

## Programme Specification

A Programme Specification provides a concise summary of the main features of a programme and its intended learning outcomes. It is intended to be used by prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers.

<b>Programme Title:</b>	
<b>MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Apprenticeship)</b>	
<b>Programme (AOS) Code(s):</b>	<b>MW1ACP2</b>
<b>UCAS Code:</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Name of Final Award:</b>	<b>Master of Science, MSc</b>
<b>Level of Qualification:</b>	<b>Level 7</b>
<b>Regime of Delivery:</b>	<b>Work-Based Learning</b>
<b>Mode(s) of Delivery:</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
<b>Typical Length of Study (Years):</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Professional Body Recognition / Accreditation (including specific requirements where applicable):</b>	<b>n/a</b>

### Brief Description of the Programme

This Apprenticeship programme has been developed in response to an emerging healthcare role, that of the Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP). It encompasses the four pillars of advanced practice: advanced clinical practice, leadership, education and research. Within it is embedded the demonstration of core capabilities and area specific clinical competence, and alignment to the Apprenticeship Standards.

Advanced clinical practice embodies the ability to manage clinical care in partnership with individuals, families and carers. It includes the analysis and synthesis of complex problems across a range of settings, enabling innovative solutions to enhance people's experience and improve outcomes.

The programme comprises core and optional modules relevant to the individual Apprentices' developmental needs, relevant clinical practice and service requirements.

### Programme Aims

- 1 To develop Advanced Clinical Practitioner Apprentices with a high level of autonomy and decision-making skills, who are able to use a person-centred approach to manage complex and unpredictable clinical situations
- 2 To enable the utilisation of a range of appropriate skills and knowledge with regards clinical investigations, tests and assessments to support diagnostic decision-making and the evaluation of therapeutic interventions
- 3 To facilitate inter-professional collaboration and cross-boundary working to formulate a plan of care relevant in a variety of healthcare settings

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| 4 | To encourage the Apprentice to undertake research, educational and leadership activities to enhance organisational culture and improve service and patient outcomes |
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## Programme Learning Outcomes

The Bucks Graduate Attributes focus on the development of innovative leaders in professional and creative capacities, who are equipped to operate in the 21st Century labour market and make a positive impact as global citizens. The attributes are developed through the programme.

**The Programme Learning Outcomes are configured under the 4 pillars of advanced practice.**

ID	Learning Outcome
<b>Advanced Clinical Practice</b>	
A1	Demonstrate a high level of accountable and autonomous practice in line with the code of professional conduct, and in relation to local and national policies and procedures.
A2	Utilising an inter-professional, holistic and person-centred approach, undertake a range of evidence-based physical and psychological assessment methods, supported by the application of pathophysiology to underpin diagnosis, investigations and management and evaluation of therapeutic interventions.
A3	Use expertise in clinical reasoning and diagnostic decision-making to manage complex and unpredictable episodes of care, taking into account issues such as health promotion, appropriate referral, risk management and discharge planning.
A4	Evaluate the use of pharmacological interventions underpinned by of pharmacotherapeutics relative to one's scope of practice, supported by the application of contemporary and emerging technological advances.
<b>Education</b>	
B1	Assess one's own learning needs and those of others to establish realistic goals and learning outcomes to maximise potential to lead and transform care and services.
B2	As a role model and mentor, apply teaching and learning theories to support practice education and promote inter and intra-professional learning.
B3	Advocate and contribute to the development of an organisational culture that supports life-long learning and development, evidence-based practice and succession planning.
<b>Clinical Leadership</b>	
C1	Provide professional leadership and supervision in complex and unpredictable situations by utilising models, theories and techniques of leadership in inter and intra-professional contexts.
C2	Participate in peer review of one's own practice and that of others as part of the process of critical reflection to inform creative and innovative practice across professional boundaries.
C3	Identify strategies for instigating change to inform practice and service redesign solutions in response to service needs, underpinned by a range of legal, ethical, professional and organisational policies, procedures and professional codes of conduct.
<b>Research</b>	
D1	Critically appraise and synthesise the outcomes of research, evaluation, audit and its application to clinical practice to promote the dissemination of evidence-based standards, policies and clinical guidelines, locally and nationally, in the light of financial constraints within healthcare.

D2	Explore the development and implementation of clinical governance structures and policies to ensure that robust governance systems and systematic documentation processes are maintained.
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## Programme Structure

Programmes are structured in stages. The number of stages will vary depending on the mode (e.g. full-time, part-time), duration and location of study which will be detailed in the Programme Handbook.

Modules are set at a specific academic level and listed as either core (compulsory) or optional. The level indicates the relative academic difficulty which will increase through the programme. Passing modules will reward you with academic credit. The amount of credits will depend on the complexity of the module and the level of effort required, which is measured in 'notional learning hours'.

Our [Academic Advice webpages](#) provide more information on the structure of taught awards offered by the University.

*Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to sector developments.*

There will be a tripartite decision between the Apprentice, Employer and the Programme Leader regarding the choice of optional modules, based on the appropriate clinical environment and service requirements.

The Non-Medical Prescribing modules NP704 (for Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals) and NP705 (for Pharmacists) have a high number of contact hours and must be undertaken to achieve a prescribing qualification, which carries professional body recognition (i.e. NMC, HCPC or GPhC accreditation). The inclusion of these modules is in response to extensive consultation with employers and fits closely with the ethos of work-based learning as they are highly applicable and relevant to advancing professional practice, and service requirements.

## Level Seven

Code	Module Title	Credit	Core / Option	Compensable (Normally Yes)
CL761	Developing Professional Knowledge: Clinical Reasoning Skills for Advanced Practice	30	C	No
CL762	Developing Professional Skills: Physical Assessment of the Adult	30	C	No
NP704	Non-Medical Prescribing - Nurses/Midwives/Allied Health Professionals	60	O	No
<b><u>Or</u></b>				
NP705	Non-Medical Prescribing - Pharmacists	60	O	No
CL763	Leadership, Management and Professional Issues	30	O	No
CL764	Respiratory Care	30	O	No
CL765	Cardiac Care	30	O	No
CL766	Cancer Care	30	O	No

CL767	Intensive Care	30	O	No
CL768	Managing Minor Illness	30	O	No
CL769	Managing Minor Injury	30	O	No
CL770	Research and Work-Based Project	40	C	No
CL771	End Point Assessment	20	C	No

## Learning and Teaching Activities

Please see the [Academic Advice pages](#) for a description of learning and teaching activities that are recognised by the University. Detailed information on this specific programme is outlined below:

Teaching and learning strategies employed within the programme reflect the nature of the learning experience at Level 7. Strategies adopted will encourage further Apprentice independence and learning from and through experience. The teaching will be undertaken by lecturers and experts within a variety of disciplines.

**Lectures:** keynote lectures will be employed to launch fundamental theoretical aspects of the programme and will provide the academic foundation for Apprentice led work within seminar and/or workshops.

**Seminars:** seminars will offer a forum by which Apprentices can explore key areas and will combine the presentation of information and ideas, exploration of relevant issues, and the application of theoretical principles. There will be further opportunities for them to discuss the application of these in their field of practice.

**Simulated learning:** the simulation suites will be used on some of the clinical modules to simulate practice scenarios and to facilitate physical assessment skills for example. Apprentices will be enabled to apply theory to practice, enhance their practical skills and increase their confidence in a more realistic, but non-threatening environment. The Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is utilized as an assessment, to allow Apprentices to demonstrate the learnt theory in a safe practical space.

**Case studies:** during face-to-face sessions, an array of case studies from all disciplines will be used as a vehicle for enquiry-based learning. Apprentices will explore and critically discuss the components of those cases, to learn from successful and un-successful interventions as well as to be able to iterate the nature of good and bad experiences. The case studies will enable Apprentices to illuminate the nature of work, the demands inherent within the practice arena to enable the development of critical knowledge and problem solving skills.

**Directed reading:** throughout the programme Apprentices will be required to engage in critical discussion, which will require them to undertake directed reading outside of the formal teaching session. Further, they will be provided with relevant reading lists by the lecturers, and via the Virtual Learning Environment and will be encouraged to undertake independent reading to ensure they engage with a breadth of literature and evidence so they are cognisant with contemporary debates within their field.

**Virtual Learning Environment:** in addition to accessing reading material uploaded by the teaching team, links will be provided to relevant national and international guidelines and websites. Learners will be able to participate in discussion boards for the individual modules to facilitate the sharing of information.

**End Point Assessment Preparation:** The EPA module (CL771) forms the final 20 credits of the Apprenticeship Award, and within the core modules, assessment strategies will mirror those requirements, enabling the Apprentices to have preparation and exposure to the requirements of the final aspect of the award. For example, module CL761 has an assessment entitled ‘Oral Assessment and Presentation’, which is modelled on the EPA element 2: Presentation of Practice; CL762 assessment EX1 will be modelled on the Open Book element of the End Point Assessment.

### Additional Course Costs

There are costs associated with all studies, additional to the tuition fee, which require consideration, when planning and budgeting for expenditure. Costs are indicative and for the total length of the course shown unless otherwise stated and will increase with inflation; depending on the programme they may include equipment, printing, project materials, study trips, placement activities, DBS and/or other security checks.

None

### Contact Hours

1 unit of credit is the equivalent of 10 notional learning hours. Full time undergraduate students study 120 credits (1200 hours) and full-time postgraduate students study 180 credits (1800 hours) per year or ‘stage’ of the course.

Course Stage	Scheduled Activities (Hours)	Guided Independent Study (Hours)	Work-based Learning
Year One	112	162	326
Year Two	Optional Module dependent	Optional Module dependent	Optional Module dependent
Year Three	54	182	364

### Assessment Methods

The [Assessment and Examination webpages](#) provide further information on how assignments are marked and moderated, including a description of assessment activities. These also include further information about how feedback on assessed work is provided to students, including our commitment to ensure this is provided to students within 15 working days (the ‘three-week turnaround’).

The following assessment activities are used on this programme:

- **Oral presentation:** either individually or in groups. The Apprentices are supported to develop their presentation skills. Presentations are either assessed by the tutor or are peer assessed using a clear marking scheme.
- **Essay:** a variety of written assessments are used ranging from reflection on practice to reports and the development of portfolios.
- **Literature review:** A review of literature is used as the summative assessment for several modules. This allows the students to explore in greater depth a subject of their choice.
- **Clinical competency document: (skills and knowledge evaluation documents)** provide the opportunity for Apprentices to complete clinical competencies relevant to their field of study is a corner stone of the MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Apprenticeship) programme. The

students work in their own clinical area and are supported to complete the competencies by qualified mentors who are supported by University Staff to ensure understanding of the documentation and assessment process. The competencies are pass / fail and are not graded. Clinical competencies are not considered to be dependent on academic level.

- **Viva voce:** some clinical modules include a viva as part of the summative assessment. This allows the student to demonstrate their ability to translate the learnt theory into a practical situation. The viva are assessed by subject experts.
- **Objective Structured Clinical Examination:** The OSCE is used in several modules to allow the students to demonstrate the learnt theory in a safe practical space. The OSCEs are assessed by field experts and practice partners.
- **Formative assessment:** elements of formative assessment are included in all modules so that the students can prepare for the summative assessments and identify any gaps in their knowledge
- **Work-based project:** an evidence-based work-related project will be completed in the final year of study. This allows the student to identify an area of clinical interest and relevance to the advanced practice role and produce an extended piece of work based on an extended literature review, service development or audit.

## Classification

<b>Calculation of final award:</b>	<b>100% at Level 7</b>
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For full details of assessment regulations for all taught programmes please refer to our [Results webpages](#). These include the criteria for degree classification.

## Admissions Requirements

Please see the [Application webpages](#) for more information on how to apply, including a statement on how we support students from a variety of backgrounds. Please also see our [general entry requirements](#) for taught programmes. Applicants who do not meet our published entry requirements are encouraged to contact our admissions team for further advice and guidance.

## Typical applicant profile and any programme-specific entry requirements

- Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to undertaking the end-point assessment.
- Apprentices must hold current registration with one of the statutory regulators of health and care professions.
- Apprentices must be in a clinically appropriate role.

<b>Do applicants required a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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## Opportunities for students on successful completion of the programme

The enhanced skills of analysis that Apprentices will gain through this programme of study may lead to promotional opportunities either in the clinical area, or in the fields of education, management or research. Apprentices will have access to progression to doctoral studies in their specific subject context, and the generic, transferable skills acquired throughout the programme may also open up employment opportunities outside these areas.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules. Please refer to our [Credit Accumulation webpages](#) for further guidance.

## Student Support

During the course of their studies, Apprentices will be supported in the following ways:

- At the start of their studies all Apprentices will receive a full **induction** to the programme which will include introduction to the staff responsible for delivering the course, and access to library and IT facilities
- The **Programme Handbook** will outline the exact nature of the course and how it is structured, including the core modules in year 1, and the availability of optional modules.
- Each Apprentice will be allocated a **Personal Tutor** who will support their academic development, be able to advise and guide them with their studies and, where necessary, give advice on study options
- Apprentices will be able to access our full range of **support services**, including the Learning Development Unit for skills and study support, the Library, the Careers and Employability Team, Student Finance Team, Accommodation and Counselling Services.
- PREP – access to pre-course academic writing and research skills workshops.
- The Apprentice will receive support on a regular basis (every 6 weeks) from a University based link lecturer.
- Through Work-based Learning the Apprentice will have a Mentor who has the appropriate advanced and autonomous skills and knowledge (Master's level), to support the Apprentice's developmental progress related to a higher level of learning and development. Assigned Mentors will need to be cognisant with the aims and learning outcomes of the Apprenticeship Standard relevant to the MSc ACP programme, as well as the competency requirements associated with advanced practice.
- Apprentices undertaking the Non-Medical Prescribing module (NP704 or NP705) are required to have a Designated Medical Practitioner (DMP) as a mentor for the duration of the module.
- In being a Mentor the following principles will apply:
  - Has an ACP or ANP award (Master's level).
  - Works at a higher level in the same, or similar clinical context.
  - Has the required skills to support the module learning outcomes.
  - Has supervisory and mentoring skills
  - Is able to make sound judgements and decisions about whether an Apprentice has achieved both the relevant Apprenticeship Standards, and the knowledge and skills for advanced and autonomous practice.

## Appendices

Quality Assurance

<b>Awarding Body:</b>	<b>Buckinghamshire New University</b>
<b>Language of Study:</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s):</b>	<b>Programme mapped to the Advanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship Standard.</b>

<b>Assessment Regulations:</b>	<i>Academic Assessment Regulations</i> , accessible via the Academic Advice webpages ( <a href="https://bucks.ac.uk/students/academicadvice">https://bucks.ac.uk/students/academicadvice</a> )
<b>Does the Fitness to Practise procedure apply to this programme?</b>	No
<b>Date Published / Updated:</b>	September 2018, September 2021

### Other awards available on programme (Exit Qualifications)

Please refer to the *Academic Qualifications Framework* for Exit Qualifications recognised by the University and credit and module requirements.

<b>Name of Exit Qualification:</b>	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)
<b>Full name of Qualification and Award Title:</b>	PGCert Advanced Assessment Skills
<b>Credits requirements:</b>	60 Credits
<b>Module requirements:</b>	60 Credits at Level 7: core Modules: CL761 and CL762

#### Learning Outcome

Demonstrate a high level of accountable and autonomous practice in line with the code of professional conduct, and in relation to local and national policies and procedures

Utilising an inter-professional, holistic and person-centred approach, undertake a range of evidence-based physical and psychological assessment methods, supported by the application of pathophysiology to underpin diagnosis, investigations and management and evaluation of therapeutic interventions

Use expertise in clinical reasoning and diagnostic decision-making to manage complex and unpredictable episodes of care, taking into account issues such as health promotion, appropriate referral, risk management and discharge planning

Assess one's own learning needs and those of others to establish realistic goals and learning outcomes to maximise potential to lead and transform care and services

Provide professional leadership and supervision in complex and unpredictable situations by utilising models, theories and techniques of leadership in inter and intra-professional contexts

Identify strategies for instigating change to inform practice and service redesign solutions in response to service needs, underpinned by a range of legal, ethical, professional and organisational policies, procedures and professional codes of conduct

Explore the development and implementation of clinical governance structures and policies to ensure that robust governance systems and systematic documentation processes are maintained

<b>Name of Exit Qualification:</b>	Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
<b>Full name of Qualification and Award Title:</b>	PGDiP Advanced Assessment Skills
<b>Credits requirements:</b>	120 Credits
<b>Module requirements:</b>	120 Credits at Level 7: core CL761, CL762, and optional i.e. NP704/NP705

### Learning Outcome

Demonstrate mastery in undertaking a comprehensive patient assessment, displaying a detailed knowledge of the investigations and physical examination required whilst acknowledging any underlying condition to inform a diagnosis and treatment plan.

Demonstrate reflection, integrity, personal responsibility, accountability, and a shared approach for prescribing considering the legal and ethical implications, multi-professional team working and the wishes, values, diversity and ethnicity of patients and their carers.

Demonstrate in depth knowledge of the principles of pharmacology and how these inform prescribing decisions considering how alterations in physiology and pathophysiology may affect the actions of medicines.

Demonstrate the ability to accurately calculate drug dosages to ensure safe prescribing practice

Distinguish between independent & supplementary prescribing considering current research and formulating an independent perspective. Document an accurate legible clinical management plan that reflects the principles of supplementary prescribing.

Prescribe safely appropriately and cost-effectively considering local and national frameworks to support evidence-based prescribing taking into account relevant research materials.

Demonstrate mastery in both pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches to modifying disease and promoting health, optimising doses as well as stopping treatment in addition to considerations of polypharmacy.

Write legible, unambiguous and complete prescriptions and written records that meet legal requirements ensuring that other healthcare professionals and prescribing partners are appropriately informed.

Demonstrate mastery of working within governance frameworks that include audit of prescribing practice, reflecting on one's own prescribing practice and that of others and demonstrating an independent perspective within this in relation to continual professional development.

Evidence advanced scholarship of the public health issues related to medicines use

## Degree Apprenticeships

The following information applies to work-based learning programmes designed to be delivered as part of a degree apprenticeship. For other programmes this section should be deleted.

*Note: in this document the terms ‘apprentice’ and ‘student’ are used interchangeably.*

<b>Apprenticeship Standard:</b>	<b>Degree Apprenticeship Standard Advanced Clinical Practitioner</b>
<b>End Point Assessment (EPA):</b>	<b>Integrated EPA: Integrated into the design and assessment of this Degree Apprenticeship</b>

Degree Apprenticeships combine university study and work-based learning to enable apprentices to gain a full master’s or bachelor’s degree qualification. This provision of an academic degree is integrated with experience, practice and learning in the workplace. An apprentice has paid employment status and does not pay any training costs or student fees. Degree Apprenticeships are co-designed by employers ensuring that apprentices are equipped with the skills employers need and for their own future career.

### **The Standard and End Point Assessment Plan (EPA) - integrated**

As well as containing on programme training and assessment, all apprenticeship standards must contain an end-point assessment (EPA).

Apprentices must undertake an end-point assessment, which is a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. For integrated EPAs the training provider must be on the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO) and approved to undertake the EPA. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure the apprentice meets the standard set by employers and is fully competent in the occupation. It is taken by apprentices at the very end of the on-programme phase of training when their employer (and in some cases their training provider) is satisfied that they have met the “gateway” criteria to undertake the assessment. Integrated end-point-assessments are graded and the academic qualification and apprenticeship certificate is only awarded after end-point assessment is successfully completed.

An integrated end-point assessment must be administered by an independent assessor supplied by an appropriate organisation on the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO) and must not have been involved in on-programme delivery of the apprenticeship.

### **Admission requirements**

Under UK Government rules, Degree Apprentices must be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week and must have the right to live and work in the UK (applies only in England). A Degree Apprentice cannot be self-employed. The employer must enter into an Apprenticeship Agreement with the student.

All candidates must be employed in a role related to the subject matter of the Degree Apprenticeship and be sponsored by their employer. Applications can only be made through the sponsoring employer. The University will consider all such applications and will have the final decision whether to accept the candidate for entry to the programme.