

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

SECTION A: DETAILS OF THE COURSE AND AWARD

Programme Title	MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner
Awarding Body	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution / Course Location	Buckinghamshire New University/Uxbridge and High Wycombe
Faculty	Society & Health
School	School of Health and Social Sciences
Name of Final Award	Master of Science, MSc
NQF/FHEQ Level of Qualification	Level 7: Master's degree
QAA Benchmark Statement(s)	QAA (2010) Master's Degree Characteristics.
UCAS Code	N/A
Course Code(s)	MP1ECP2
Mode and Length of Study	3 years/part-time
Number of Intakes	1 - September
Regime of Delivery	Attendance
Language of Study	English
Details of Accreditation	N/A
Month and Year valid from	01 September 2016
Month and year valid until	01 September 2022
Publication / Revision Date	01 September 2016 / January 2018 / May 2019 / September 2021

Potential Student Profile / Criteria for Admission:

What the award is about and who the programme is aimed at:

This programme has been developed in response to an emerging healthcare role, namely the Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP). A curriculum and competency framework for ACP training has been developed by Royal College Emergency Medicine (RCEM, 2015), this has informed this curriculum content and structure of this programme. Central to the Advanced Clinical Practitioner educational process is the development of a 5 year credentialing portfolio, of which a prerequisite is a Masters level Advanced Practice award (RCEM, 2015); this programme aims to fulfill this requirement. The credentialing portfolio does not feature within the programme assessments and would be completed by the practitioner in partnership with their employing organisation. The programme conforms with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) (2014) and meets the requirements for level 7 (Masters) provision.

Potential students will be from a variety of professional backgrounds within health care, however it is anticipated that most applicants will be Nurses or Paramedics. The programme may also attract other healthcare professionals that are seeking career opportunities within advanced practice, i.e.

Physiotherapists, Operating Department Practitioners (ODP's) and Pharmacists. All students must be employed in clinical roles throughout the duration of the programme.

All students applying to the programme will have normally achieved a first degree, or at least 60 credits at level 6 from a United Kingdom (UK) based University, an affiliated college or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard, or the APEL route, through the University's Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS). Students with professional qualifications gained overseas which allow registration with the relevant UK regulatory bodies, will have the academic level of their qualifications assessed by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC™).

A number of modules require the student to have a mentor in the area of employment to support the student in their development. This support may include teaching, the facilitation of learning opportunities and the assessment of clinical competencies. In this case the mentor is required to be a registered practitioner (this could be an advanced clinical practitioner, emergency care practitioner nurse, paramedic or physician) with a minimum of 4 years relevant clinical practice and a professional qualification at level 6 or above. Additionally the mentor would need to hold a relevant mentorship or teaching qualification or equivalent, and agree to undertake the role of mentor.

Why students should choose this award:

- The programme has been aligned to the curriculum and competency framework has been developed by Royal College Emergency Medicine (RCEM, 2015). This ensures that the validated curriculum meets the RCEM requirements for ACP educational programmes.
- The Course Leader will be an experienced Advanced Practitioner, who will be supported by a team of lecturers with diverse and varied advanced practice and critical/acute care backgrounds.
- The programme enables the concept of student-centered approach to learning to come to the fore, giving students ownership of their own learning, which is placed within a robust pedagogical framework.
- In the 2nd year, students have the opportunity to customise their programme, by selecting from a variety of modules; this facilitates a personalised and student focused approach to their learning and development as Advanced Clinical Practitioners.
- The University has invested in state-of-the art skills laboratories and equipment to support the teaching, learning and assessment throughout the programme.
- A number of staff are involved in applied health related research projects; this will provide a vibrant applied research environment that informs the ongoing enhancement of the curriculum.

Opportunities available for students after completion of the award:

The enhanced skills of analysis that students 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. Students 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.

Expected entry qualifications, knowledge and skills that the entrant will have on entry to the programme:

Students should be employed in an area of clinical practice and must hold current registration on the appropriate professional register, e.g. NMC, HCPC. Students will normally have completed a first degree or have at least 60 credits at level 6 to access the MSc.

The university regulations permit AP(E)L to be used within a programme of this nature. Students will be facilitated by the course leader and AP(E)L assessor to AP(E)L prior experiential or academic learning where applicable and appropriate. If a student leaves the programme they leave with the credits completed and awarded to them. Should they wish to return they can use the CATS process to AP(E)L these credits into the programme.

SECTION B: PROGRAMME AIMS, OUTCOMES, LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

Programme Aims

The main educational aims of the programme are to:

- Provide the student with the knowledge and skills to practice as an autonomous accountable practitioner, utilising best evidence in a compassionate, safe, competent, accountable and professional manner.
- Promote an advanced level of scholarship; develop conceptual insight, skills of interpretation, critical reflection and effective synthesis of knowledge within the field of advanced practice, to inform, develop and innovate healthcare practice and policy at both operational and strategic level.
- Foster refined levels of clinical judgment and autonomy concerning a range of health care interventions, equipping the student to support the development of advanced practice values and operate collaboratively within a specified field of care.

Programme Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of Level 7 PGCert Clinical Assessment, a graduate will be able to:

A. Knowledge and Understanding

1. Systematically analyse key aspects of advanced practice including acquisition of in-depth knowledge relevant to the students discipline

B. Intellectual/Cognitive Skills

1. Accurately utilise established techniques of analysis and critical enquiry within one's own discipline, in line with contemporary policies and guidance

C. Practical Skills

1. Demonstrate a systematic knowledge and mastery of the qualities and skills necessary to work within advanced clinical practice

D. Key/Transferable Skills

1. Exercise self-direction, and decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts, demonstrating insight into one's own learning and developmental needs

On successful completion of Level 7 PGDip Advanced Clinical Practitioner, a graduate, in addition to the above, will be able to:

A. Knowledge and Understanding

2. Demonstrate a conceptual understanding of the application of research evidence to support the expansion of personal and professional development, and to address challenges in advanced practice

B. Intellectual/Cognitive Skills

2. Critically examine and debate professional, ethical and legal issues within the context of one's own advanced practice

On successful completion of Level 7 MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner a graduate, in addition to the above, will be able to:

A. Knowledge and Understanding

3. Synthesise conclusions from a research project to demonstrate an independent perspective and originality in the application of this knowledge to develop recommendations for future research or practice innovation

C. Practical Skills

2. Demonstrate a systematic knowledge and mastery of the qualities and skills necessary to work within advanced clinical practice

Table 1: Programme Skills Matrix – Assessment *

Module Code	Information Acquisition	Critical thinking, analysis and synthesis	Self-reflection and Criticality	Communication Skills: Oral	Communication Skills: Written	Information & Communications Technology (ICT)	Numeracy & Quantitative Skills	Problem Solving & Decision Making	Independent & Self-managed Learning	Working with Others
CL758	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CL746	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NP704 / NP705	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PP744	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PP727	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PF728	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF729	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF754	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Two modules listed above were re-validated since the programme's inception, so now capture the programme skills being assessed (i.e. NP701 Clinical Decision Making for Non-Medical Practice and NP703 – Applied Pharmacology for Non-medical Prescribing).

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods to achieve the Programme Learning Outcomes

The 1st and 3rd year module are compulsory; however the 2nd year module choices can be configured by the student. Concerning the choice of optional modules; the module content, the students' suitability, their professional registration and their area of employment, will determine if a student will be permitted to undertake a module, i.e. a student wishing to undertake the Emergency an Unscheduled Care

(PP727), would need to be working in an Emergency Department environment. **Nurses, Pharmacists** and AHP can now undertake the non-medical prescribing (NMP) programme via selecting to study NP704 (for Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals) or NP705 (for Pharmacists); students, who are not able to undertake NMP will be required to select alternative optional modules. Students will be directed to the module leader for advice concerning the selection of optional modules.

A variety of methods for delivery will be employed including keynote lectures, seminars, group and individual tutorials and debates. The prior experience inherent within this student population will be actively used to enhance the learning experience. This programme helps to promote inter and intra-professional learning, by accessing a team of lecturers consisting of a mix of professions including nurses, educators, physiotherapists, psychologists and physicians.

Students will be supported to develop the skills and attributes to model best practice and demonstrate the professional standards associated with the programme learning outcomes. A blended learning approach is adopted throughout the programme and a virtual learning environment platform (Blackboard™) will support the students with online learning content.

Paramount to the teaching and learning strategy will be the value placed on the student's own experience of practice and theoretical underpinnings of practice. It is envisaged, however, that the programme team and external experts from a range of employment areas and specialities will provide expert input to the taught sessions. Expert patients have been involved in the curriculum development of some of the healthcare modules and will also take part in taught sessions to provide the students with another point of view, for example: Emergency and Unscheduled Care (PP727).

Students will have access to University information technology resources, including Internet, word processing and printing facilities. Materials that are used to support module delivery will be made available through the virtual learning environment. This may include PowerPoint slides, handouts, worksheets, assessment documents, website links and scanned articles. These can be accessed on or off campus. The Department of Advanced Health Science has invested in a tried and tested distance learning package (safeMedicate™), focussing on medication numeracy, this will be of benefit to students undertaking the Independent and Supplementary Prescribing module.

The use of the Learning Development Unit (LDU) is actively promoted and masterclasses in level 7 academic writing skills facilitated jointly by the LDU and academics have been positively evaluated by the participants. Plans are currently underway to establish pre-course academic skills workshops before the start of the semester. At the start of modules students have an introduction to the Learning Resource Centre and information technology. The induction includes data base searching, e-submission, and information on plagiarism and academic misconduct. Following enrolment, students are assisted in logging into their university e-mail accounts and the university virtual learning environment.

The mechanisms for content delivery include:

Lectures: keynote lectures may be employed to launch fundamental theoretical aspects of the programme and will be led by the lecturers and/or external speakers. The lectures will provide the foundation for student led work within seminar and/or workshops.

Seminars: seminars will offer a forum by which students 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 opportunities for students to discuss the application of these in their field of practice.

Workshops: workshops will be used to enable students to work through examples and the application of theory to practice. These sessions will be facilitated by lecturers and/or outside speakers.

Simulation: the high fidelity simulation suite at Buckinghamshire New University is used on some modules to simulate practice scenarios and to facilitate physical assessment skills. Video recording technology is utilised to capture episodes of care i.e. history taking, this allows the student to review and reflect upon their performance.

Directed reading: throughout the programme the students will be required to engage in critical discussion, which will require them to undertake directed reading outside of the formal teaching session. Students will be provided with relevant reading lists by the lecturers 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. In keeping with the Virtual Learning Policy, all documents and supporting information will be made available to students electronically and will be utilised to enable student discussion and peer support.

Case studies: during face-to-face sessions, an array of real case studies from all disciplines will be used as a vehicle for enquiry-based learning. Students 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 the students to illuminate the nature of work, the demands inherent within the practice arena to enable the development of critical knowledge and problem solving skills.

Group work: group work is a key teaching and learning modality. It enables students to engage in participatory learning and encourages a team working approach to problem solving. Some modules include an element of enquiry based learning where students work in small groups to discuss work related scenarios and coordinate presentations to a professional standard. This is an opportunity for the students to benefit from constructive feedback from their peers.

Learning Contracts: learning contracts allow students to negotiate an area of study personal to them and help them to focus on their learning and development needs. Learning contracts are a particularly suitable learning strategy for those wishing to undertake project work in their employment areas.

Competency Based Learning: some of the clinical modules have competencies which must be completed in the clinical area under the support of a clinical mentor. Clinical competencies are core to the learning and assessment criteria of these modules and students are not admitted to the modules unless they have access to appropriate clinical experience for the duration of the module.

Reflection: reflection in and on practice is central to the student developing emotional intelligence around their skills development that will enable their continued professional development. Reflecting on their past experience and the experiences of others is a key component of the programme. Reflection encourages the students to explore the application of new knowledge to a given situation, and the development of problem solving skills both of which are characteristic of being a responsive practitioner.

Virtual Learning Environment: this will allow students to access module materials and where appropriate participate in discussion boards. It is a resource through which students may be contacted and which also enables them to access a range of facilities to support their studies including the library, academic writing support and plagiarism software.

Assessment

Each module will clearly outline the assessment methods and detailed information will be supplied within the module plan. Learning outcomes, learning content and assessments are aligned in order to ensure that graduates will develop into academically sound, safe, responsive evidence-based practitioners. In line with the aim of encouraging students to develop a flexible approach to their own learning and development, the programme adopts a varied methodology for assessment.

All assessments have been prepared to conform to the QAA descriptors for level 7 and will require the application of theory to the specific practice area in which the student is working. These will include presentations, competency documents and work related assessments with evidence of practice/service improvements within the work area. Other forms of assessment may include written examinations, oral examinations, practical examinations such as an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), reflective essays, case studies and portfolio production.

To prepare students for summative assignments, formative work is a feature of many of the modules within the programme and students will be provided with verbal or written feedback to support this. In addition the use of video-based technology (SMOTS™) to record and review clinical performance, will be utilised to facilitate reflective critique by the student and their peers.

The Learning Development Unit (LDU) also actively supports students with academic work to meet their course requirements. To facilitate the development of academic writing competence at level 7, the LDU in partnership with the Department academic team have developed a series of workshops and study days.

Specific level 7 academic writing master classes study days are provided

Assessment Regulations

Buckinghamshire New University Academic Assessment Regulations apply to this programme and the special regulations are outlined within this Programme Specification document.

Work-Based / Placement Learning

Some optional modules within the programme carry clinical competency documents as part of the assessment strategy and require student support in the workplace through clinical mentors.

Module leaders are available for support of the mentors and mentorship updates are undertaken by link lecturers for staff in the clinical areas to ensure that mentors are suitably prepared. The mentor is required to be a registered practitioner (this could be an advanced clinical practitioner, emergency care practitioner nurse, paramedic or physician) with a minimum of 4 years relevant clinical practice and a professional qualification at level 6 or above. Additionally the mentor would need to hold a relevant mentorship or teaching qualification or equivalent, and agree to undertake the role of mentor. Buckinghamshire New University carries out education audits for pre-qualifying students prior to placement.

Clinical mentors will be supported by a dedicated link-lecturer, who will visit the student and mentor within the placement environment. Mentors will receive a formal programme orientation, which will cover programme structure, assessments and key contacts.

Clinical competencies are core to the learning and assessment criteria of these modules and students are not admitted to the modules unless they can guarantee appropriate clinical experience for the duration of the module. Buckinghamshire New University does not provide clinical placement areas for students to complete their competencies.

SECTION C: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE(S)

Table 2: Programme Structure Table

Course Title	MSc Advanced Clinical Practice						
Course Code	MP1ECP2						
Mode of Study	Part-time						
Credit Value	UK	180	ECTS			90	
M o d	Module Title	C U	C o	S t	a t	C r	e d
						Assessment Regime	S e

						Written Exam %	Coursework %	Practical %	
CL758	Physical Assessment of the Adult	7	1	C	30	30%		70%	S1
CL746	Clinical Reasoning Skills for Advanced Practice	7	1	C	30		50%	50%	S2
NP704 OR NP705	Non-Medical Prescribing - Nurses/Midwives/Allied Health Professionals Non-Medical Prescribing - Pharmacists	7	2	O	60	25%	50%	25%	S1, S2 or SB
PP714	Minor Injury Management	7	2	O	30		100%	P/F	S1 or S2
PP744	Minor Illness Management	7	2	O	30		100%	P/F	S1 or S2
PF754	Leadership, Management and Professional Issues	7	2	O	30	100%			S1 or S2
PP727	Emergency and Unscheduled Care	7	2	O	30		100%	P/F	S1 or S2
PF728	Generating Knowledge for Practice	7	3	C	15		100%		S1
PF729	Dissertation	7	3	C	45		100%		SB

Table 3: Mapping of Programme Outcomes to Modules

Level 7 PG Cert Clinical Assessment

Programme Outcome	CL758	CL746			
A. Knowledge and Understanding					
A1	X	X			
B. Intellectual / Cognitive Skills					
B1	X	X			
C. Practical Skills					
C1	X	X			
D. Key / Transferable Skills					
D1	X	X			

Level 7 PGDip Advanced Clinical Practitioner

Programme Outcome	CL758	CL746	NP704	NP704/ NP705	NP703	PP727	PP714	PF754	PP744
A. Knowledge and Understanding									
A1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X
A2			✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X
B. Intellectual / Cognitive Skills									
B1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X
B2			✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X
C. Practical Skills									
C1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X
D. Key / Transferable Skills									
D1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X

Level 7 MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner

Programme Outcome	CL758	CL746	NP704	NP704/ NP705	NP703	PF729	PP714	PP744	PP727	PF754	PF728
A. Knowledge and Understanding											
A1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X	X	X
A2			✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X	X	X
A3						X					X
B. Intellectual / Cognitive Skills											
B1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X	X	X
B2			✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X	X	X
C. Practical Skills											
C1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X	X	X
C2						X					X
D. Key / Transferable Skills											
D1	X	X	✗	X	✗	X	X	X	X	X	X

SECTION D: CONTACT HOURS

Table 4: Breakdown of Contact Hours

Year of course	Scheduled Learning and Teaching Activities	Guided Independent Study	Placement / Study Abroad	Total
Year One	142	458	0	600
Year Two	Module choice dependent		0	600
Year Three	64	536	0	600
Total	Module choice dependent		0	1800

SECTION E: ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

This programme conforms to the approved University procedures as detailed on the University website with the following exceptions:

The calculation of this award will be as follows:

- Completion of stages one, two and three, resulting in 180 credits, leads to an award of MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner. The course will be offered with a final award of MSc. However university regulations permit awards to be made at the following step off points:
 - Completion of stages one and two, resulting in 120 credits, leads to an award of Post Graduate Diploma Advanced Clinical Practitioner.
 - Completion of stage one modules to a total of 60 credits leads to an award of Post Graduate Certificate Clinical Assessment.
- There will be no APEL for the Post Graduate Certificate Award.
- Students must complete their chosen award within six years from the date the first credits were awarded, regardless of the awarding institution. This includes the credits from stand-alone modules that are later used as part of the award. Access to an award outside of this time frame will require normal application to the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Committee (CATS). It would normally be expected that students are able to demonstrate currency of knowledge in the specified area. This also applies to relevant credits not undertaken at Buckinghamshire New University.
- Students who have pursued affiliate (stand-alone) modules and wish to enrol for the MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner must do so before the last 60 credits are undertaken.
- The research module and the dissertation module cannot form part of the PG Certificate Clinical Assessment or the PG Diploma Advanced Clinical Practitioner.
- Students wishing to undertake Emergency and Unscheduled Care (PP727) must be working within an Emergency Department or similar clinical setting.

No modules may be compensated.

This programme will be covered by the following University regulations:

Academic Assessment Regulations

The following modules have some or all assessments with non-standard pass marks. Please refer to the module descriptor for further details:

- CL758.
- CL746.
- NP704 / NP705

Either one or both of the following modules may be reassessed once should one or both be failed at the first attempt

- PF728, Generating Knowledge for Practice (15 credits).
- PF729, Dissertation (45 credits).

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