Buckinghamshire New University

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	BSc (Hons) Professional Nursing Practice (Top up)
Awarding Institution:	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution(s):	Buckinghamshire New University
Subject Area:	Nursing & Midwifery
Award Title (including separate Pathway Award Titles where offered):	BSc (Hons) Professional Nursing Practice (Top up)
Pathways (if applicable)	
FHEQ level of final award:	Level 6
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	BSc Professional Nursing Practice (Top up)
Accreditation details:	
Length of programme:	2 years
Mode(s) of Study:	Part time
Mode of Delivery:	Distance learning
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	Subject Benchmark – N/A Framework for Higher Education Qualifications - Level 6 Descriptor (2024)
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	N/A
Course Code(s):	BSPNURTU
UCAS Code(s):	N/A
Approval date:	December 2025
Date of last update:	

2. Programme Summary

The BSc (Hons) Professional Nursing Practice (Top up) degree programme enables nurses to access development opportunities and academic accreditation from the programme. This programme is carefully designed to support nurses in advancing their careers, providing a clear pathway toward specialist nurse, clinical educator, leadership including ward or clinical area management, community and public health roles. It acknowledges and builds upon the extensive experience and knowledge gained through nursing practice. The course is open to both UK-based and international nurses, including internationally educated nurses currently working in the UK. Delivered through flexible, part-time distance learning, it offers an accessible opportunity for nurses to enhance their existing qualifications and achieve a

degree with honours. The programme is an internationally recognised qualification, cultivating critical thinking and problem-solving abilities while enhancing cross-cultural competence for practice in diverse healthcare environments.

The programme empowers nurses to critically engage with global healthcare perspectives, fostering a nuanced understanding of international systems, policies, and cultural contexts. Through advanced analysis of diverse practices and complex global challenges, learners develop the ability to synthesise evidence, evaluate global innovations, and apply strategic insights to enhance care delivery, including through technological advancements, support digital health literacy and prioritise person-centred care. This global outlook not only strengthens professional identity but also equips nurses to lead and influence within increasingly interconnected and multicultural healthcare environments.

The programme reflects the WHO Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery 2021–2025, which emphasise the importance of:

- Strengthening nursing education and training,
- Promoting leadership at all levels of healthcare,
- Enhancing evidence-based practice,
- Supporting mobility and academic progression of nurses worldwide.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Provide a framework to promote the progression of professional knowledge, skills and expertise for nurses
2. Develop and support professional judgement, accountability and autonomy within nursing
3. Develop an analytical approach to nursing care, encouraging the promotion of best practice in line with contemporary policies and guidelines
4. Support nurses to develop an understanding of leadership, management and clinical innovation to support development in professional roles
5. Equip nurses with the knowledge and expertise required to deliver and manage complex care across diverse healthcare environments
6. Provide an exceptional distance learning experience to promote and develop an ethos of life-long learning and creative enquiry

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Describe relevant national and international guidelines and policies for practice across a range of nursing roles and care.
K2	Apply principles of health and wellbeing, health promotion and strategies for global health issues to identify potential nursing actions for healthcare.
K3	Evaluate the impact of evidence-based nursing care to improve patient outcomes.

K4	Utilise knowledge from evidence to support and challenge a range of issues relating to evidence-based nursing practice, to enhance person-centred care.

Analysis and Criticality (C)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Critically appraise the evidence base for care and integrate research into nursing practice, linking theory, research and practice.
C2	Utilise academic skills including the accurate use of referencing, inclusion of high-quality evidence and formation of critical discussion to explore key nursing topics.
C3	Accurately utilise established techniques of analysis and enquiry within nursing, in line with contemporary policies and guidance.
C4	Analyse and evaluate aspects of care where practice could be improved, developing evidence-based recommendations to enhance person-centred care through innovation and improve patient satisfaction.

Application and Practice (P)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Apply understanding of the application of research to support evidence-based nursing practice and identify innovations for care.
P2	Relate new knowledge to nursing practice including digital and technological developments in the assessment, treatment and management of key clinical issues.
P3	Through reflection, evaluate personal and broader nursing practice to determine ongoing learning requirements and opportunities for leadership and innovation.
P4	Explore a range of interventions utilised in practice to identify priorities for nursing care.
P5	Develop a range of recommendations for education, research and practice to improve person-centred nursing care.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Utilise knowledge and skills to enhance autonomy and decision making in nursing practice.
T2	Utilise academic skills, including the accurate use of referencing, inclusion of high-quality evidence and formation of critical discussion, to explore nursing practice and identify areas for enhanced leadership and management.
T3	Evaluate and demonstrate insight into your own learning and development needs including professional, academic and technology focussed skills.

T4	Identify theories, models and techniques of leadership to affect change at the individual, team and organisational level.
T5	Contribute to the ethos of life-long learning, development and evidence-based nursing practice.

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 the acquisition and application of knowledge critical to nursing care (K1, K2, T2). This knowledge and understanding will relate to a range of relevant topics including evidence-based practice, key clinical issues, global health issues, leadership and management and innovation for healthcare to support and challenge current nursing care (K3, K4, T2, T4). Learners throughout the programme will demonstrate self-direction for their learning, and access support appropriately (T3, T5) while independently managing their engagement with a range of asynchronous resources.

Learners develop knowledge of subjects through review and critical exploration of the evidence base linked to the topic being studied (C1, C2). Evidenced-based practice, technology, national guidelines and research are linked to enable learners to understand factors contributing to the development, implementation and evaluation of clinical practice (T4).

Reflection on practice and through the understanding and exploration of common global issues in healthcare allows learners to synthesise contemporary initiatives into current professional nursing practice, demonstrating their ability to critically evaluate nursing practice (K2, C1, P2, P3, P4). By developing their confidence in interpreting evidence, and communicating findings, learners will feel able to work with others to address contemporary health issues and contribute meaningfully to improving professional practice through recommendations for innovation (P2, P5, T1, T4). This is achieved throughout the modules and culminates in completion of a Dissertation: Extended Literature Review focussed on a selected area of practice (P1, C3, C4).

The programme utilises a variety of approaches to support learning, appropriate to a degree award and distance learning including: synchronous sessions covering key concepts relevant to each module, utilising learner experience from nursing practice, pre-recorded videos (with closed captions), appropriate short videos (with closed captions), slide sets, research and commentary articles, web links, podcasts (audio), ebook chapters, quizzes, case scenarios.

4. Entry Requirements

The University's general entry requirements will apply to admission to this programme with the following additions:

- Learners must be a registered nurse
- Learners must be working in a practice-based nursing role
- Hold a Diploma of Higher Education or equivalent including 120 credits at Level 4 and Level 5

Learners with international nursing qualifications, will have the academic level of their qualifications assessed by the UK ENIC (or equivalent).

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.

If learners have completed the module 'Developing a Portfolio for Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning' at BNU, they will be able to gain entry to the programme via a group directive, confirmed by the University's APL panel.

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.

5. Programme Structure

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 6	**Year 1** **Core modules:** NAM6124 Evidence into Action: Academic and Professional Skills for Nursing Practice (20 credits) NAM6125 Global Health: Challenges and Opportunities for Professional Nursing Practice (20 credits) NAM6130 Leadership and Management for Professional Nursing Practice (20 credits) NAM6131 Dissertation - Extended Literature Review for Professional Nursing Practice (40 credits) **Option modules** (All 20 credits)**:** Choose 1 module from: NAM6126 International Perspectives for Evidence-based Stroke Care NAM6127 International Perspectives for Evidence-based Diabetes Care NAM6128 International Perspectives for Recognising Adult Deterioration NAM6129 International Perspectives for Evidence-based Dementia Care	**Ordinary Degree**, awarded on achievement of any 60 credits gained from the programme.

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 changes in the subject area.

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching

Paramount to the teaching and learning strategy will be the value placed on the learners own individual experience and workplace. This aligns with adult learning theory, emphasising the link between professional experience, linking theoretical underpinnings of health and social care delivery ensuring relevance to the students' role and specialty through application of analysis, synthesis and professional judgement. A varied programme of learning and teaching strategies enables the learner to achieve an award whatever their professional nursing role. Active learning is embedded across all modules, promoted through discussions to ensure student engagement, and through completion of self-directed learner focused elements across assessments.

Lectures (Synchronous and Asynchronous): keynote lectures will be employed to launch fundamental theoretical aspects of the programme and will provide the academic foundation for learner-led activity within seminars and/or workshops.

Seminars: seminars will offer a forum by which learners 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 nursing practice.

Case-based Discussion: during synchronous sessions, a range of case studies will be used as a vehicle for enquiry-based learning. Learners will explore and critically discuss the components of those cases, to learn from successful and unsuccessful approaches as well as to be able to iterate the nature of good and bad experiences. The case studies will enable learners to illuminate the nature of work, and the demands inherent within nursing practice, leadership and innovation to enable the development of critical knowledge and problem-solving skills.

Directed reading: throughout the programme, learners will be required to engage in critical discussion, which will require them to undertake directed reading. 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, evidence and activities, so they are cognisant of contemporary debates within a range of nursing fields/issues.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): Asynchronous learning and support will be provided through a range of approaches and materials which will include: pre-recorded lecture videos (with closed captions), appropriate short videos (with closed captions), slides, research and commentary articles, web links, podcasts (audio), ebook chapters, quizzes, case scenarios. Learners will participate in discussion boards for the individual modules to facilitate the sharing of information and engagement with asynchronous learning.

Assessment

Presentation: Learners are supported to develop their presentation skills with presentations assessed by the tutor using a clear marking scheme. Presentations will include an exploration of their own leadership style based on colleague feedback.

Essay/Report: a variety of written assessments are used ranging from reflection on individually identified elements of nursing practice, to reports and the development of portfolios and education tools for colleagues, developed from critique of practice and evidence.

Engagement with the VLE - Engagement with the VLE will foster scholarly debate, resource sharing, and collaborative reflection. Students will participate in a variety of online activities and discussion forums, followed by a concise reflective summary of their engagement.

Literature review: A review of literature is used as part of the summative assessment. This allows the students to explore in greater depth a subject of their choice utilising a range of evidence leading to a greater understanding of the topic and also promotes recommendations for evidence-based practice innovations.

Extended Literature Review: an evidence-based work-related project will be completed in the final stages of the programme. This allows the student to identify an area of clinical interest and relevance to their nursing role and produce an extended piece of work resulting in recommendations for innovation in practice.

Formative assessment: elements of formative assessment are included in all modules so learners can prepare for the summative assessments and identify any gaps in their knowledge/approach to the assessment through developmental feedback.

Contact Hours

Each year of the BSc (Hons) Professional Nursing Practice (Top up) consists of 60 credits, therefore 600 hours of scheduled learning activities (synchronous and asynchronous) and independent study. For 20-credit modules, learners can expect to receive approximately 3 hours of synchronous contact for scheduled learning activities per week, for 9 weeks. In addition, there will be approximately 30 hours of identified asynchronous activities for each 20-credit module. A full breakdown of contact hours can be found in individual module descriptors.

7. Programme Regulations

This programme will be subject to the following assessment regulations:

- Regulations for Taught Degree Programmes (2023)
- Adherence to the BNU Maintaining Academic Confidentiality policy

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 - 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 students and course administration
- Central student services, including teams supporting academic skills development, career success, student finance, Multifaith 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 relevant external surveys
- Student representatives
- Programme Committees, via appointed student representatives
- Informal feedback to your module/programme leaders

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/s following a process of external moderation of work submitted for assessment
- The Annual Monitoring process, which is overseen by the University's Education Committee
- 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 BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Grading Descriptors
- The University Strategy

Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes to Modules

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Module Code (Core)	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Level 6																				
NAM6124	X		X	X		X	X	X			X			X			X	X		X
NAM6125	X	X		X		X	X					X	X	X	X	X		X		
NAM6130	X			X			X				X		X				X	X	X	
NAM6131			X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Option clinical module -																				
NAM6126/6127/6128/6129	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Programme Specification