

Quality Assurance

Master of Science in Advanced Clinical Practice

Master of Science in Advanced Clinical Practice (Advanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship)

With subsidiary exit awards:

Postgraduate Diploma in Advancing Clinical Practice

Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Health Assessment and Clinical Decision Making

Programme Specification: Postgraduate 2019 - 2020

Information for students: the programme specification is the definitive document summarising the structure and content of your degree programme. It is reviewed and updated every year as part of Keele’s annual programme review process. The document aims to clarify to potential and current students what you can expect from the study of the subject over the course of your programme.

Names of programme(s) and award title(s)	MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Postgraduate Diploma in Advancing Clinical Practice Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Health Assessment & Clinical Decision Making
Mode of study	Part time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Duration:	Available part-time, normally completed over 3 years. Available on a modular basis, normally completed within 5 years. Available as an apprenticeship route over 3 years.

Details of professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) (If appropriate):

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/professionalstatutoryregulatorybodies/>

<http://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/>

External Examiner(s) names: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/>

1. What is the philosophy of the Programme?

Rapid changes in health and social care practice require practitioners who can cope with the numerous and diverse demands placed upon them in their professional lives. The NHS in the 21st century faces many challenges: rising expectations, demand driven by demographics; the continuing development of advances in treatments, the changing nature of disease and changing expectations of the health workplace (DH, 2008). Health and social care services are going through a period of profound transformation, with radical changes in roles and responsibilities for health and

social care professionals. People's expectations of care provision are also changing. This exciting and contemporary educational programme focuses on higher academic study underpinning a higher level of clinical practice in health and social care. The MSc Advanced Clinical Practice award has been agreed and is supported through Health Education West Midlands and the West Midlands Universities Advanced Practice Group. National workforce intelligence has highlighted a national supply and skills shortage in the medical and non-medical workforce however there is consensus that the Advanced Clinical Practice workforce can be used effectively to enhance capacity and to ensure a quality service for patients, now and in the future, supporting the values of the NHS Constitution.

Advanced Clinical Practice roles are essential to the delivery of healthcare services and the West Midlands Advanced Clinical Practice Framework provides the foundation on which all future Advanced Clinical Practice roles within the West Midlands should be developed and existing roles can be reviewed and subsequently supported. The framework has been developed for all Healthcare Professionals, Workforce Managers, Employers and Education Providers. Both local organisations and national bodies state that there is a need for all Healthcare Professionals to advance their skills and knowledge to provide safe, effective and timely care for those accessing services (HEWM 2015). This programme within the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Keele University is distinctive in that it offers an advanced clinical focus upon which to acquire a postgraduate award, and will therefore appeal to a multidisciplinary market including qualified nurses; physiotherapists; paramedics; pharmacists; etc. The pathway offers a broad range of contemporary options for prospective post-graduate students and reflects the University mission statement in learning and teaching to deliver high quality education with an emphasis on interprofessional and multi-professional learning opportunities.

Professional training programmes such as this provide specialist knowledge and skills for independent practice (e.g. advanced health assessment, non-medical prescribing) along with additional generic components (e.g. leadership and management, critical appraisal, professional ethics, reflective practice) to equip professionals for the challenges of modern health care. This programme seeks to provide such knowledge and skills, within the challenge of a Masters level course and using small group learning to share knowledge and experience. This is a part-time programme, designed to meet the needs of full-time health professionals, who can take study leave in short blocks with study augmented by on-line learning within the Keele Virtual Learning Environment (KLE). The modules are offered on a regular basis throughout the year, usually repeated annually. Each module has a designated leader, who may be assisted by course tutors. Keele University is recognised for the quality of its programme delivery, especially within the health assessment and prescribing components of the programme and also offers the availability of 15 elective credits, enabling a student to tailor the programme to their area of clinical expertise. In addition, keele has excellent relationships with our clinical partners and meet on a regular basis to ensure that the programme is meeting specific clinical needs in our rapidly changing healthcare economy.

On completion of this Award the student will be a recognised Advanced Clinical Practitioner (HEWM, 2015) with an expert knowledge base, complex decision-making skills and clinical competencies for expanded autonomous scope of practice, the characteristics of which are shaped by the context in which the individual practices.

The aim of the programme is summarised in the West Midlands Advanced Clinical Practice definition; to develop.

“A registered practitioner with an expert knowledge base, complex decision-making skills and clinical competencies for expanded autonomous scope of practice, the characteristics of which are shaped by the context in which the individual practices. Demonstrable at masters' level and meets the education, training and CPD requirements for Advanced Clinical Practice as identified within the framework.”

Advanced Clinical Practitioner Learning Characteristics

Advanced Clinical Practice

- Complex decision making/clinical judgement and problem solving
- Critical thinking and analytical skills reflexively
- Evidence of critical reflection and learning
- Appropriate outcome when managing complexity
- Acts within Clinical Governance standards
- Upholds equality, diversity and decision making

- Robust assessment and diagnosis/problem identified, making appropriate referrals and/or discharge
- Autonomy when assessing and managing risk
- Competent and safe to prescribe (where appropriate) and/or advise therapeutic interventions to improve service user outcomes including use of assisted technology
- Advanced communication skills
- Ensures service user focus through service user, patient and public involvement

Clinical Leadership and Management

- Ability to lead innovation and lead implementation of a service development/redesign
- Ability to negotiate and influence case for change to ensure evidence-based practice
- Evidence of promoting and influencing others to deliver value-based care
- Confidence to lead networks / groups and initiating team development
- Demonstrate resilience and ability to influence organisational culture
- Leading multi-disciplinary/agency teams
- Ability to project manage and business plan

Education

- Evidences the principles of teaching and learning
- Competent to teach theoretical knowledge and clinical skills
- Supports others to develop knowledge, skills and competences
- Act as a coach and mentor to the inter-professional team
- Create an effective learning environment
- Acts, provides and advises on service user/carer teaching documents and information giving
- Health promotion and patient focused education
- Identify patient/carer goals and work with them to achieve these

Research

- Lead on relevant projects
- Ability to access research/use information systems
- Critical appraisal/evaluation skills
- Active involvement in research, audit and service evaluation
- Ability to implement research findings into practice – including use of and development of policies/protocols and guidelines
- Ability to disseminate research findings

Keele Graduate Attributes:

Engagement with this programme will enable students to further develop their intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of students' studies and activities. Whilst students will undoubtedly have already developed these skills and abilities to varying degrees, such existing capabilities can always be deepened and enriched. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help students to develop further as a well-rounded postgraduate who can make a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life they engage in during and after their studies at Keele. Please refer to the programme webpages for a statement of how students can achieve the Keele Graduate Attributes through full engagement in the programme and other educational opportunities at Keele.

2. How is the Programme taught?

The MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Award is a programme of 180 credits aimed at multi-professional groups delivered by Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in the West Midlands which aims to meet the contemporary challenges of advanced clinical practice. Approximately 80% of the curriculum for the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice is recognised as 'core' curriculum applicable to an Advanced Clinical Practitioner working in any health discipline and setting. The other 20% of the curriculum will be negotiated between Keele and the student to consider education/training/modules required to support their advanced clinical role. Students can select modules from

within the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the wider Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and other, indeed, relevant modules within the University and other Universities through negotiation with the Award Lead.

Apprenticeship route:

The MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Apprenticeship is a programme of 180 credits. 160 credits will be achieved through on-programme learning and assessment, with the End Point Assessment contributing the final 20 credits. This apprenticeship is aimed at multi-professional groups to meet the contemporary challenges of advanced clinical practice, using a wide variety of clinical and academic based learning and assessment of competence.

During the programme you will undertake the equivalent of one day per week of study, and the rest of the week will be spent in your role in clinical practice. You will undertake both theory and practice modules to support your learning, and this will be monitored by at least three tri-partite meetings per year where you will meet with a representative of both the University and your employing organisation to ensure that you are progressing well and are receiving the support you need to continue to make progress.

The learning methods below are selected and used to support students to meet the stated learning outcomes by providing a balance of independent, supported study with choice in relation to topics of relevance and importance to individuals' teaching contexts, the provision of dialogic development of skills and knowledge through peer and expert support.

The principal learning and teaching methods used in the programme are:

- Seminars and Workshops: The core of each module delivery mode is a series of face to face tutor-led or group-led seminars or workshops.
- Observations and Supervised Practice: The module Teaching Reflectively in Higher Education expects participants to take part in a minimum number of six observed teaching sessions with tutors, mentors and peers and provides pre- and post-session structured support and discussion to maximise learning from each event.
- Web-based learning using the Keele Learning Environment (KLE), Blackboard. All modules on the programme maintain an active web presence where module details and learning materials can be accessed on campus and remotely. For the two taught certificate modules, core face to face sessions are routinely made available as audio recordings for students to revisit the materials. The module technology-enhanced learning includes and expects students to access and work with the KLE and other technologies to explore their potential for learning and learners.
- Group work and peer support. All modules use focused group work and class discussions within face to face tutor time. In some modules approaches are more formalised and include independent group work (Design and Development of Higher Education).
- Project supervision. Participants on the MSc working on their dissertation / advanced work-based practice project are supported by group and one to one meetings with an experienced supervisor. In many instances, there will be an assigned co-supervisor to offer additional support and guidance from a clinical background.
- Directed independent study. Most of the study hours for each module comprise independent learning by expecting participants to add depth and breadth to their knowledge of topics, to practice skills and to reflect on critical incidents and their practice.

Throughout the period of study on the programme or on an associated award, participants are assigned a named tutor. The tutor will offer a regular infrastructure of meetings throughout the participant's study period. They can discuss progression, achievement and offer pastoral support and guidance.

Teaching staff: The course is led by a range of experienced lecturers and advanced clinical practitioners who have additional educational qualifications. Subject specific sessions are often led by senior clinicians from our local Trusts and beyond.

3. What is the Structure of the Programme?

A rolling programme of modules, most repeated on an annual cycle, allows students to plan modules and study leave well in advance. The allocation of study time is 150 hours per 15 credit module which usually amounts to 5 days of face to face teaching (or equivalent with on line learning) and the remainder is personal study time. The teaching is often split into smaller 1 to 3 day blocks.

MSc Advanced Clinical Practice; Postgraduate Diploma in Advancing Clinical Practice; Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Health Assessment and Advanced Decision Making.

Traditional route:

EXIT AWARD:	POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ADVANCED HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND CLINICAL DECISION MAKING	
Module 1	NUR 40039 An Introduction to Clinical Effectiveness	15 Credits
Module 2	NUR-40014 Health Assessment in Clinical Practice	30 Credits
Module 3	NUR-40077 Advanced Decision Making	15 Credits
Core Portfolio	NUR-40085 Clinical Competence for Advanced Clinical Practice	

EXIT AWARD:	POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN ADVANCING CLINICAL PRACTICE	
Module 4	NUR-40033 Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals Or NUR-40047 Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Nurses and Midwives Or PHA 40122 Independent Prescribing (Pharmacy)	30 Credits 30 credits 60 Credits
Module 5	NUR 40042 Clinical Leadership	15 Credits
Module 6	Elective Module	15 Credits
Core Portfolio	NUR-40085 Clinical Competence for Advanced Clinical Practice	

EXIT AWARD:	MSc ADVANCED CLINICAL PRACTICE	
Module 7 (Dissertation)	NUR-40037 – Advanced Work-based Practice Project	60 Credits
Core Portfolio	NUR-40085 Clinical Competence for Advanced Clinical Practice	PASS

Apprenticeship route:

EXIT AWARD:	POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ADVANCED HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND CLINICAL DECISION MAKING	
Module 1	NUR 40039 An Introduction to Clinical Effectiveness	15 Credits
Module 2	NUR-40014 Health Assessment in Clinical Practice	30 Credits
Module 3	NUR-40077 Advanced Decision Making	15 Credits
Core Portfolio	NUR-40085 Clinical Competence for Advanced Clinical Practice	

EXIT AWARD:	POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN ADVANCING CLINICAL PRACTICE	
Module 4	NUR-40033 Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals	30 Credits
	Or NUR-40047 Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Nurses and Midwives	30 credits
	Or PHA 40122 Independent Prescribing (Pharmacy)	60 Credits
Module 5	NUR 40042 Clinical Leadership	15 Credits
Module 6	Elective Module	15 Credits
Core Portfolio	NUR-40085 Clinical Competence for Advanced Clinical Practice	

EXIT AWARD:	MSC ADVANCED CLINICAL PRACTICE	
Module 7 (Dissertation)	NUR-40079 Advanced Work Based Practice Project Apprenticeship	40 credits
EPA	NUR-40081 MSc ACP Apprenticeship End Point Assessment	20 credits
Core Portfolio	NUR-40085 Clinical Competence for Advanced Clinical Practice	PASS

This modular/part time programme, consists of 180 credits of level 7 modules, and the students will be able to select a combination of core and elective taught modules up to the value of 120 credits and 60 credits at dissertation / advanced work-based practice project to give a total of 180 level 7 credits for the Award (it is permissible to have up to 30 credits at level 6 in accordance with regulation C7).

MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (apprenticeship route)

This part time programme consists of 180 credits of Level 7 modules; the students will be able to select a combination of core and elective taught modules up to the value of 120 credits, 40 credits at Advanced Work Based Practice Project Apprenticeship and 20 credits from the End Point Assessment.

There are 3 formal exit routes from the award:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Health Assessment & Clinical Decision Making (60 Credits)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Advancing Clinical Practice (120 Credits)
- MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (180 Credits)

There is an expectation that the apprentice undertakes the full programme over three years and completes the required end point assessment.

Advanced Clinical Practitioner Learning Characteristic achievement across core modules:

ACP Learning characteristic	NUR-40039 An Introduction to Clinical Effectiveness	HLT-40001 Research Methods in Health	NUR-40014 Health Assessment in Clinical Practice	NUR-40077 Advanced Decision Making	NUR-40042 Clinical Leadership	NUR-40033 /40043 Independent and Supplementary Prescribing	NUR-40037 – Advanced Work-based Practice Project	NUR-40019 – Research Dissertation	NUR-40079 Advanced Work-based Project Apprenticeship	NUR-40085 Clinical Competence for Advanced Clinical Practice	NUR-40081 MSc ACP Apprenticeship End Point Assessment
Advanced Clinical Practice	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clinical Leadership and Management			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Education	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Research	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Elective Modules:

There are an extensive range of potential elective module choices; examples available to the student within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences can be located here:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/health/postgraduate/individualmodules/>

Students can select appropriate elective modules from across the University or external Institutions. These will have to be agreed by the Programme Lead / APL Co-ordinator.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

Approximately 80% of the curriculum for the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice is recognised as ‘core’ curriculum applicable to an Advanced Clinical Practitioner working in any health discipline and setting. Approximately 20% of the curriculum will be negotiated between the university and the student when considering the education/training /modules required to support individual advanced practice roles.

Learning required:

- Minimum study required is 600 hours for a 60-credit module
- Taught days range from 10 to 17 for a 30-credit module
- Clinical component for advanced health assessment is a minimum of 78 hours
- Minimum 6 hours of clinical supervision in practice per week

- Completion of Clinical Competency Handbook and Portfolio throughout the programme.
- For the apprenticeship route, completion of the end point assessment.

The Award is comprised of a modular structure delivered part-time ordinarily over a 36-month period.

4. How is the Programme assessed?

A variety of assessment methods is used, including essays, task-based assignments, group presentations, assessment of communication skills and a portfolio. Each method of assessment is supported by clear criteria for marking. The pass mark is 50% for all elements of assessment.

This range of assessments allows students to demonstrate the achievement of the different outcomes by:

1. Class tests to demonstrate knowledge and problem solving abilities
2. Presentations to develop communication, teaching, scientific and leadership skills
3. Group work and tasks and to develop practical skills
4. Essays to develop critical thinking, problem solving and skills of marshalling and defending an argument
5. For the apprenticeship route, an end point assessment.

In addition a portfolio to demonstrate clinical competencies is required. This is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Formative assessment occurs in several places in the award including:

1. Class presentations to rehearse arguments and gather feedback from tutors and fellow students
2. Self-assessment are used in the VLE to guide self-directed learning
3. Video feedback on performance

ASSESSMENT OF CLINICAL COMPETENCY IN PRACTICE – NUR-40085 CLINICAL COMPETENCE FOR ADVANCED CLINICAL PRACTICE

Clinical Competency in practice is a summative assessment for the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Award which is graded as a PASS or FAIL. (Full guidance is detailed within the handbook.)

Clinical Practice Portfolio

Students are required to produce a Clinical Practice Portfolio of evidence which supports the Clinical Competency Handbook. It should illustrate and map your progress towards becoming an Advanced Clinical Practitioner and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and outcomes across all the four competency domains; Clinical Skills; Education; Research; Leadership and Management as you develop from 'Novice' to 'Competent' practitioners, to 'Proficient' practitioners to 'Expert' practitioners. The content of the Clinical Practice Portfolio should be supported by appropriate reference to legislation and literature throughout.

The competencies will enable student practitioners to demonstrate that they can:

- Deal with complex issues both systematically and relatively, making sound judgments and decisions in the absence of complete data and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences

- Demonstrate self-direction and originality in solving problems and act autonomously in planning and implementing treatment and care
- Function effectively and safely in circumstances requiring sound judgment, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable clinical environments
- Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding and to develop new skills to a high level

It is a requirement that you record all clinical activity in your Clinical Practice Portfolio including, time spent with your Clinical Supervisor, visits to other clinical areas and time practising skills unsupervised. There is an expectation of regular clinical activity with at least 6 hours of clinical supervision per week throughout the programme. This clinical time can also be used as part of specific module requirements, such as Health Assessment in Clinical Practice and Non-Medical Prescribing.

NUR-40081 MSc ACP Apprenticeship End Point Assessment (EPA)

In order to progress to the EPA, the apprentice must meet the gateway criteria (have formally completed 160 credits of the Advanced Clinical Practice modules and have received confirmation from your employer that the requirements of the apprentice agreement and knowledge, skills and behaviours from the standard have been met within your workplace.

The EPA is completed within a maximum three-month period at the end of the programme including the time required to prepare for and undertake the EPA.

The EPA is comprised of two assessments. Firstly, you will sit an unseen open book examination to assess knowledge, skills and behaviours. The 'open book' examination is a two hour examination in which you will bring resources into the examination room in order to support your completion of examination questions. The resources permitted are three referenced written case studies built from your own practice. No other resources are permissible. Case studies are a maximum of 1500 words (+/- 10%) excluding references. The case studies will be presented using a provided template. The examination comprises eight examination questions selected by the end point assessment organisation (EPAO) from the EPAO's bank of 24 questions developed in consultation with a representative employer organisation and an independent external examiner.

Secondly, you will complete a synoptic assessment with two elements to demonstrate integration of knowledge, skills and behaviour. The presentation of practice is focused on a 1500 word (+/-10%) clinical practice change report using a template provided. This is written during the EPA period and outlines the evidence-based background and proposed clinical practice change related to your area of clinical practice. Element 2 is a 25-minute (+/-10%) presentation and 10 minutes (+/-10%) for the panel to gain clarification on any aspect of the presentation or the clinical practice change report. The clinical practice change report and presentation are submitted electronically 5 days prior to the date of the presentation.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

Accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL) and accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) will be permitted along the following lines. APCL will be allowed where a module has been completed prior to registering on the MSc, whose content and learning objectives are equivalent to those of a module within the MSc. These credits must have been earned sufficiently recently that they are deemed to be 'current' (which will be judged in relation to the subject matter and disciplinary context, but will normally be no more than 5 years). The module offered for APCL must have a credit rating at least as large as that of the Keele module against which it is offered, and the maximum credit value that can be contributed by an individual module offered for APCL is the credit rating of the Keele module against which it is offered.

Through a similar process, and subject to the relevant approvals, students may apply for accreditation in respect of modules that they may wish to undertake at other HEIs during their registration on the MSc; such accreditation cannot normally be given in respect of core modules within the MSc.

APEL will be determined through the submission of a portfolio of experiential work, which will be assessed, and must similarly be offered against one or more specific modules in the MSc. The credit rating of the portfolio, which will be

confirmed during the process of assessment, must be at least as large as that of the Keele module against which it is offered. Where a single portfolio of work is offered against more than one module, it must explicitly address the learning objectives of the modules concerned.

Whilst APCL/APEL is normally granted against a specific module in the Keele framework, if no such module exists within the framework APCL/APEL may still be permitted if the module or portfolio submitted meets level 7 learning objectives and the philosophy of this programme.

A fee may be charged for both APCL and APEL to reflect the administrative and assessment work required; in the case of APEL this may be up to the full fee for the module against which accreditation is sought.

Extent of APL Permissible

Within this programme the maximum permissible APL credits are:

Postgraduate Certificate: 30 Credits

Postgraduate Diploma or Degree: 60 Credits

APCL and APEL are not possible within the MSc dissertation stage.

If, prior to registering on a programme, a student has taken one or more Keele modules that are specified modules on the programme, accreditation of these modules will not normally count towards the maximum permissible APCL.

Normally, no more than 25% of the credits with which a student wishes to gain an award can be contributed through accreditation of modules undertaken at other HEIs during registration on the Keele framework. Credits that have formed part of a previous award outside this MSc programme (either through APCL or through the modules offered within that award) cannot normally be used again in respect of an award in this framework.

Exceptionally, with the approval of the Course Director and the External Examiner, a student who had previously completed a PGDip equivalent to the Keele PGDip may be permitted direct entry to the MSc dissertation stage. The student will be referred to the school APL process.

For those undertaking the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) (Advanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship) an initial needs assessment (INA) will be undertaken and funding will not be available to repeat current knowledge and skills. The initial needs assessment will be considered as part of the University APL process.

5. What are the typical admission requirements for the programme?

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADVANCED CLINICAL PRACTICE EDUCATION/TRAINING

New entrants to Advanced Clinical Practice:

To become an Advanced Clinical Practitioner, the following points should normally be met and the applicant must be in a role that has employer support for clinical placement and time to attend the course with supervisor/mentor within practice.

- Hold current first level Professional Registration with a relevant Regulatory Body
- Hold a first degree and minimum of 3 years relevant experience in clinical practice.
- Recognised post within a healthcare organisation and the post listed within workforce plan and business need.
- Confirmed defined / protected Advanced Clinical Practice role for the trainee to be moved into on successful completion of the programme.

- Appropriately named clinical supervisor to support the trainee during their training.
- Commitment to providing protected learning time for the trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner during the MSc and this is equivalent to:
 - One day a week in University (or equivalent)
 - One day a week (or equivalent) protected time for mentor-supported practice, reading, writing and other academic activities.

For those undertaking MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) (Advanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship), the Institute for Apprenticeships stipulates that the apprentice is registered with a statutory health and/or social care regulator with proof of current registration and achievement of Mathematics and English qualification of level 2 as general apprenticeship requirements, prior to the EPA. In addition, apprentices will be interviewed, and an initial needs assessment undertaken.

Applicants without a first degree:

Universities have a separate policy for applicants who do not hold a first degree at 2:2 or above but have substantial and relevant clinical or prior study experience. In such circumstances, at the discretion of the course director, applicants may be offered a place to study a single module of the programme and, if successful, upgrade their University registration to a Postgraduate Certificate, Diploma or MSc.

Existing Practitioners:

Existing Practitioners who are currently working in an Advanced Clinical Practice role and do not have a MSc level of education have options to either complete the Masters or continue in the role and update in-line with their CPD requirements.

There are 'Top Up' arrangements for existing Practitioners who do not have a full Master's degree. They have the option to complete the degree and to do this they would need to be in a relevant Advanced Clinical Practice post and supported by their organisation.

Employers:

All organisations supporting staff to undertake an Advanced Clinical Practice course will need to ensure as part of their workforce plans the role of Advanced Clinical Practitioner is embedded within their organisation structures.

6. How are students supported on the programme?

The Course Handbook provides key information and guidance on structure, content and assessment, including dates for submission of assignments. The current year's handbook also includes the module dates. The course complies with University policy on student pastoral and academic support. The Course Administrator is based at the CEC and is available to deal with students' queries by phone, email or in person.

Primarily the Programme Lead will provide academic support for the student, and conjointly establish the outcomes of the programme agreement plan and guidance on the available taught modules selected during the academic year. The student has an important role in liaising closely with all partners involved in the programme.

Module Leaders will provide additional support within the taught modules. Clinical mentors will provide support within the practice area. The Programme Lead and Module Leader will meet students individually at scheduled times (minimum of once per Module) and will be contactable by email, phone or via the Keele Learning Environment. The University has a range of support services which are detailed on the Keele Website.

Below is a diagram (Table 6.1) which indicates the full range of student support structures, showing the personal tutor playing a central, pivotal role.

Table 6.1: Student Support Structure

Personal Tutor	Project Supervisor
Student Support	Multidisciplinary Team
Keele Student Services	Clinical Mentor
Library Staff	Trust Educational leads
Professional Services Staff	Clinical Practice Facilitators
Module Leaders	Peer support

7. Learning Resources

The student will have access to the Library and IT Services on the Main Keele Campus and also at the Clinical Education Centre [CEC].

Keele University Library: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/library/>

Library information

The Library operates from two sites; the Campus Library which also houses IT Services and the Health Library in the Clinical Education Centre at the Royal Stoke site. The Health Library is available to everyone who works for or with the NHS in North Staffordshire, all students and staff of Keele University and others with a need for health information. Students will have access to the clinical skills laboratory for simulated sessions. The Keele Learning Environment (KLE) will be used for a range of learning information and activities. Students will be given a Programme Handbook and a specific Module Handbook as relevant to their studies.

8. Other learning opportunities

Students may be able to negotiate an appropriate elective module with an external institution either nationally or internationally. This will be discussed and confirmed with the Programme Lead/APL Coordinator.

Learning is enhanced by the provision of an inter-professional learning environment. A blended learning approach is utilised including Keele Learning Environment (KLE) delivered by a combination of classroom and web based activities and resources.

9. Quality management and enhancement

The School of Nursing and Midwifery Postgraduate Committee is responsible for monitoring the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice programme, which in turn is responsible to the School Learning and Teaching Committee, which is then responsible to the School Executive Committee. The School has robust, rigorous and responsive review and evaluation processes that take account of the views of students, mentors, teaching staff, stakeholders, External Examiners and regulatory bodies.

These processes include:

- Students' evaluation of individual modules:
- Compilation of a module report by the relevant module leader
- Students' individual and anonymous evaluations for each iteration of the module
- Report of actions from module evaluation reports are presented at School Learning and Teaching Committee
- Quality management of assessments:

- Management of assessments is overseen by the School's Deputy for Learning and Teaching
- Assessment titles align with module aims and learning outcomes
- Titles and markers' guides are scrutinised by the relevant External Examiner prior to use
- Submitted work is marked and moderated by academic staff, and these processes are scrutinised and approved by the External Examiner
- Written assessments are anonymous to the marker unless otherwise specified in the Module Proforma
- Quality monitoring processes:
 - All clinical placement areas are audited by School staff in collaboration with clinical colleagues
 - Partnership meetings take place with the School, representatives of the commissioning body and local health care provider partners
 - External Examiner's report on each module's assessment and annually on the conduct of assessments
 - University's Internal Quality Audit (IQA)
 - User and Carer Involvement Group (UCIG) – on-going strategic service user involvement and action planning Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of quality and standards:
 - Assessment Committees
 - Student Staff Voice Committee
 - School and Faculty Learning & Teaching Committees
 - Trust Partnership Meetings

10. The principles of programme design

This programme focuses upon the need for driving forward expert practice and the professional role development of the practitioner, underpinned by higher academic study. The programme has distinctive features such as inter-professional learning, tripartite collaboration and assessment. The programme offers an intellectual challenge, and importantly reflects health and social care reforms, and breaking the boundaries of inter-professional roles and organisations in professional practice. In addition, reflection on the interface of care [for example, primary and secondary, health and social, voluntary and private sector] and the challenges in sustaining a person-centred approach will be integral.

The School of Nursing & Midwifery embraces the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy and further addresses specific learning needs of professional practitioners undertaking part time study. Keele Virtual Learning Environment (KLE) will be utilised to support and complement the blended learning approach of the curriculum and the importance of inter-professional learning and Faculty/University Awards.

Students who have completed their first degree in a range of health/social care subjects have expressed a need to develop their academic profile. This programme has been developed in response to stakeholder need within the regional NHS Trusts and we have received full collaborative support for the proposal from our senior partners. This MSc programme meets the needs of professionals, provides personal fulfilment for the experienced practitioner, and is unique to the individual and relevant to advanced clinical practice. The MSc programme is flexible, aligned with contemporary policy and practice in health and social care, promotes andragogy and is attractive to employers. Employers are encouraged that this MSc programme meets the needs of their future workforce as it is grounded in service development and evaluations.

Service user and carer involvement is a concept that is valued, fully embraced and actively incorporated in to Keele University School of Nursing and Midwifery's (SNAM) education programmes at all levels of study and research activity. The Department of Health (2013), Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2010), National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Quality Standard (QS) 14 (NICE, 2011) NICE QS 15 (NICE, 2012) and high profile public reports (Cavendish, 2013; Francis, 2013; Keogh, 2013; National Advisory Group on the Safety of Patients in England, 2013; National Voices, 2013; Willis, 2015) reinforce the significance of healthcare professionals having the ability to view care from differing perspectives to promote person-centred care.

You will be expected to conceptualise service user and carer involvement. Demonstration of understanding and determining ways in which you can work collaboratively and confidently with service users to inform person-centred healthcare provision is required; acknowledging differing levels of involvement and ways in which this can be meaningfully achieved. This is to include evidence typically but not exclusively generated by the student's own mode of study e.g. desk top research /empirical research. The aim of this being to support you in developing in-depth and complex levels of knowledge informed by service user experience to achieve Masters Level attributes of generating original responses to multifaceted and unanticipated problems experienced by individuals in the situation of healthcare. This knowledge aligns to the levels indicated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (QAA, 2008; QAA, 2010).

11. Programme Version History

Version History	Date	CHANGES / NOTES
Date first created	10 January 2017	MSc Advanced Clinical Practice has been removed from MSc Advancing Professional Practice Programme Specification and had a change of core research module dependent on dissertation / advanced work-based project selection.
Revision history	June 2017 October 2018 February 2019	36 month part time route / up to 5 years modular. Addition of NUR-40077 Advanced Decision Making in year 1. Addition of the apprenticeship route to the MSc ACP.
Date approved	6 th December 2018	FLTC approval

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Annex A: MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) (Advanced Clinical Practitioner delivered via the apprenticeship route.

These regulations supplement the relevant University Academic Regulations which are to be found on the University website and in the University Calendar. In the event of a contradiction or other discrepancy between these regulations and University Academic Regulations, the University Academic Regulations shall be authoritative, unless approval has been given by Senate for a variation from the University Academic Regulations

1. Overall research credits:

For the apprenticeship route MSc ACP, the total research credits, due to the requirement for an integrated end point assessment, fall below the 'normal' 60 credits required by the University. This deviation from standard University regulations has been accepted as a course specific regulation.

2. +/-10% for the word count for a Level 7 assessment:

The end point assessments (EPA) for apprenticeships are nationally agreed. The two elements of the end point assessment for the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) (Advanced Clinical Practitioner delivered via the apprenticeship route) includes within the detail for the two assessments a requirement for +/-10%. This deviation has been accepted and only applied to the two EPA assessments.

3. Grading of end point assessment (EPA)

The nationally agreed criteria for the two assessments within the EPA include that they are capped at assessment. This is not usually an approach utilised within the University for modules under 30 credits, but this requirement has been accepted as a programme specific regulation.

In addition, there is a requirement that the assessments for the EPA are graded at fail/pass/merit/distinction. This falls outside approaches applied by the University but this requirement has been accepted as a programme specific regulation. Fail will be below 50%, Pass between 50% - 59% (50% for resubmission), Merit between 60% and 69% and Distinction over 70%.

Examples of overall apprenticeship grading:

Open book examination	Presentation of practice	Apprenticeship grade
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
Distinction	Merit	Merit
Merit	Distinction	Merit
Merit	Merit	Merit
Merit	Pass	Pass
Pass	Merit	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass
Fail	Pass	Fail
Pass	Fail	Fail
Fail	Fail	Fail

Please also refer to the grading criteria outlined in the End Point Assessment Plan, which can be found at <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/1696/advanced-clinical-practice-assessment-plan-for-publication-march2018.pdf>