There has been an increase in enquiries from educational institutions wishing to offer nursing programmes. There were more than 900 courses going through the approval process in March as universities responded to the introduction of new routes into the profession.

Striking-off orders went up by almost a third, with 344 registrants being removed from the register in 2016-17, up from 261 the previous year. However, more cases were concluded last year and this figure is expected to fluctuate from year to year.

NMC chief executive Jackie Smith said: ‘These reports mark another successful and productive year for us and highlight the substantial amount of positive work the NMC has undertaken.’

Improve understanding
RCN deputy director of nursing Stephanie Aiken said she was not surprised by the broad range of allegations that are made against nurses that ‘relate to conduct both within practice and in their public life’.

She said improving understanding of the reasons for nurses being referred to the regulator would benefit patient safety and registrants.

‘It will help to inform how patient safety can be assured, as well as how this can translate into standards and guidance for nurses and midwives to support them to be safe and effective practitioners,’ she said.

NMC chief receives almost £20,000 pay rise after regulator conducts salary review

Nursing and Midwifery Council chief executive Jackie Smith (pictured) received a pay rise of almost £20,000 in the past year, according to the regulator’s annual report.

The report, published last week, says Ms Smith’s basic salary rose from £173,800 in 2015-16 to £192,850 in 2016-17.

Her overall remuneration package for 2016-17 was £256,027, compared with £220,284 in 2015-16.

The almost £36,000 increase equates to the salary of a nurse at the top of band 6, or a mid-ranking band 7 nurse in England.

The regulator said the increase resulted from the first review of executive pay in five years, which found NMC senior pay was ‘generally out of alignment’ with salaries for comparable roles in similar organisations.

In 2016, the organisation’s remuneration committee undertook a review of executive pay, looking at data from the independent Total Remuneration Survey, civil service data and pay in other healthcare regulators and public bodies.

The NMC introduced a new executive pay framework, aligning base salaries with the wider market.

‘In light of the review findings and new framework, the committee concluded that a significant realignment of the chief executive’s pay was needed,’ the report said.

In addition to her basic salary, Ms Smith’s total remuneration for 2016-17 included:

- £11,921 performance bonus for 2015-16, paid in 2016-17. The bonus is suspended for 12 months.
- £10,392 for 17 days’ annual leave not taken in 2015-16 due to the ‘volume of high-priority business’.
- £40,864 increase in the value of pension benefits.