

MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner Programme Specification

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/advanced-practice-clinical-practitioner/>

Academic Year:	2021/22
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Subject Benchmark:	Health Studies (QAA 2019)
Target Degree Award:	Master of Science, Advanced Clinical Practitioner [FHEQ Level 7]
Interim/exit awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Advanced Clinical Practitioner [FHEQ Level 7]; Postgraduate Certificate Enhanced Clinical Practitioner [FHEQ Level 7]
Accreditation:	Prescribing Elements approved by NMC, HCPC, GPhC
Admissions:	September and January
Modes of Study:	36 months Part-time (MSc); 24 months (PGDip); 12 months (PGCert)

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Minor Modifications Schedule

1. July 2021: New specification approved
2. May 2022: Specification reformatted and made more accessible, links checked, typos corrected

Introduction

Experienced nurses and healthcare practitioners now have the opportunity to take on challenging roles, working across professional, organisational and system boundaries to meet diverse patient needs (Francis 2013, DH 2013, HEE 2017, RCN 2018). Healthcare practitioners working towards these senior professional roles, often at the forefront of innovative practice, are expected to undertake Master's level education (HEE 2017, NHS England *et. al.* 2020). This programme is designed around the four pillars of advanced practice to develop the advanced competencies in clinical practice, leadership, education and research alongside developing complex reasoning, critical thinking and analysis required to undertake the role of an Advanced Clinical Practitioner.

The MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner programme is led and delivered by experienced Advanced Clinical Practitioners from a range of clinical areas including emergency medicine, primary and community care. This team of clinicians are experienced in both advanced clinical practice and education and work closer with work-based clinical supervisor to support students through this programme of study to ensure excellence is at the heart of everything delivered and the clinical care of practitioners completing this programme of study. Students on the programme must be working in a clinical role that enables them to develop the clinical skills required of advanced clinical practitioners.

The awards provide students the opportunity to apply knowledge to a range of clinical and professional situations through reflection and practice experience, supported by a work based Clinical Supervisor. Learning and Teaching is designed to equip students with clinical knowledge and competencies in using a range of information, data, tools and techniques to improve the quality of patient care and health outcomes as well as demonstrate impact and value. There is a focus on patient safety, risk assessment and risk management within a clinical governance context. The programme is delivered with a significant work-based element where the clinical competencies that students require to undertake the role of an Advanced Clinical Practitioner are developed with the support of their clinical supervisor in clinical practice.

The Faculty of Health Studies at the University of Bradford is a major provider of education and training for individuals working within the health, social, independent and community/voluntary sector organisations across the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Region and wider. The Faculty focus on excellence through knowledge, advanced practice, research, leadership and education to support the future sustainability of the individuals, through lifelong learning and improved employability and thereby influencing the future adaptability of individual organisations and service delivery to promote change.

The Faculty of Health Studies has a consistently good record of service user and carer involvement which is integral to this programme. The University vision of a world of inclusion and equality of opportunity where people want to, and can, make a difference is supported by the University of Bradford being awarded the University of the Year for Social Inclusion by the Times Good University Guide (referenced in Billington 2019). Research and innovation is an underpinning principle of the University reflected in our works in partnership with Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust at the Wolfson Centre for Applied Health Research, the work of the Centre includes the Born in Bradford Project.

Programme Aims

The aim of this Higher Education Qualifications Framework (FHEQ) Level 7 programme of study is to provide the academic support which in partnership with clinical support from a suitable qualified work-based clinical supervisor and comprehensive work-based learning will enable students to develop the knowledge and clinical competencies to achieve the necessary generic professional and clinical attributes to undertake an Advanced Clinical Practitioner role.

Programme Learning Outcomes

To be eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma award, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate appropriate literature and research evidence and apply findings to their clinical practice.
2. Critically analyse and apply the research evidence that informs the development of policy and service delivery in the role of Advanced Clinical Practitioner.

3. Demonstrate mastery of clinical skills for the management of complex issues as an Advanced Clinical Practitioner.
4. Apply knowledge of anatomy and physiology to undertake advanced assessment, diagnosis, complex care planning, health promotion as an Advanced Clinical Practitioner.
5. Critically reflect upon and demonstrate knowledge of values, ethical thinking, equality awareness, inclusive practice.
6. Demonstrate the ability to risk assess, problem solve and articulate sound arguments and justify decisions using a variety of formats including written and oral communication skills.
7. Demonstrate independent learning and the critical reflection required for continuing professional development of themselves and others.
8. Provide professional leadership to promote and support the professional practice and colleagues.
9. Prescribe safely and effectively within the role of Advanced Clinical Practitioner.
10. Critically analyse clinical governance issues, service improvement and patient safety issues in the context the role of Advanced Clinical Practitioner

Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 Degree award of Master, students will be able to:

11. Demonstrate their understanding of the theoretical constructs underpinning research and project management.
12. Apply research, service improvement and re-design theory skills to influence and improve practice and policy in their area of practice.
13. Demonstrate their ability as an autonomous learner to complete an extended project in the planning and execution of a service improvement or audit and evaluation project.

Curriculum

The MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner programme is a 180 credit Master's degree (FHEQ Level 7) with the option to exit with a postgraduate diploma after 120 credits.

Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma

Students enrolling in September start in Study Period 1 and students enrolling in January start in Study Period 2. In years 1 and 2 of the programme, students will study and complete 3 core modules and 1 option module from the following list, aiming to complete 1 30-credit module per University semester. The choice of option will be agreed with the student and their clinical supervisor.

Study Period	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Module Type
1	NUR7034-C	Applied Pathophysiology and Pharmacology in Acute and Long-term Conditions	30	Option
1	NUR7063-C	Urgent Care (Minor Injuries/Illness)	30	Option
1 or 2	LEM7011-C	Leadership for Advanced Practitioners	30	Core
1 or 2	PRE7003-C	Prescribing for Pharmacists	30	Core •
1 or 2	PRE7004-C	Prescribing for Healthcare Professionals	30	Core •
2	PRP7005-C	Advanced Physical Assessment and Clinical Decision Making Skills	30	Core

- Please note: The non-medical prescribing module is a core module on this programme and is a recordable qualification with the NMC, GPhC and HCPC. Students will register for either PRE7003-C or PRE7004-C depending on their professional background and eligibility (in the **Professional Admission Requirements** section of this document). It is not possible to take both modules.

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Diploma Advanced Clinical Practitioner if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students who have successfully completed at least 60 credits will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Certificate Enhanced Clinical Practitioner, reflecting that they will not be able to evidence outcomes from their studies to meet standards for advanced clinical practice.

These awards do not confer eligibility to register as a practitioner with the NMC, GPhC or HCPC.

Degree of Master

In Year 3 of the programme, students study a 60-credit final service improvement and evaluation project.

Study Period	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Module Type
1 and 2	RES7018-E	Service Improvement and Evaluation in Clinical Practice	60	Core

Students will be eligible for the Master's Degree award of Advanced Clinical Practitioner if they have successfully completed 180 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

This award does not confer eligibility to register as a practitioner with the NMC, GPhC or HCPC.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

The first year of the programme focuses on developing of the evidence-based knowledge and physical examination skills required by ACPs. The theoretical framework is provided by the University's academic team through a combination lectures, seminars and practical sessions, which are then developed in clinical practice working in partnership with the clinical supervisor. Clinical competency is evidenced through the completion of a portfolio verified by the clinical supervisor and clinical and academic assessment is undertaken by the University. The second year of the programme focusses on the leadership skills required by clinicians to work in the ACP role and completion of the independent prescribing qualification. The programme is completed with the final stage service improvement and evaluation dissertation.

Whilst following this programme of study, trainees will engage with learning through a range of teaching methods. These methods will be dependent on modules studied, however student-centred approaches to learning are a feature of the modules and trainees will be expected to take responsibility for their learning as they develop their academic skills. The module delivery requires study day attendance delivered either weekly or in blocks dependent on the module, supported by self-directed and work-based learning supported by an employer named clinical supervisor. When devising the students individual training plan with an academic advisor, students will be informed regarding which attendance methods are utilised for which module.

The learning and teaching strategy has been designed so that students can develop theoretical understanding, research informed knowledge and critical thinking (Programme Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 5, 7, 11, 12, 13), and develop a range of skills appropriate to their professional field's organisation and workplace setting (Programme LOs 3, 4, 6, 8, 9). Trainees will also develop their skills and knowledge of research and service improvement which they will apply to their practice area (Programme LOs 10, 11, 13).

The modules within the programme offer students the capacity to acknowledge and build upon the knowledge and skills they may have developed through previous learning experiences including those in the workplace.

A student's course of study will expose them to a range of different teaching, learning and assessment techniques required to achieve the learning outcomes. Students will be expected to develop an autonomous learning style and become self-directed as a learner.

The teaching approaches that are used across the Faculty of Health Studies are informed by the University and Faculty core values which are for teaching and learning to be: **Research informed, Reflective, Adaptable, Inclusive, Supportive, Ethical and Sustainable**. Students may experience these across their choice of modules in order to meet both the aims of the programme and their learning outcomes which may include any number of the following:

- **Research informed lectures:** To a group of students where information will be presented and discussed.
- **Facilitated seminars and group discussion:** Where learning will be through the interpretation and critical application of information and group learning.
- **Tutorial** where small groups of students reflect upon and discuss issues related to their learning.

- **Practical clinical skill sessions** demonstrating evidenced based best practice clinical assessment.
- **Work-based learning:** Where learning is directed at consolidating skills in relation to theory and best practice, enabling students to advance their competence in their field of practice.
- Use of Web based **virtual learning environments** such as Canvas and E- learning packages: To access information and to interact with other students undertaking group work or developing wikis or discussion groups.
- **Directed reading:** Where set reading is provided.
- **Self-Directed learning:** Where students are expected to develop their own learning by identifying areas of interest and areas in which knowledge needs to be developed.
- **Undertaking a clinically based project** which is shaped by their own self-directed learning needs and the learning outcomes at MSc level.

All students are provided with a personal academic tutor (PAT) who will be both an experienced advanced clinical practitioner and university academic. The main focus of the PAT role, in partnership with the module leaders will be to provide academic support to the student to complete this programme of study to the required academic standard. Additional support will be provided by the subject librarians at the university and the academic skills team. Students with specific learning needs can be supported by Disability Services with an individual learning support profile.

Assessment Strategy

Student learning will be assessed against the learning outcomes and programme aims through the use of a range of different assessment techniques which may include one or more of the following approaches:

- Written essay
- Reflective case study
- The development of a reflective portfolio
- Completion of set number of competencies
- Completion of a set number of clinical contacts
- Practical examination
- Computer based Multiple Choice Question examination
- Computer based open book examination
- Seminar presentation and participation in discussion groups
- Oral *viva voce* examination
- Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE)
- Audit Tool development
- Conference standard Poster Presentation
- Completion of a Service Audit and evaluation project

All assessment will be marked using appropriate the FHEQ Level 7 marking rubric. This will include feed forward recommendations to support academic development throughout the programme. Students will be encouraged to provide written feedback through the formal module evaluation process and participate in the student and staff liaison meetings to ensure ongoing review and development incorporates the perspective of the students. Some of these teaching and assessment strategies may change over time and through the ongoing development of the courses.

Assessment Regulations

This Programme conforms to the standard University Postgraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at the link: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations/>

However, there are 2 variations to these regulations as listed below:

1. For all modules with a clinical component every element of the assessment must be passed at 40%, the pass requirement will be clear on individual module descriptors.
2. Students who have failed to meet the module pass criteria will be permitted a reassessment opportunity at 2nd attempt, following ratification of marks by an Assessment Committee but prior to a Board of Examiners meeting taking place.

Admissions

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make decisions based on your potential to thrive at university and beyond. The University of Bradford welcomes all potential UK applicants who meet the following criteria to apply.

Professional Admission Requirements

- Current registration with the appropriate UK professional body as a member of the following professions eligible (HEE 2021) to undertake independent and supplementary prescribing qualifications:
 - Nurses (see note below for exceptions)
 - Midwives
 - Pharmacists
 - Physiotherapists
 - Podiatrists
 - Paramedics
 - Optometrists
 - Therapeutic Radiographers*
 - Diagnostic Radiographers* (supplementary prescribing only)
- At least 2 years' experience working in your professional role (3 years for paramedics).
- An identified workplace supervisor (and, for Nurses and Midwives only, an additionally identified workplace assessor) who must have a recognised qualification and at least 5 years post-qualification experience as:
 - An Advanced Clinical Practitioner in any of the above professions

Or A medical practitioner / doctor
- Evidence of contracted working arrangements (paid or voluntary) with the named clinical supervisor for the duration of the MSc programme a minimum of 2 days a

week, including University of Bradford attendance for the first 2 years of the MSc programme.

Please note: The University of Bradford is not, when this document was published, offering supplementary prescribing qualifications to Dietitians, or community prescribing from a limited formulary qualifications to Public Health Nurses, Community Nurses or District Nurses.

Please note: While Radiographers* are welcome on this programme, Therapeutic and Diagnostic Radiographers can alternatively take a dedicated ACP programme which does not incorporate the prescribing module. For more information on this programme, visit the Radiographic Reporting course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/clinical-practitioner-radiographic-reporting/>

Please note: To check the current list of allied health professionals other than Pharmacists eligible to take a prescribing course at Bradford, visit the Prescribing course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/cpd/prescribing-for-healthcare-professionals/>

University Admission Requirements

- A first degree in your vocation, NVQ level 6 or equivalent or a relevant postgraduate qualification.

Or An academic waiver can be requested for applicants with significant work-based experience without a first degree. For example, Nursing only became a graduate exit occupation relatively recently, and applicants may require a waiver based on occupational experience rather than academic credits on this basis.

Please note: This programme of study is not suitable for international students who are unable to fulfil all of the above requirements. This admission information relates to the contemporary recruitment cycle when this document was published. It may be different for the current cycle. To check the entry tariff in effect, visit the course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/advanced-practice-clinical-practitioner/>

Access

Applications are particularly welcomed from returners to study aged 25 or over, armed forces families, carers and care leavers, and Romani or Traveller families.

All students are offered screening from the Disability Service on entry to the programme to aid identification of any specific learning difficulties. Students will gain access to information which will provide specific study support. Disabled students' applications are considered on the same grounds as all students. Applicants may wish to check with our Disability Service before applying by visiting: www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before/

Recognition of Prior Learning

The University welcomes applications from all potential students and most important in the decision to offer a place is our assessment of a candidate's potential to benefit from their studies and of their ability to succeed on this programme. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss with the Programme Lead the potential to import prior Level 7 learning into this programme of study. For prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning, to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules.

Examples of prior learning that could be imported into this programme are a FHEQ Level 7 Independent Prescribing qualification from the University of Bradford and/or any of the core or optional modules named in this programme's curriculum completed at the University of Bradford at FHEQ Level 7.

Similarly, if FHEQ Level 7 study has been completed at another University that potentially meets the learning outcomes of one or more of the modules named in the curriculum, then students are encouraged to discuss this with the programme team on an individual basis so eligibility for prior learning to be imported can be established. For more detail on the RPL procedures visit the website: www.bradford.ac.uk/teaching-quality/prior-learning/

References

Department of Health (2013). **The Cavendish Review**. Published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-healthcare-assistants-and-support-workers-in-nhs-and-social-care/> (accessed 28.4.2022)

Francis, Robert (2013). **Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry chaired by Robert Francis QC**. London: The Stationary Office, HC 947. Published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-the-mid-staffordshire-nhs-foundation-trust-public-inquiry/> (accessed 28.4.2022)

Billington, Lara (2019). **The Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide 2020: These are the UK's most socially inclusive universities for 2020**. Bolton: GradTouch. Published online at:

<https://www.gradtouch.com/advice/article/content-sunday-times-good-university-guide-2020> (accessed 4.5.2022)

Health Education England (2017). **Facing the Facts, Shaping the Future – A draft health and care workforce strategy for England to 2027**. Published online at: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/workforce-strategy/>

(accessed 28.4.2022)

Health Education England (2017). **Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England**.

Published online at: <https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/multi-professional-framework-for-advanced-clinical-practice-in-england/> (accessed 4.5.2022)

Health Education England (2021). **Training for non-medical prescribers**. Published online at:

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/medicines-optimisation/training-non-medical-prescribers/> (accessed 4.5.2022)

NHS England, Health Education England and Skills for Life (2020). **Core Capabilities Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice (Nurses) Working in General Practice / Primary Care in England**. Published online at:

<https://skillsforhealth.org.uk/info-hub/advanced-clinical-practice-nurses-working-in-general-practice-primary-care-in-england-2020/> (accessed 4.5.2022)

Royal College of Nursing (2018). **Advanced Level Nursing Practice Section 2: Advanced level nursing practice competencies**. Published online at: <https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-006896> (accessed 4.5.2022)

Quality Assurance Agency (2019). **Subject benchmark statement: Health Studies**. 4th edn. Published online

at: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-health-studies.pdf> (PDF document accessed 28.4.2022)