Purpose

This award is intended to equip the learner with the knowledge, skill, and competence to understand the core principles of the nursing profession, apply the nursing process in a structured and person-centred way, and perform a range of foundational nursing care skills safely and effectively. The learner will also gain insight into the structure of the healthcare system, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the professional standards and ethical responsibilities associated with nursing practice.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the historical and contemporary development of nursing, including its evolution as a professional and regulated discipline within Irish and international healthcare systems.
2. Examine the structure and functions of the Irish healthcare system, including primary, secondary, and tertiary care services, and evaluate describe the influence of European Union directives on healthcare provision and nursing practice in Ireland.
3. Explain the stages of the nursing process — assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation — and demonstrate their relevance to holistic and patient-centred care.
4. Interpret the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses, identifying the values, responsibilities, and boundaries that guide nursing practice.

5. Assist individuals with activities of daily living, including hygiene, nutrition, mobility, and elimination, using best-practice techniques and person-centred care principles.
6. Collaborate and communicate effectively within professional and interdisciplinary teams, using common nursing and medical terminology, working both independently and collectively to deliver inclusive, culturally responsive healthcare supports across diverse healthcare settings.
7. Identify the roles and functions of interdisciplinary healthcare team members and demonstrate an understanding of collaborative practice in supporting patient care across various settings.
8. Demonstrate an understanding of medication safety principles, including the importance of accuracy in drug administration and documentation, and the legal and ethical aspects of handling medications.
9. Demonstrate empathy, respect, and effective communication in all aspects of care delivery, recognising the psychological and emotional needs of patients and families.
10. Measure, record, and interpret key clinical observations, including temperature, pulse, respiration, blood pressure, and fluid balance, identifying deviations from normal ranges and appropriate responses.
11. Describe the principles of infection prevention and control, including the causes and transmission of common healthcare-associated infections, standard precautions, and procedures to minimise cross-infection risk.

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.
- Access to an environment and equipment replicating the clinical setting (classroom).
- Work-based learning hours to be set in the application for validation.

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.