



## Practitioners with a Special Interest (PwSI) Postgraduate Programmes Specification

[www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-cardiology/](http://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-cardiology/)

[www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-diabetes/](http://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-diabetes/)

[www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-gynaecology/](http://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-gynaecology/)

[www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/pwsi-musculoskeletal-medicine-with-rheumatology/](http://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/pwsi-musculoskeletal-medicine-with-rheumatology/)

<b>Academic Year:</b>	2022/23
<b>Degree Awarding Body:</b>	The University of Bradford
<b>Delivery Organisation:</b>	The Ridge Education Ltd.
<b>Subject Benchmark:</b>	Health Studies (QAA 2019)
<b>Pathways Available:</b>	Cardiology; Diabetes; Gynaecology; Musculoskeletal Medicine with Rheumatology
<b>Target Awards:</b>	Postgraduate Diploma; [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Level 7]
<b>Further Award*:</b>	Master's Degree of Science [FHEQ Level 7]
<b>Mode of Study:</b>	Part-time, distance learning with some attendance
<b>Programme duration:</b>	Between 18 months and 60 months

**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.

\* Successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma is required before students can register for the Master's degree.

### Minor Modifications Schedule

- (v1) August 2021: Initial publication of unified Programme Specification
- (v2) February 2022: Annual changes for 2022/23 academic year

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## Introduction

The four Practitioners with a Special Interest programmes (PwSI) are taught and run by advanced clinicians, allied health professionals and service improvement specialists. The PwSI diploma and certificate programmes are managed by The Ridge Education Ltd and graduates receive a University of Bradford award.

Four part-time Diploma programmes are offered, each containing a large element of work-based learning. Attendance is only required for a total of eight study days on five separate occasions throughout the 18 months, so each programme is accessible to students nationally. The programmes enable qualified practitioners to gain a formally recognised

standard of competence in one of the areas of **Cardiology, Diabetes Care, Gynaecology or Musculoskeletal Medicine with Rheumatology**, as a Special Interest (also known as Advanced or Extended Roles in these areas).

Students who successfully complete all modules gain the Postgraduate Diploma and will be able to progress to a Master's degree - the MSc for Practitioners with a Special Interest – if they wish.

**Please note:** The MScs are taught and managed entirely by the University of Bradford. Students wishing to continue on to the Master's project will need to complete a short reapplication process to transfer in.

## Programme Overview

During the PwSI programmes the emphasis is on critical thinking, reflective learning and the practice of evidence-based medicine. Students are enabled to directly apply their learning to their current and future roles. While we recommend students complete a full course of study leading to an award, any module can be selected as a standalone if they do not wish to complete the whole programme.

The programme structure is specifically designed to encourage the development of the specialist practitioner role, by encouraging collaborative clinical work-based training between the practitioner and the clinical mentor. The issues of ethics and informed consent are an integrated part of the students' daily practice, and it is implicit in all the modules that there is conformity to the usual standards and guidelines in these areas.

On successful completion of their chosen modules students will be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate. Students who successfully complete the Postgraduate Diploma will have greater breadth of knowledge of their Special Interest area than those who complete the Certificate. Students progressing on to the Master's Degree will undertake a small-scale project as applied to their local clinical setting.

## Working together in partnership

The Ridge Medical Practice - Ridge Education Limited is the host organisation for the PwSI programmes in these specialisms. They provide the premises, recruit and support teaching staff, and undertake the administration and management of the courses. Admissions are undertaken by the partner although administered formally by the university. Teaching is carried out by practising subject specialists recruited by staff at Ridge Education Ltd but subject to approval by the university.

The programmes fall under the collaborative provision regulations, so although they are taught wholly by the external partner, quality assurance and assessment are governed by University of Bradford regulations. The university is responsible for areas such as the coordination of assessment procedures, including committees and exam boards, and the continual validation of the programmes to local and national standards. The Faculty of Health Studies, School of Nursing and Healthcare Leadership provides academic and administrative support.

## Certificate and Diploma Programme Aims

Each route has a distinct set of aims as they relate to the Special Interest area and a shared set of Learning Outcomes for PwSI as a whole. The aims and Learning Outcomes are mapped to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ, 2014) at Level 7.

### Cardiology Programme Aims

**The Cardiology for Practitioners with a Special Interest programme is intended to:**

- A1 Develop the subject-specific knowledge and skills to enable practitioners to work independently and manage patients in their care with ischaemic heart disease, hypertension, arrhythmias and conduction disorders, heart failure and valvular disease at a higher level and to deal with complex clinical situations systematically;
- A2 Develop a subject –specific understanding of the role and responsibilities of consultant specialists and the multi-disciplinary team in secondary care and to establish appropriate relationships with these professionals;
- A3 Position practitioners at the forefront of their subject-specific area of cardiac care to develop and establish effective integrated care pathways between primary and secondary care within current NHS guidelines;
- A4 Engage practitioners in life-long learning through the enhancement of key skills, a thorough understanding of critical appraisal and reflective practice;
- A5 Provide practitioners with transferrable nationally recognised training within ischaemic heart disease, hypertension, arrhythmias and conduction disorders, heart failure and valvular disease.

### Diabetes Care Programme Aims

**The Diabetes for Practitioners with a Special Interest programme is intended to:**

- A1 develop the specialist knowledge and skills to enable primary care practitioners to practice the management of diabetes at a higher level and to deal with complex clinical situations systematically.
- A2 develop a subject-specific understanding of the role and responsibilities of consultant specialists and the multidisciplinary team in secondary care and to establish appropriate relationships with these professionals;
- A3 position practitioners at the forefront of diabetes knowledge to develop and establish the most appropriate integrated care pathways between primary and secondary care for the patient within current NHS guidelines and structures;
- A4 engage practitioners in life-long learning through the enhancement of key skills, a thorough knowledge of critical appraisal and reflective practice:
- A5 provide practitioners with a special interest with transferable nationally recognised training in the diagnosis and management of diabetes mellitus.

## Gynaecology Programme Aims

**The Gynaecology for Practitioners with a Special Interest programme is intended to:**

- A1 develop the specialist knowledge and skills to enable primary care practitioners to practice gynaecology at a higher level and to deal with complex clinical situations systematically;
- A2 develop a thorough understanding of the role and responsibilities of consultant specialists and the multidisciplinary team in secondary care and to establish appropriate relationships with these professionals;
- A3 position practitioners at the forefront of their area of gynaecological care to develop and establish the most appropriate integrated care pathways between primary and secondary care for the patient within current NHS guidelines;
- A4 engage practitioners in life-long learning through the enhancement of key skills, a thorough knowledge of critical appraisal and reflective practice;
- A5 provide practitioners with a special interest with transferable nationally recognised training in gynaecology

## Musculoskeletal Medicine with Rheumatology Programme Aims

**The Musculoskeletal Medicine with Rheumatology for Practitioners with a Special Interest programme is intended to:**

- A1 develop the subject-specific knowledge and skills to enable practitioners to practice musculoskeletal medicine and rheumatology at a higher level and to deal with complex clinical situations systematically;
- A2 develop a subject-specific understanding of the role and responsibilities of consultant specialists and the multidisciplinary team in secondary care and to establish appropriate relationships with these professionals;
- A3 position practitioners at the forefront of their subject-specific area of musculoskeletal/rheumatological medicine to develop and establish the most effective integrated care pathways between primary and secondary care for the patient with current NHS guidelines;
- A4 engage practitioners in life-long learning through the enhancement of key skills, a thorough knowledge of critical appraisal and reflective practice;
- A5 provide practitioners with a special interest with transferable nationally recognised training in musculoskeletal medicine with rheumatology.

## **Master's Degree Programme Aims**

**In addition to the relevant Programme Aims listed above, the Master's programme for Practitioners with a Special Interest is intended to:**

- A6 Enable GPs and other Practitioners to work effectively at a 'special interest' level.
- A7 Contribute to the extension of the role of the PwSI within the specialist area.
- A8 Provide a nationally recognised award in the training of PwSIs.
- A9 Establish and/or extend professional collaboration within the chosen specialism, in order to develop the most appropriate care pathways for the patient.
- A10 Embed a culture of enquiry and critical awareness for PwSIs.

## **Programme Learning Outcomes (LOs)**

For the award of the Postgraduate Certificate students will have studied ONE clinical module and so will have developed expertise in a single area of their Special Interest.

For the award of the Postgraduate Diploma students will have studied THREE clinical modules and will have achieved a wider specialist expertise.

**To be eligible for a named FHEQ Level 7 Certificate or Diploma award in their area of Special Interest, students will be able to:**

- P1 Critically analyse and apply current knowledge and skills to enable practitioners to work independently and manage patients in their care and to deal with complex clinical situations systematically;
- P2 Contribute to the development of clinical protocols and practice within the care pathway linking primary and secondary care in line with current recommendations;
- P3 Make strategic and appropriate clinical decisions within the relevant care pathway at a higher level with regard to the diagnosis, management, treatment and referral of patients;
- P4 Communicate complex clinical conclusions clearly and effectively to patients and the clinical team;
- P5 Evaluate the PwSI role, and its implications for the whole patient pathway and current techniques for improving the delivery of patient care;
- P6 Act autonomously and collaboratively in a multidisciplinary context.

**Additionally, to be eligible for a named FHEQ Level 7 Degree award of Master in their area of Special Interest, students will be able to:**

- P7 Critically evaluate and select appropriately methods for a proposed project in the local healthcare environment;
- P8 Critically analyse the current body of knowledge in your specialist subject;

- P9 Demonstrate independent study and the application of research skills as evidenced by the planning, execution and evaluation of a project related to your area of practice;
- P10 Demonstrate problem solving skills;
- P11 Apply information technology as a medium for communication and presentation of data;
- P12 Reflect on the process of undertaking the project and identify what has been learned.

## Curriculum

**Please note:** Not every pathway runs each year; some run multiple times if there is demand. The curriculum may change, subject to contract and the University's programme approval, monitoring and review processes.

The Postgraduate Diploma for Practitioners with a Special Interest is a modular programme encompassing four modules, three of which are clinical and one of which is a service improvement module, leading to a named award in the special interest area.

### Core Certificate and Diploma Curriculum

The service improvement module – PSI7001-C Applied Methodologies – can be taken alongside one or more of the other modules, over a maximum period of 18 months, and is required to be taken on all of the PwSI programmes.

Module Code	Title	Credit	FHEQ Level	Study Period
PSI7001-C	Applied Methodologies	30	7	Full Year

Each of the three clinical modules on the PwSI programmes lasts six months. For students who wish to exit at Certificate level they can choose to complete only one clinical module from the following lists of options in their pathway. Certificate students therefore complete one clinical module and the service improvement module. To achieve the Diploma all modules are compulsory (core).

### Cardiology Programme Options

Module Code	Title	Credit	FHEQ Level	Study Period
PSI7002-C	Heart failure & valvular disease	30	7	Half Year
PSI7003-C	Hypertension, arrhythmias & conduction disorders	30	7	Half Year
PSI7004-C	Ischaemic heart disease	30	7	Half Year

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Cardiology for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 60 credits including PSI7001-C and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students will be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Cardiology for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

## Diabetes Care Programme Options

Module Code	Title	Credit	FHEQ Level	Study Period
PSI7028-C	Diagnosis & Management of Diabetes; Gaining Glycaemic Control	30	7	Half Year
PSI7029-C	Diabetes Intensification of Therapy and Living with Diabetes	30	7	Half Year
PSI7030-C	Diabetes Care Delivery and the Detection and Management of Complications	30	7	Half Year

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Diabetes for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 60 credits including PSI7001-C and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students will be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Diabetes for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

## Gynaecology Programme Options

Module Code	Title	Credit	FHEQ Level	Study Period
PSI7005-C	Abnormal Uterine Bleeding	30	7	Half Year
PSI7006-C	Family Planning, Sexual Health and Cervical Pathology	30	7	Half Year
PSI7007-C	Menopausal Issues, Gynaecological Cancers, Incontinence and Prolapse	30	7	Half Year

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Gynaecology for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 60 credits including PSI7001-C and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students will be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Gynaecology for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

## Musculoskeletal Medicine with Rheumatology Programme Options

Module Code	Title	Credit	FHEQ Level	Study Period
PSI7011-C	Musculoskeletal Disorders of the Upper Limb and Inflammatory Arthropathies	30	7	Half Year
PSI7012-C	Musculoskeletal Disorders of the Lower Limb and Metabolic Bone Disease	30	7	Half Year
PSI7013-C	Musculoskeletal Disorders of the Cervical, Thoracic and Lumbar Spine and Chronic Widespread Pain Disorders	30	7	Half Year

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Musculoskeletal Medicine with Rheumatology for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 60 credits including PSI7001-C and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students will be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Musculoskeletal Medicine with Rheumatology for Practitioners with a Special Interest if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

### Master's Degree

The MSc programme for Practitioners with a Special Interest programme builds upon learning from a Postgraduate Diploma and may be completed in one additional year on a part time basis.

Module Code	Title	Credit	Level	Study Period
LEM7006-E	Management Project	60	FHEQ Level 7	Full Year

Students will be eligible for the award of Degree of Master if they have successfully completed at least 180 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

## Learning and Teaching Strategy

### Diploma Programme

The Postgraduate Diploma programme is run and delivered by The Ridge Education Ltd and the award is made through the University of Bradford. A key feature of the programme is the development of clinical competence in a work environment.

A variety of teaching methods are employed on the programmes, to enable students to fulfil the varied modular learning outcomes. The learning within the programmes is gained through:

- 1 **Direct tuition:** this occurs at the beginning of each module. Tutors are available by email if required during attachment periods to handle learning queries.

Tutors are advanced clinical practitioners, allied health professionals and service improvement specialists.

- 2 **Work-based learning:** this forms the central part of the programme of study in the form of clinical attachments. Each module should contain at least 14 sessions of direct clinical practice in a secondary care environment. This learning is undertaken on attachment in the locality, under the supervision of a clinical mentor. Students will approach the mentor in the first instance: they must be a registered advanced clinician in the Special Interest area who has teaching experience. The clinical mentor will receive a Mentor Guide including advice and support from the programme management team in fulfilling the role of mentor.
- 3 **Guided reading (given by tutor and mentor):** this complements the attachment and enables students to fulfil the theoretical background necessary for their attachment activities and prepares them for their written and presentational assignments.
- 4 **E-learning:** the virtual learning environment gives access to the peer group and tutors during attachment, facilitating learning through clinical discussion, as well as providing support.
- 5 **Local research and application:** The Applied Methodologies module involves working within the healthcare community and applying two different service improvement methodologies: a clinical audit and a patient pathway analysis. Learning takes place during the activities of researching and reading information, planning, preparation and application of these.

Programme Learning Outcomes 1, 3, and 6 will be developed through lectures, seminars and workshops on the teaching/assessment days; a programme manual; practical engagement with patients in the hospital setting under the supervision and mentorship of the consultant; reflective discussion with the mentor; reflective learning through case study preparation and clinical learning diary recording; the application of learning with patients in general practice and will be supported by guided reading. Outcomes 2 and 5 will be developed through the Applied Methodologies module. Outcomes 3 and 4 will be developed through practical engagement with patients in the hospital setting as well as their own practice under the supervision and mentorship of the consultant and through reflective discussion with the mentor on these and other occasions. Outcomes 4, 5 and 6 will be developed throughout the programme in all modules.

Optionality is available to students studying for the Certificate in their choice of modules. It is available to students studying for the Diploma in the choice of cases for the written reflective studies and the presentations.

## Master's Degree

The Clinical Project module will begin with a two-day project preparation workshop, supported by interactive learning objects and online synchronous student-centred tutorials, which will introduce them to alternative methods which students may want to use when carrying out their project and will prepare students to undertake the project. Students will be able to present a proposal for their study and receive feedback to help students to further develop their study. Following the workshop, students will receive

individual project supervision from their personal supervisor for the duration of the project. These will give students the knowledge and skills needed (LOs 7-8, 10) to undertake their project which will be undertaken within your work area (LOs 7-11).

The subject of the project undertaken must relate to your specialism and be agreed with the students' academic supervisor who will be a member of staff from the University of Bradford. In addition, students will have a clinical supervisor whose expertise lies in the chosen specialism. The academic supervisor will ensure that the project is presented with academic integrity, while the clinical supervisor ensures that there is an appropriate clinical content. Whilst the academic supervisor will be appointed by the University, the student should approach a clinical supervisor.

It is anticipated that students will continue to work in their normal practice setting during the project period of study, and it is expected that ongoing learning will be applied in this context.

## **Assessment Strategy**

Students will be provided with a detailed student handbook, containing guidance, marking criteria and reading lists. Assessment is designed to enable students to have a rounded measurement of the skills needed for their role in the healthcare community.

Clinical competence is verified through mentor signature after observation and discussion during the attachment periods.

All assessments are of an applied nature. In the clinical modules assessment is in the form of the verification of competence and key skills as observed by the mentor. This is supported by a learning diary which demonstrates both breadth of learning and experience. Reflective case studies are undertaken and presented. These address patients whom students have seen and managed clinically. Students are required to prepare and present a critical appraisal of a piece of published research to the student group.

In the Applied Methodologies module students submit a clinical audit and a patient pathway analysis in order to demonstrate their engagement with quality improvement procedures in patient care.

Students submit their work electronically and receive a summative numerical mark and written feedback. A draft may be sent to tutors for formative assessment. Students are awarded a numerical mark and receive written and verbal feedback.

Students will be provided with a detailed student handbook, containing guidance, marking criteria and reading lists. Assessment is designed to enable students to have a rounded measurement of the skills needed for their role in the healthcare community.

The MSc Management Project will be marked in accordance with the Level 7 marking criteria of the University of Bradford, Faculty of Health Studies, which will be made available to students in order to meet the required standard (LO7-12). Both the first and second marker will be allocated by the University as per their standard procedure.

## Assessment Regulations

These Programmes conform to the standard University of Bradford Postgraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at the link: [www.brad.ac.uk/regulations/](http://www.brad.ac.uk/regulations/)

However, there are two exceptions to these regulations for the Certificate and Diploma stages as listed below:

- Students will be required to pass all components of assessment at 40% or above without compensation, with the exception of the clinical competence element of each module which is marked on a pass/fail basis. All clinical elements must be passed.
- If the students overall mark for any module is below 40% they will have an automatic opportunity to undertake a second attempt at any assessment or components of assessment they have failed. A date will be given to the student by when they will need to submit their second attempt. Students will not need to wait until their marks have been presented to a Board of Examiners.

## Certificate/Diploma Admission Requirements

The standard entry requirements for the programme are as follows:

- Students must be a suitably qualified registered primary or secondary care practitioner, demonstrating successful study skills at level 6, with at least two years relevant work experience in the UK;
- Students must obtain written support from a registered advanced clinician or clinician with extended roles in their chosen specialism (Cardiology, Diabetes, Gynaecology, MSK with Rheumatology) for mentorship and the provision of a clinical attachment;
- Students must produce evidence of relevant registered qualification, currency and academic qualifications:
- As the assessment elements of the Programme require a substantial amount of written work at FHEQ level 7, in accordance with regulations from the University of Bradford non-native speakers require an IELTS rating of at least 6.5, with no sub-test lower than 5.5, or the equivalent score in another recognised English Language test: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/>

The University of Bradford 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 particular programme. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

If applicants have 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 in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme. For more details about the University Recognition of Prior Learning procedures visit: <https://www.brad.ac.uk/teaching-quality/prior-learning/>

## Master's Degree Admission Requirements

There is no direct entry to the MSc via the standard Admissions process. Admission requirements for the MSc requires applicants to have completed one of the four Postgraduate Diplomas for Practitioners with Special Interest, or another qualification of similar content, as approved by the University of Bradford.

If applicants present qualifications other than a Postgraduate Diploma for PwSI, or if prior knowledge comes from experiential learning, a Recognition or Prior Learning (RPL) panel will be convened, consisting of a specialist in the relevant subject area and a University representative.

Applicants without a University of Bradford Postgraduate Diploma are encouraged to contact the Faculty of Health Studies Admissions Team – by telephoning 01274 236088 or via email to [admissionshealth@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:admissionshealth@bradford.ac.uk) – to discuss their suitability for the programme.

MSc applicants are also required to obtain the (renewed) agreement of a suitable clinical supervisor and of their employing NHS Trust to undertake this programme.

**Please note:** this admissions information relates to the contemporary recruitment cycle when this document was published. The entry requirements may be different for the current cycle. Visit the course page to check:

PwSI Cardiology: <https://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-cardiology/>

PwSI Diabetes: <https://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-diabetes/>

PwSI Gynaecology: <https://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/practitioners-with-special-interest-gynaecology/>

PwSI MSK: <https://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/pg/pwsi-musculoskeletal-medicine-with-rheumatology/>

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