



FdSc Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Programme Specification

Academic Year:	2023/24
Degree Awarding Body:	University of Bradford
Final and interim award(s):	Foundation Degree in Science [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Level 5] Certificate of Higher Education in Health Studies [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Level 4]
Programme accredited by:	NMC - Nursing and Midwifery Council
Programme duration:	2 Years full time
Apprenticeship Standard:	Nursing Associate (NMC 2018)
LARS Code for the Standard:	434
End Point Assessment:	Integrated
QAA Subject benchmark statement:	Health Studies (2019)
Date last confirmed and/or minor modification approved by Faculty Board	October 2022

The award meets the UK Government's apprenticeship standard published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

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.

Introduction

This is an exciting time to undertake a programme of study to become a Nursing Associate. Learner Nursing Associates will be at the forefront of developing and establishing this new role. The Nursing Associate is intended to transform the nursing workforce by bridging the gap between unregulated health care assistants and the registered nurse. Nursing Associates are professionals, registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), they deliver holistic, person-centred care, undertaking clinical tasks and supporting individuals, families, and carers. The Nursing Associate monitors care and the patient's condition, consulting with the registered nurse as required.

A Foundation Degree Science Nursing Associate will equip learners with the skills, knowledge and attributes for a lifelong career working in diverse and challenging health and social care environments to provide caring, efficient and effective health care. It will

give the opportunity to progress a career across a range of healthcare settings and, if required, to go on to undertake a shortened course to become a registered nurse.

This Foundation Degree programme is undertaken over two years, with an emphasis on learning in the clinical practice setting. The programme is unique as the learner will be employed as an apprentice Nursing Associate in the healthcare setting, providing excellent opportunities to link learning in the classroom with experience in patient care. Practice placements with the employing organisation will allow the learner to consolidate learning and build caring and therapeutic relationships with patients, service users and carers. Practice placements will allow learners to gain experience across all fields of nursing, caring for adults and children, people in hospital who are acutely ill, people who need care in their own homes, people with physical illness, mental health illness and those with learning disabilities. The nature of nursing and health care means that learners will be working alongside other health and social care professionals in practice placements. Learners will also engage in shared learning with other students at the University where sessions occur that match the learning outcomes for the Nursing Associate modules.

The Nursing Associate programme offers potentially two intakes per academic year, depending on applicant numbers and workforce demand in our partner Trusts. The intakes will commence at the beginning of Semester 1, which is August/ September or Semester 2 December/ January. Specific start dates will vary annually. Throughout the programme of study learners have access to all the academic support facilities at the University. The programme has been designed to support learners in becoming confident learners, even after a long break from academic study. The Faculty of Health Studies and the School of Nursing and Healthcare Leadership have successfully delivered undergraduate nursing programmes for many years. Teaching on the programme is informed by current theoretical knowledge, research and practice-based evidence. Lecturers are predominantly academics that hold Nursing and Midwifery Council qualifications as Registered Nurse Lecturers and Registered Nurses with extensive expertise in their field of practice. Other lecturers that contribute to the programme hold professionally recognised qualifications in allied fields of health care and/or are subject specialists. Learners will be supported both in the academic and clinical settings through the allocation of a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) and an Academic Assessor, and a Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor in the clinical practice area. In addition learners in NHS Trusts will be supported by an inhouse Practice Educator, learners in GP practices and Private and Independent Voluntary Organisations (PIVO) will be supported by a Practice Education Support Tutor (PEST) from the University.

The programme and module learning outcomes reflect the guidance set in the Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards (2018) and the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Standards (2019) and the Framework for Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2008).

The Faculty of Health Studies hosts a thriving service user and carer community who are actively involved in the development of programmes, recruitment and selection of learners, research projects and teaching, and offers a rich diversity of clinical experience available through its partner Trusts. The City of Bradford is a vibrant multi-cultural city, where learners will be exposed to people from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

School of Nursing and Healthcare Leadership Philosophy

The profession of nursing, including the relatively new role of Nursing Associate, aspires to be holistic, compassionate and inclusive. In collaboration with patients, their families and carers we will provide an emphasis on authentic scenarios with learners at the heart of learning. Experiential reflection, exploration, evidence-informed inquiry and assessment opportunities will take place at the University of Bradford and our partner organisations.

- We are committed to encouraging a community in which scholarly inquiry, improving nursing education and practice, lead to provision for quality health care and initiating change.
- We will inspire each learner to develop their full potential through high quality, evidence-informed learning, teaching and practice activities.
- We will support, guide and prepare learners to provide evidence-informed care in a range of health and social care settings.
- We will support learners to maximise their potential and prepare them to be effective practitioners in global settings, celebrating diversity and enhancing their employability.
- We will include the inter-professional team in shared governance, working and learning together to ensure the delivery of excellence in care.
- We will ensure that educational opportunities encompass a learner-centred, deep approach to learning, recognising learners as independent adult learners with emphasis on personal and life experiences.
- We will deliver a portfolio of educational opportunities to serve contemporary professional nursing and service needs using innovative learning teaching and assessment strategies, underpinned by research informed theoretical knowledge.

Programme Aims

The programme is intended to:

- Deliver a coherent educational experience that will enable learners to meet the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Standards and the Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards. Enable learners to demonstrate fitness for practice and prepared to engage in ongoing personal and professional development which will demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning.
- Prepare learners to work in partnership with other professionals, service users and their carers/families across organisational and professional health and social care settings.
- Provide learners with the skills to develop an enquiry-based approach to the delivery of high-quality person centred-care, utilising knowledge of a range of subjects.
- Develop a critical awareness to enable safely and effectively practice within an evidence informed team.

- Prepare learners to become a Nursing Associate who can provide culturally appropriate and sensitive care across the health and illness continuum in diverse health and social care settings.

Programme Learning Outcomes

To be eligible for the FHEQ Level 4 award of Certificate of Higher Education in Health Studies, learners will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with nursing, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these to deliver and monitor high quality person-centred, holistic care and support individuals and communities to improve health.
2. Show an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of nursing care.
3. Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to Nursing Associate practice.
4. Communicate effectively using structured, coherent arguments to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and apply effective interpersonal skills to deliver health and care service.
5. Demonstrate skills, attitudes and behaviours that contribute to the delivery and monitoring of high quality person-centred, holistic care and support individuals and communities to improve health.

Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 5 award of Foundation Degree in Science Nursing Associate, learners will be able to:

6. Apply knowledge and critical understanding of the principles of Nursing Associate practice in order to work across organisational boundaries and in a range of health and care settings and teams.
7. Evaluate research and apply to Nursing Associate practice, addressing the challenges faced within the context of rising public expectations.
8. Take the initiative in a variety of situations and performing a range of clinical and care skills consistent with the roles, responsibilities and professional values and limits of knowledge of a Nursing Associate.
9. Critically analyse information, research and guidance and apply to improve the quality of care and patient safety.
10. Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis using a variety of forms with specialist and non-specialist audiences, demonstrating the ability to communicate with a wide range of individuals.
11. Demonstrate the skills, attitudes and behaviours that support personal development and life-long learning as well as those associated with the development of others.

Curriculum

The FdSc Nursing Associate taught curriculum is made up of 30 credit modules that contribute to the Foundation Degree in Science - worth 240 credits. Learners will study modules across the Academic Year (2 semesters/terms) or within a single University Semester, over 2 Stages (years). All modules are core to the programme.

This section assumes learners are commencing the programme in December 2023/ January 2024. Such Learner Nursing Associates study Semester 2 first because the programme starts after the autumn University semester. **The progression point for these learners onto the next stage of study will be the following January (2025).**

Please note: The curriculum may change, subject to accrediting body requirements and the University's programme approval, monitoring and review procedures.

Learners study 120 core credits in the first year of study.

Stage 1 Modules (Programme Year 1/CertHE Health Studies):

Level	Title	Credit	Study Period	Code
FHEQ 4	Effective Person-Centred Care	30	1 (SEM2)	NUR4018-C
FHEQ 4	Nursing Associate Practice One	30	1 (SEM2)	NUR4017-C
FHEQ 4	Promoting Health	30	2 (SEM1)	NUR4016-C
FHEQ 4	Nursing Associate Practice Two	30	2 (SEM1)	NUR4019-C

At the end of stage 1, apprentices will be eligible to exit with the award of Certificate of Higher Education in Health Studies if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits.

PLEASE NOTE: THE CERT.HE HEALTH STUDIES AWARD DOES NOT CONFER ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER WITH THE NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL.

Learners do not have to complete the Nursing Associate Programme Standards - Part 1 module to exit with a Certificate of Higher Education in Health Studies, but this module must be passed to be eligible for progression into the next stage of study.

Learners complete the final 120 core credits in the second year of study.

Stage 2 Modules (Programme Year 2/FdSc Nursing Associate):

Level	Title	Credit	Study Period	Code
FHEQ 5	Nursing Associate Programme Standards - Part 2	0	Year (NSYR)	NUR5019-Z
FHEQ 5	Integrated Care	30	1 (SEM2)	NUR5015-C
FHEQ 5	Nursing Associate Practice three	30	1 (SEM2)	NUR5016-C
FHEQ 5	Improving Care Quality	30	2 (SEM1)	NUR5017-C
FHEQ 5	Nursing Associate Practice four	30	2 (SEM1)	NUR5018-C
FHEQ 5	Nursing Associate Gateway Requirements	0	2 (SEM1)	NUR5020-Z

At the end of stage 2, apprentices will be eligible to exit with the award of Foundation Degree Science Nursing Associate if they have successfully completed at least 240 credits

and have passed the Nursing Associate Programme Standards - Part 2 module and the Nursing Associate Gateway Requirements module.

The FdSc Nursing Associate award contributes to the gateway requirements for an apprentice.

PLEASE NOTE: THE FD.SC NURSING ASSOCIATE AWARD CONFERS ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER WITH THE NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL. SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS MUST REGISTER WITH THE NMC WITHIN 5 YEARS OF COMPLETING THE AWARD.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

The curriculum has been designed to support the learner in balancing study time and the demands of the role as a learner Nursing Associate. Attendance at the University will be a combination of full-time study blocks and one day a week. The programme is framed around core concepts that form a framework of key content which is revisited across the programme, progressing from an introductory/broad understanding of concepts to advanced application of concepts to nursing. The intention is to facilitate development by introducing the learner to the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to meet the health needs of all patient/client groups. Learners will not only learn about and become competent nursing patients/clients in their own practice setting but also become confident in nursing patients/clients who have conditions related to other fields of nursing practice. For example, learning to work with patients/service users with surgical problems but who also have a learning disability.

Throughout the Foundation Degree programme learners will participate in a wide range of learner centred learning activities in order to help develop the knowledge, skills and values required to meet the apprenticeship standard (2019). The programme learning and teaching strategy is designed to meet the NMC standard for pre-registration Nursing Associate programmes (NMC, 2018) and the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Standards (2019). The programme is structured to ensure that learners gain 2,300 hours of protected theory learning time over the two years of study.

There is a structured approach to teaching which will take place on campus (face to face) and be complimented by virtual activities. Examples include directed learning activities, and online learning resources as well as keynote lectures, seminars, tutorials group work, clinical case studies, simulated practice, team-based learning and elements of problem-based learning, individual tutorials, debates and discussions. Learners will be expected to complete and give feedback upon directed activities and undertake regular self-directed study. Learning will be monitored, and learners will receive regular formative feedback that does not contribute to the final module mark but is intended to support progress.

Learners will have the opportunity to work with and learn alongside other professionals in health and social care, both in the university and practice settings. As an apprentice, it is expected that learners will develop and display the professional behaviour that is required of all Nursing Associates by the general public and employers, both in the university and whilst gaining practice experience.

Placement

Learners will work gaining practice experience as an apprentice within their normal place of work, known as the 'hub' placement. Learners will also have additional experience of placement in other settings, known as 'spoke' placements. Learners will be supernumerary whilst on spoke placements. This is in order to ensure that each learner experiences a broad range of learning opportunities and contexts. During the programme learners will undertake a variety of clinical experiences in different healthcare settings such as acute care and patient or client's own home and in caring for different groups of people across the age range and with people with a learning disability and with mental health problems.

Each learner will be allocated a practice supervisor and a practice assessor on each placement. Supervisors are there to support and educate during practice placements, helping to integrate theoretical knowledge into effective/appropriate practice. The assessor will monitor and assess progress during and at the end of the placement. Academic assessors will liaise with practice assessors to monitor the progress of learners on a regular basis.

Protected and off the job learning in practice

The placement strategy is aligned to the NMC Standards for pre-registration Nursing Associate programmes (NMC, 2018) and is designed to contribute to 2300 hours of protected learning time over two years.

The programme meets the NMC standard for pre-registration Nursing Associate programmes (NMC, 2018) and the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Standards (2019) requirements incorporating 767 hours off the job (university) and, 767 hours off the job (practice) and, 767 hours of protected learning time (2,300 hours) over two years.

The protected learning time in practice will be recorded in the PAD and monitored by clinical and academic assessors.

End Point Assessment of Apprentices

End point assessments are a requirement of all apprenticeship programmes. However, as a professional programme, the end point assessment is integrated within the existing assessments of the FdSc Nursing Associate award. On confirmation of successful completion of their programme learners will be submitted to the gateway for independent verification of the claim for the apprenticeship.

On completion of the apprenticeship learners will be a competent and 'job-ready' Nursing Associate. Before submission to the gateway the learner must have completed:

- RQF Level 2 Maths and English - The Apprentice will also have to have evidence that English and Maths have been achieved at a minimum of Level 2 (**This is required prior to entry on the programme**).
- RQF/FHEQ Level 5 regulated qualification such as a Foundation Degree or Level 5 Diploma of Higher Education delivered by an institution approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council to provide pre-registration nursing (**This is obtained by completing the FdSc Nursing Associate programme**).

Assessment Strategy

Assessment is an important part of learning on this programme of study. Assessments are designed to help focus learning and to demonstrate progress. The assessments also demonstrate that learners have met the standards required to be a compassionate, safe and effective Nursing Associate. Assessments are linked to each module; half the modules have a focus on understanding of the theory and how it is applied in practice and half the modules have more focus on learning in the practice environment and how to apply theory to practical skills and behaviours. Assessments aim to determine achievement of the learning outcomes of each module.

The module assessments that are used toward final grades are known as summative assessments. Learners will be supported in achieving the best possible grades for each module by an academic member of staff and will also have formative opportunities for assessment. The feedback given for formative assessments does not count towards final grades but is designed to help learners practise assessment skills and develop their written work.

The summative theory module assessments have some scope to choose the topic areas for assessment. Methods of assessment include essays, case studies, reports, workbooks, communications exercise, individual readiness assurance tests and team readiness assurance tests, written examinations.

Practice experience is continuously assessed with informal feedback mid-placement and a formal summative assessment twice a year by practice assessors. The summative assessment is recorded in the portfolio, known as the Practice Achievement Document (PAD). Learners will also be expected to submit a reflection on practice experience. The summative reflective element of most of the practice-based modules recognises the importance of reflection as a tool for professional practice. The reflective accounts will provide an opportunity to demonstrate integration of theory into practice and show application of evidence for practice. Assessment and feedback, providing direction for personal development and help to bridge the gap between classroom learning and the clinical environment. Reflective accounts will demonstrate development across the programme, demonstrate written communication skills, ability to critique own practice and evaluate personal learning. Learners will negotiate a focus for their reflective account with their supervisors and assessors in practice. The reflection is related to the module learning outcomes and the NMC Standards of proficiency for Nursing Associates (NMC, 2018).

Nurses and Nursing Associates are required to revalidate with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) every three years. Revalidation requires evidence of reflection and completion of a reflective discussion with a fellow registrant. The assessed reflection throughout the two-year Foundation Degree allows learners to develop their reflective skills and become familiar with an activity that is essential for professional nursing practice and potentially a requirement for their future professional registration.

The methods of assessment used in this programme have taken into consideration; feedback (staff, clinicians, and learners) from current assessments, variety of assessment, clinical assessments to assess safe practice in a controlled and safe environment, resourcing and marking mechanisms. Service users/carers are involved in assessment, including setting assessments, providing evaluation and feedback in practice.

Written assessments and reflections are submitted electronically using Canvas according to module guidelines. Support in submitting assessments electronically will be available. A self-assessment for all summatively assessed work is required.

Assessment Regulations

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

However, there are 3 exceptions to these regulations as listed below:

1. Eligibility for Award:

1.1. Learners must achieve a mark of 40% or above in all modules and their subsequent parts (components and elements).

2. Supplementary assessment:

2.1. All learners on the Foundation Degree Nursing Associate Programme are entitled to only 2 attempts in practice/ clinical elements of the assessment (PAR document) and that where the requisite standard is not achieved the learner will be required to withdraw from the programme.

3. Trailing credit/ Referral:

3.1. Learners are permitted to progress to the final stage of study trailing up to 30 credits of Level 4 modules.

Admission Requirements

Applicants to the programme must be employed as a Nursing Associate Apprentice. Applicants are interviewed jointly by the employer and University. The recruitment interviews are centred on values in accordance with The Code (NMC, 2018). The University welcomes applications from all potential apprentices and most important in the decision to offer a place is a candidate's potential to benefit from their studies and succeed on the programme.

Applicants who are successful at interview and offered a job as apprentice Nursing Associate are invited to apply to the University for a place on the FdSc Nursing Associate programme. We strongly encourage potential applicants to attend university Open Days, where they will have the opportunity to meet staff, view the facilities and discuss the "Bradford Experience" with current students and apprentices.

The minimum entry requirements for the programme are as follows:

- Maths GCSE (grade C or above) or equivalent certificated learning
- English GCSE (grade C or above) or equivalent certificated learning
- A level 2 qualification in Health and Social Care.
- A declaration of health and good character in line with the NMC's health and character decision-making guidance (on entry).
- Satisfactory occupational health assessment
- Satisfactory criminal record checks

- Completion of the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Standards (2019) Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours assessment.

A declaration of health and good character must also be made annually following admission to the programme.

Please note: the admissions requirements listed here are accurate at the time of publication but may be different when you are reading this document. The up-to-date list of requirements is available via the course website: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/nursing-associate-apprenticeship-foundation/>

Recognition of Prior Learning

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. We recommend contacting our Central Admissions Department on admissions-health@bradford.ac.uk before making an application. Any RPL is cross referenced against the Knowledge Skills and Behaviours of the Apprenticeship Standard. The RPL process could result in a reduction in the price of the apprenticeship.

References

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (2019) Nursing Associate - NMC 2018, available at: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/nursing-associate-nmc-2018/>

Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2018, Standards for pre-registration Nursing Associate programmes, NMC, available at <https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/standards-of-proficiency/standards-for-pre-registration-nursing-associate-programmes/nursing-associates-programme-standards.pdf>

Minor Modification Schedule

Version	Minor Modification Description	Faculty Board Approval Date
2	Minor changes for 2021 Academic Year	September 2021
3	Addition of the Nursing Associate Gateway Requirements module to the curriculum structure	September 2021
4	Minor changes for 2022 Academic Year and reformatted for better accessibility	October 2022
5	Minor changes for 2023 Academic Year	July 2023