

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	Professional Practice in Healthcare Postgraduate Degree Programme
Awarding Institution:	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution(s):	Buckinghamshire New University
Subject Cluster:	PG Continuing Professional Development
Award Title (including separate Pathway Award Titles where offered):	MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare PG Cert Professional Practice in Healthcare PG Dip Professional Practice in Healthcare
Pathways (if applicable)	
FHEQ level of final award:	7
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	Postgraduate Certificate Professional Practice in Healthcare Postgraduate Diploma Professional Practice in Healthcare
Accreditation details:	N/A
Length of programme:	2 year full time, 3-6 years part time
Mode(s) of Study:	Full time/Part time
Mode of Delivery:	Blended learning
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Level 7 Descriptor (2014)
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	N/A
Course Code(s):	MSPPRAPT (3 years) / MSPPRAPT (2 years) PCPPRAFT (PG Cert) PDPPRAFT (PG Dip)
UCAS Code(s):	N/A
Approval date:	September 2023
Date of last update:	September 2024

2. Programme Summary

The potential learners for this Master's level programme will be current practitioners or professionals within Health and Social Care, who are seeking continued professional development at any stage in their career.

This is a flexible programme of study offering a range of opportunities for learning to all Health and Social Care professional. It suits both experienced professionals, those who

have gained their professional registration more recently, those who are developing in their roles, or developing towards future roles.

The course has been developed in consultation with learners and Health and Social Care providers, who are our main funding sources, to ensure an appropriate range of option module opportunities are included.

The programme is different by design. Learners will normally be employed throughout the duration of the course and have previous appropriate qualifications from Buckinghamshire New University or other university. The flexibility of module choice ensures learners who are predominantly full-time professionals can fit their continuing professional education alongside their working life, offering opportunities for practitioners to focus on their own career development and progression. Learners include: Nurses, Operating Department Practitioners, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Paramedics. The modules offered on this programme can also be taken individually using the affiliate student approach allowing further flexibility for learners.

A wide range of option modules are offered across a variety of Health and Social Care specialities and can be used as a means to develop knowledge, skills and understanding around contemporary issues of relevance to their Health and Social Care role and speciality. As a vehicle for professional development, learners will be encouraged to actively reflect upon their own practice and role. They will also explore how practice can be enhanced through creative, innovative approaches and how these can contribute to overall quality of Health and Social Care.

As learners are already in employment, the combination of the development activities across their choice of modules across the MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare programme can support their progression in their career allowing the opportunity to advance their professional role. As a result of completion of modules or the full programme learners may apply for senior positions, become specialists within their workplace, or link practitioners, for example the diabetes link nurse for the stroke ward. There is an increasing demand across health and social care for employees to have completed Master's level study to progress in their career due to the attributes developed.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Provide a flexible framework for postgraduate study to promote the progression of professional knowledge, skills and expertise across a variety of health and social care disciplines, leading to mastery of the chosen area
2. Enhance the development of professional judgement, accountability and autonomy within the scope of the individual's role
3. Develop a critically analytical approach to care delivery in health and social care professional practitioners encouraging the promotion of best practice in line with contemporary policies and guidance
4. Support the ethos of life-long learning and creative enquiry, to confront, challenge and shape the future of professional practice in healthcare

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Systematically critically analyse key aspects of the field of study including acquisition of in-depth knowledge relevant to the discipline and professional practice in healthcare.
K2	Demonstrate application of research evidence to support the expansion of personal and professional development, and to address challenges in professional practice.
K3	Demonstrate a critical understanding of legal and professional guidance which underpins the evidence base for their professional role.

Analysis and Criticality (C)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Critically explore and interpret the theories and concepts from contemporary evidence underpinning the care and/or management within Health and Social Care.
C2	Critically explore and evaluate political and organisational drivers that influence developments in the management and delivery of Health and Social Care.
C3	Synthesise conclusions from a research project to demonstrate an independent perspective and application of knowledge to develop recommendations for practice.

Application and Practice (P)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Demonstrate subject mastery and independent perspective to propose ways to resolve issues in the field of their professional role.
P2	Develop an individualised learning programme relevant to your chosen area of practice.
P3	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of professional issues such as accountability, clinical governance and leadership in relation to Health and Social Care.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Support and promote the process of continuing professional development to enhance your level of autonomy in a professional role.

T2	Exercise self-direction and decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts, demonstrating insight into one's own learning and developmental needs.
T3	Develop critical writing skills to demonstrate independent and creative solutions to challenges in professional practice.
T4	Critically evaluate and demonstrate awareness and application of technological advances relevant to a professional practice in healthcare role.

Graduate Attributes

The BNU Graduate Attributes of: Knowledge and its application; Creativity; Social and ethical awareness and responsibility; and Leadership and self-development 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.

On this programme, attributes are developed through engagement in a range of learning as it is designed for a range of Health and social care professionals from a variety of settings wanting to improve healthcare professional practice knowledge and skills (K1).

Learners direct their own pathway from the variety of option modules to address the needs of their current and future roles in professional practice (T1, T2, T4, P2). It is expected through completion of the course learners will lead, direct and enhance clinical practice, whilst expanding the evidence base for their own area of practice, to support delivery of appropriate interventions and improvements in practice (P1).

Learners develop mastery of subjects through review of the evidence base and completion of their Practice-based Project (C3). An understanding and exploration of political, economic, technological and quality issues in health and social care is established as learners are required to synthesise contemporary initiatives in relation to current professional practice and delivery of health and social care to creatively provide a safe and effective service (K3, C2, P3).

Through developing abilities and confidence in interpreting evidence, and communicating findings (C1, T3), learners will feel able to work with others to address contemporary health issues and contribute meaningfully to improving professional practice in healthcare (K2).

4. Entry Requirements

The University's [general entry requirements](#) will apply to admission to this programme with the following additions / exceptions:

If you do not meet the entry requirements you may, if you have relevant professional experience, still be invited for interview, where you will be required to demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding for entry onto the course.

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules in accordance with our [accreditation of prior learning](#) (APL) process. A group directive to allow up to 60 credits has been approved for this programme by the University's Accreditation of Prior Learning panel (July 2024). This allows a student to enter the course with up to 60 credits gained at other UK HEIs in appropriate health and social care topics. The student must provide the course team with the details of the modules studied and evidence the credit with certificates/ transcripts.

Typical applicant profile and programme-specific entry requirements -

The potential learners will be from a variety of professional backgrounds within Health and Social Care and are seeking continued professional development at academic level 7. Learners are a range of health and social care professionals including nurses, ODPs, physiotherapists and occupational therapist. All learners will normally be employed throughout the duration of the programme due to the nature of continued professional development, and the value placed on the learner's experience of practice and their professional role.

Learners utilising the full-time mode of the course would be expected to understand the way in which they would balance full-time study with professional commitments. It is expected that learners would be working part time if they are planning to complete the course on a full-time basis. Applicants for the course will be expected to have a conversation with the Programme Lead before their application is accepted.

Learners can access individual modules on a stand-alone, affiliate basis. These credits could then be utilised to build credits towards a full award in the future.

All learners applying to the programme will have normally achieved a first degree, or at least 60 credits at level 6 from a UK University, an affiliated college or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard. Alternatively, entry may be via the APL route, through the University's Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS). This qualification should have been awarded at 2:1 or above. Learners with professional qualifications gained overseas which allow registration with the relevant UK regulatory bodies, will have the academic level of their qualifications assessed by UK ENIC (or equivalent).

In line with many Master's programmes, learners will be able to utilise a maximum of 30 credits gained at level 6 for the MSc and PGDip Professional Practice in Healthcare, as long as the credits were awarded by Buckinghamshire New University for a module with a clinical competency document or a Practical exam (e.g. PR1/EX1) exploring competency in/for practice as part of the assessment strategy. The rationale for this is that the assessment of clinical competence is not level dependent. Learners will be able to APL a maximum of 60 credits from appropriate Health and Social Care orientated Continuing Professional Development courses from other universities. The knowledge and skills developed resulting from these credits need to still be in use as part of their practice, and optimally will have been awarded within the previous 6-year period. For learners outside of this 6-year period, learners will only be admitted onto the programme at the discretion of the Programme Lead.

Learners who have completed any relevant accredited/credit-bearing Health and Social Care Continuing Professional Development courses with Buckinghamshire New University within the past 6 years at Level 7, will be permitted to utilise these credits for their option credit requirements of the MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare programme, without the need for APL approval, following agreement of the Programme Lead. For learners with credits completed outside of this 6-year period, this will be at the discretion of the Programme Lead where evidence of continuing use of knowledge and skills gained through these credits is clearly provided. Examples of these courses include: completed modules from the previous version of the MSc Professional Programme, Non-Medical Prescribing programme, the Advanced Therapeutic Mental Health Skills for Nurse Practitioner course, renal modules and modules from the Advanced Clinical Practitioner programme and the Practice Education programme.

If a learner has completed a PGCert or PGDip Professional Practice in Healthcare at Buckinghamshire New University, they can return to gain a higher award from the course, this will then replace their previous award for the course.

5. Programme Structure

Programme modules – Option

Credit	Module Code/Title	Programme(s) – Status (Core/Pathway/Option)
20	NAM7089 Acute Medical Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7086 Adopting and Sustaining Improvement in Healthcare Settings	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7066 Anaesthetic Management	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7091 Cancer Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
10	NAM7092 Cardiac Disease Prevention and Management for Non-Specialists	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7083 Cardiac Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7088 Dementia Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7093 Dementia Management and Care (online)	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7069 Diabetes Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7095 End of Life Care and Symptom Management	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7087 Frailty Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option

Credit	Module Code/Title	Programme(s) – Status (Core/Pathway/Option)
20	NAM7096 Infant Feeding in Practice	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7082 Introduction to Critical Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7097 Introduction to Innovation Adoption in Healthcare Practice	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7071 Leadership and Management in Healthcare	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
10	NAM7072 Learning from Experience in Practice	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7098 Learning from Study in Practice	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7078 Neuroscience Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7099 Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7100 Principles and Practice of Infection Prevention and Control	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7080 Principles of Leg Ulcer Management	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7079 Principles of Wound Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7121 Professional Nurse Advocate Course	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7136 Professional Midwifery Advocate	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option

Credit	Module Code/Title	Programme(s) – Status (Core/Pathway/Option)
20	NAM7101 Recognition and Management of the Seriously Ill Child (0-18 years)	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7070 Recognising the Deteriorating Patient	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7068 Recovery Management in the Perioperative Environment	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7084 Respiratory Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7073 Stroke Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7081 Students, Supervisors and Assessors in Professional Practice	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7067 Surgical Management in the Perioperative Environment	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7103 Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy - Principles, Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
40	NAM7075 Theoretical Concepts in Renal Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7076 The Renal Care Practitioner	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7077 Trauma Management and Care	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option
20	NAM7104 Writing for Publication	PGCert/PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Option

Please note: Not all option modules will be offered in any one year. Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to changes in Health and Social Care professional practice.

Programme modules – Core

Credit Module Title	Programme(s) – Status (Core/Pathway/Option)
20 NAM7090 Applied Research for Professional Practice	PGDip/MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Core
60 NAM7107 Practice-based Project	MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare - Core

Exit Awards

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	Full time – Postgraduate Certificate Professional Practice in Healthcare Year 1 - Option modules: Choose modules to the total of 60 credits	Postgraduate Certificate Professional Practice in Healthcare awarded on achievement of 60 credits

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	Full time - Postgraduate Diploma Professional Practice in Healthcare Year 1 - Option modules: Choose modules to the total of 100 credits Year 1 - Core module NAM7090 Applied Research for Professional Practice (20)	Postgraduate Diploma Professional Practice in Healthcare awarded on achievement of 120 credits

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	Full time - MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare Year 1 - Option modules: Choose modules to the total of 100 credits:	MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare awarded on achievement of 180 credits at Level 7

	<p>Year 1 - Core module NAM7090 Applied Research for Professional Practice (20)</p> <p>Year 2 - Core module NAM7107 Practice-based Project (60)</p>	
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Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	<p>Part time - MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare – 3 years</p> <p>Year 1 - Option modules: Choose modules to the total of 60 credits</p> <p>Year 2 - Option modules: Choose modules to the total of 40 credits</p> <p>Year 2 - Core module NAM7090 Applied Research for Professional Practice (20)</p> <p>Year 3 - Core module NAM7107 Practice-based Project (60)</p>	<p>MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare awarded on achievement of 180 credits at Level 7</p>

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching

Paramount to the teaching and learning strategy will be the value placed on the learner's own experience and workplace. This will be linked to the theoretical underpinnings of health and social care delivery, ensuring relevance to the learner role and specialty. It is envisaged, however, that the programme team and external experts will provide the main input to the taught sessions. A variety of methods will be employed including keynote lectures, group and individual tutorials and debates.

Teaching and learning strategies employed within the programme reflect the nature of the learning experience at Level 7. Teaching and learning strategies used will encourage further learner independence and learning from and through experience using reflection. These strategies include, small-group based activities, e.g. presentations,, discussions within small and whole learner groups with promotion of learning from peers with potential applications to practice. This approach supports development of the skills required to practice, underpinned with theoretical knowledge.

Learners 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 University virtual learning environment. This might include PowerPoint slides, recording of online sessions, videos, handouts, worksheets, assessment documents, website links, and research articles. These can be accessed on or off campus.

A varied programme of learning and teaching strategies enables the learner to achieve an award, whatever their specific health and social care related discipline.

Learners will be supported to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes to model best practice and demonstrate the professional standards associated with the programme learning outcomes and specific pathway requirements. A blended learning approach is adopted throughout the programme which includes practical workshops, seminars, lectures and simulation. In some modules, service users will be utilised to give alternate perspectives on the work environment. A virtual learning environment (VLE) will support the learners with online learning content, resources and contemporary technologies enhancing traditional face-to-face teaching. For each module independent study will be expected under the guidance of the module leader and is individual to each module and learner interest, role or specialty; a range of Independent learning options are outlined in module documents or on the VLE. This will include wider reading, engaging with a range of resources including videos and videos from the VLE, preparation for lectures and reading and planning to prepare for assignment submission.

The workplace is regarded as a forum for learning and development and will be incorporated as an integral part of the learning and teaching strategies used on the programme. Opportunities for inter-professional learning will be maximised across modules to give opportunity for inter-professional debate.

All learners enrolled on the award programmes will have a personal tutor, this is usually the Programme Lead. This role supports overarching pastoral issues and ensures decisions about module choice are appropriate. For affiliate learners, their personal tutor will be the module leader. Academic tutoring and support will be integrated within all modules to facilitate personal development for academic planning and to support key skills, including the understanding and application of research relevant to the module and application to the

learner's practice. Learners will be allocated a supervisor for the duration of the Practice-based Project Module.

Assessment

A range of assessment activities are used on this programme to enable authenticity. Each module has an assessment strategy designed to meet module and programme learning, these are detailed in the Assignment Brief. To prepare learners for summative assignments, formative work is a feature of all modules across the programme. Learners will be provided with verbal and/or written feedback to support their academic development. The Student Learning and Achievement (SLA) team also actively supports learners with academic work to meet their course requirements.

Each module will clearly outline the assessment methods and detailed information will be supplied within the module scheme and on the VLE. Learning outcomes, learning content and assessments are aligned in order to ensure that graduates will develop into academically sound, safe, responsive, evidence-based health and social care practitioners. In line with the aim of encouraging learners towards a flexible approach in 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 learner is working. These will include presentations, reports, 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, presentations on evidence-based practice approaches, development of education tools for practice, practical examinations such as an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), Viva Voce, reflective essays, case studies and portfolio production.

Some clinical modules have clinical competency documents as part of the assessment strategy and require learner support in the workplace through clinical assessors. Assessors are to be a registered practitioner with relevant clinical experience and appropriate professional qualification. The assessor should hold a relevant assessor/mentor qualification or have completed appropriate training and feel competent and confident in this role. Clinical competencies are core to the learning and assessment criteria of these modules and learners 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 learners to complete their competencies.

To achieve the MSc Professional Practice in Healthcare award learners must achieve the full 180 credits, therefore compensation is not permitted on any modules.

Contact Hours

This is a continuing professional development programme. Each learner will have individual needs specific to their professional role and practice area. Contact hours vary dependent on option modules completed by the learner. These are clearly documented in each module descriptor. These contact hours deliver essential subject principles based on national guidelines and the current evidence-base, however learners are expected to build on this theory independently focussing on the needs specific to their practice to gain the most from the module.

There are no specific attendance requirements for this programme, as contact is module dependent, however learners are bound by the University Attendance and Engagement Policy which can be found in the Programme Handbook.

7. Programme Regulations

This programme will be subject to the following assessment regulations:

- Academic Assessment Regulations

8. Support for learners

The following systems are in place to support you to be successful with your studies:

- The appointment of a personal tutor to support you through your programme
- A programme handbook and induction at the beginning of your studies
- Library resources, include access to books, journals and databases - many of which are available in electronic format – and support from trained library staff
- Access to Blackboard, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is accessible via PC, laptop, tablet or mobile device
- Access to the MyBNU portal where you can access all University systems, information and news, record your attendance at sessions, and access your personalised timetable
- Academic Registry staff providing general guidance on University regulations, exams, and other aspects of learners and course administration
- Central student services, including teams supporting academic skills development, career success, student finance, accommodation, chaplaincy, disability and counselling
- Support from the Bucks Students' Union, including the Students' Union Advice Centre which offers free and confidential advice on University processes.

9. Programme monitoring and review

BNU has a number of ways for monitoring and reviewing the quality of learning and teaching on your programme. You will be able to comment on the content of their programme via the following feedback mechanisms:

- Formal feedback questionnaires and anonymous module 'check-ins'
- Participation in external surveys
- Programme Committees, via appointed student representatives
- Informal feedback to your programme leader

Quality and standards on each programme are assured via the following mechanisms:

- An initial event to approve the programme for delivery
- An annual report submitted by the External Examiner following a process of external moderation of work submitted for assessment
- The Annual Monitoring process, which is overseen by the University's Education Committee
- Review by the relevant PSRB(s)
- Periodic Subject Review events held every five years
- Other sector compliance and review mechanisms

10. Internal and external reference points

Design and development of this programme has been informed by the following internal and external reference points:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- The QAA Master's Degree Characteristics Statement
- The BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Grading Descriptors
- The University Strategy, Impact 2022

Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes to Modules

This programme specification does not provide a typical programme mapping of modules to outcomes. This is because there is no 'typical learner' pathway. Each learner will complete an individually determined selection of option modules, with only the Applied Research for Professional Practice and Practice-based Project modules being core components. Core modules are mapped below to the Programme Learning Outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Level 7																				
Applied Research for Professional Practice	X	X				X	X					X				X		X		
Practice-based Project	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	