

# Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

## For students starting in Academic Year 2023/24

### 1. Course Summary

<b>Names of programme and award title(s)</b>	MSc Rheumatology Nursing/ Rheumatology Practice
<b>Award type</b>	Taught Masters
<b>Mode of study</b>	Part-time
<b>Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award</b>	Level 7
<b>Normal length of the programme</b>	3 to 5 years
<b>Maximum period of registration</b>	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
<b>Location of study</b>	Keele Campus
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>	Not applicable
<b>Regulator</b>	Office for Students (OfS)
<b>Tuition Fees</b>	<b>UK students:</b> Part-time fee for 2023/24 is £3,850 per year*

**How this information might change:** Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

\* We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

### 2. Overview of the Programme

People with musculoskeletal conditions need a wide range of high quality support and treatment from simple advice to highly technical, specialised medical and surgical treatment across many specialities for example, rheumatology, orthopaedics, pain clinics and community based social services (DH 2006). There has been guidance from NICE regarding the management of people with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA, 2009) and Osteoarthritis (OA, 2008). The implementation of these guidelines will be influenced by the knowledge and skills of nurses and allied health professionals.

The NICE guidelines for adults with rheumatoid arthritis recommend that all patients should have access to a multi-disciplinary team to provide the opportunity for periodic assessments of the effects of the condition on everyday activities, mobility, mood, ability to work and the impact on social and leisure activities (NICE 2009). Whilst the OA guidelines state that the core interventions for people with this condition include education, exercise, weight management and the use of simple analgesia such as paracetamol. Consequently we need to ensure that rheumatology nurses and AHPs have the required clinical skills to implement these guidelines.

This programme will enable experienced clinical nurses and allied health professionals to manage the ongoing care of people with rheumatoid arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions. This will include the interpretation of haematological, biochemical and radiological investigations as well as making and receiving

referrals from a host of colleagues in secondary and community care settings. In accordance with current health policy, the course will also develop clinical leadership skills.

The policy document NHS Next Stage Review: A High Quality Workforce (DH 2008) and the recent report by the Prime Minister's Commission: Front Line Care (2010) emphasise that professionals must be positioned for success in leadership, management, research and educational roles. Critical to this, is that education curricula and training programmes be integrally linked into current and emerging models of care and scientific and technological advances. In this way, practitioners will be able to acquire the new capabilities and skills in order to respond to the patients' expectations in a variety of care settings.

*In your programme you may sometimes be expected to role play and engage in simulated clinical scenarios with other students, such as the practice and observation of practical skills in physical contact with other students. For some specific practices, this may necessitate modification of dress - e.g., to shorts and t-shirt. These activities will be conducted in a professional, safe, respectful and culturally sensitive way, under the supervision of academic staff, according to a defined protocol.*

### **3. Aims of the programme**

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- a) Demonstrate the capacity for critical enquiry, analysis, and application of knowledge in their practice and to support innovations in health and social care
- b) Engage in effective clinical musculoskeletal examination.
- c) Demonstrate the use and effect of medicines, and make decisions on drug administration based on research evidence.
- d) Demonstrate the interplay between psycho-social issues and patient functioning, and develop assessment and management strategies that address these issues.
- e) Promote the knowledge and skills required to be an effective clinical leader.
- f) Engage in the research process and contribute to research within their practice.
- g) Promote and enhance their skills in critical reflection, evaluation, professional decision making and leadership to inform best practice.
- h) Promote effective collaborative, interdisciplinary and interagency working practices.

The programme will combine conceptual, theoretical and practical approaches to the study of rheumatology and musculoskeletal conditions and provide the opportunity for the student to develop skills and expertise to an advanced level.

### **4. What you will learn**

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

#### **Subject specific skills**

Successful students will acquire:

- An in-depth knowledge and understanding of their speciality, informed by current practice, scholarship and research, including a critical awareness of current issues and developments in the subject and the profession;
- The ability to apply research to professional situations, both practical and theoretical;
- The ability to use a range of techniques and research methods applicable to the professional activities.

#### **Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)**

Successful students will be able to:

- Use initiative and take responsibility;
- Solve problems in creative and innovative ways;
- Make decisions in challenging situations;
- Continue to learn independently and develop professionally;
- Communicate effectively, with colleagues and a wider audience, in a variety of media.

The main themes of the programme, which are embedded within specific modules, will focus upon: leadership and clinical management, evidence-based practice, research and professional role development.

## **Keele Graduate attributes**

Engagement with this programme will enable you to develop your 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 your studies and activities. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to become a well-rounded graduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in after your studies are completed.

Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/>

## **5. How is the programme taught?**

The main academic venue for this course will be the Staffordshire Rheumatology Centre at the Haywood Hospital. Some elements of the course may involve working with patients at the Haywood Hospital (e.g. clinical assessment). Modules will be taught through a mixture of lectures, interactive tutorials, problems-based learning, workshops, formal presentations and guided study. For the clinical examination and assessment module, lecturers have been involved in designing an interactive computer package to support home-based learning. Written handouts and visual aids will be used throughout the course.

All students will be required to undertake a period of private study, equivalent to an average of eight hours a week. Course preparation and study for assessment requirements will be made explicit throughout.

## **6. Teaching Staff**

The programme team comprises six academic staff all of whom have extensive teaching, research and professional practice experience. All members of staff are registered with the relevant Professional Body and the majority have recognised and recordable teaching qualifications. They have extensive experience of teaching at postgraduate level. Visiting lecturers and leading clinicians will be invited to contribute within appropriate modules.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

## **7. What is the structure of the programme?**

The Postgraduate Diploma is designed to be undertaken by part time students over a two year period with the dissertation being completed in the third year. As national and international students will be attending the course will run over a number of short intensive blocks, each lasting two to five days. This pattern of teaching is compatible with sponsorship, enabling release from full-time employment to be managed whilst maintaining a full clinical role and providing protected time, outside direct teaching contact time, or paid work, for students' private study. It has also been evaluated positively by those students whose geographical location is distant to the delivery centre.

It is proposed that successful completion of assessed work from the taught component will lead to students being awarded a Diploma. Subject to successful completion of the taught course element, candidates may proceed to an MSc by means of a dissertation on a piece of research or a project on a topic of the student's choice, arising from issues raised during the course.

Students can exit the programme with a Postgraduate Certificate consisting of 60 credits which must include a physical assessment module (15 credits), drug therapy (30 credits) and another 15 credit module from the pathway.

To progress from the Diploma stage to the Masters stage a student must have completed and normally achieved modular marks of 50% in all modules, with re-examinations of coursework in no more than 3 modules.

## Structure of the Programme

### Year 1

Module Status	Module Title	Pre-requisites and Module Overview	Semester and Year	Level and Credits
Compulsory	An Introduction to Clinical Effectiveness (NUR-40039)	<p>The last decade has seen an increasing emphasis laid on evidence based practice within healthcare in the NHS. The implication is that health care practitioners should have the ability to formulate key clinical questions relevant to their practice, search the literature, and be able to appraise published literature for its quality and relevance to their practice. This module will provide the student with an understanding of the fundamental concepts of clinical effectiveness. With this in mind, there will be some exploration of wider aspects of research, such as the potential of different research methods, ethical considerations in research, and some relevant statistical principles. Students will develop skills in undertaking a literature research, appraising evidence and will gain practical insight into the research processes underpinning clinical effectiveness.</p> <p><i>Specific entrance requirements apply.</i></p>	Semester 3 Year 1	Level 7 15 Credits
Compulsory	Physical Assessment in Rheumatology Practice 1 (NUR-40044)	<p>Many health Care Practitioners are involved in conducting their own clinics for patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis. This module will provide the student with the knowledge and skills required to undertake a clinical assessment and examination of the shoulder, knee and hand complexes in patients with rheumatological conditions.</p> <p><i>Specific entrance requirements apply.</i></p>	Semester 1 Year 1	Level 7 15 Credits
Compulsory	Drug Therapy in Rheumatology Practice (NUR-40041)	<p>This module is aimed at increasing the student's knowledge of anti-rheumatic drugs, their side effects and the basis for their use in clinical practice. It will also develop the skills of the students in the interpretation of results of investigations commonly performed in patients taking anti-rheumatic drugs</p> <p><i>Specific entrance requirements apply.</i></p>	Semester 1 & 2 Year 1	Level 7 30 Credits

### Year 2

Module Status	Module Title	Pre-requisites and Module Overview	Semester and Year	Level and Credits
Compulsory	Psychological and Social Aspects of Care (NUR-40040)	This module will examine the effects that musculoskeletal conditions can have on psychological and social functioning. The intention of the module is to enable the student to develop a theoretical understanding and practical application of the management of the patients' psycho-social problems within the clinical setting.  <i>Specific entrance requirements apply.</i>	Semester 3 Year 2	Level 7 15 Credits
Compulsory	Clinical Leadership (NUR-40042)	Many healthcare practitioners will have developed complex clinical skills but not undertaken any specific leadership training. This module will enable exploration of the evidence base that promotes effective clinical leadership whilst developing the practical skills required to lead a clinical team.  <i>Specific entrance requirements apply.</i>	Semester 3 Year 2	Level 7 15 Credits
Optional	Physical Assessment in Rheumatology Practice 2 (NUR-40038)  <b>OR</b>	Many Health Care Practitioners are involved in conducting their own clinics for patients with rheumatoid arthritis. This module will provide the student with the knowledge and skills required to undertake a clinical assessment and examination of the spine, pelvis and feet.  <i>Specific entrance requirements apply.</i>	Semester 3 Year 2	Level 7 15 Credits
	Principles and Practice of Joint and Soft Tissue Injection (PTY-40015)	Many Health Care Practitioners are involved in conducting their own clinics for people with a musculoskeletal condition. This module will provide the student with the knowledge and skills required for soft tissue and intra articular injections.	Semester 3 Year 2	Level 7 15 Credits
Elective	Elective Module	Relevant to the student's scope of practice	Semester 3 Year 2	Level 7 15 Credits

### Year 3

Module Status	Module Title	Pre-requisites and Module Overview	Semester and Year	Level and Credits
Compulsory	Advanced Work Based Practice Project (NUR-40037)	The dissertation will demonstrate the student's ability to negotiate, design, implement and evaluate the effectiveness on service delivery of an advanced work based project.	Year 3 Semester 1, 2 & 3	Level 7 60 Credits in total

## 8. Final and intermediate awards

<b>Master's Degree</b>	180 credits	You will require at least 150 credits at Level 7
<b>Postgraduate Diploma</b>	120 credits	You will require at least 90 credits at Level 7
<b>Postgraduate Certificate</b>	60 credits	You will require at least 40 credits at Level 7

## 9. How is the Programme Assessed?

The methods of assessment used throughout the programme will be suitable to assess the intended learning outcomes and qualification descriptors, and will ensure their synthesis throughout the programme. Each module on the programme is formally assessed. A range of assessments will be used in the programme, including written assignments, presentations, OSCEs, clinical scenarios and a research dissertation. A combination of assessment methods is employed in order to ensure validity and reliability of assessment and to motivate learning. Examiners mark written work anonymously.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

## 10. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

## 11. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

## 12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/>

The programme is designed for experienced health and social care practitioners, involved in leading and developing Rheumatological and/or Musculoskeletal practice. All students who have applied and meet the entry requirements will have a telephone interview with the Programme Lead.

**Potential/prospective students will normally:**

Hold current first level Professional Registration with a relevant regulatory body e.g. Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC); Health Professional Council (HPC); General Social Care Council (GSCC).

Be working in clinical practice. Some potential/prospective students may be Managers within a musculoskeletal setting.

Hold an undergraduate second class honours degree or higher in a related subject with minimum of two years experience in professional practice.

Practitioners with extensive practice experience and no formal undergraduate degree will be considered for entry on the basis of evidence presented within their professional portfolio and discussion at interview.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

Recognition of prior certificated learning (RPCL) and recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) will be permitted along the following lines. RPCL 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 RPCL 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 RPCL is the credit rating of the Keele module against which it is offered.

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

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

### **Extent of RPL Permissible**

Within this programme the maximum permissible RPL credits are:

- Postgraduate Diploma or Degree: 60 Credits
- RPCL and RPEL 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, recognition of these modules will not normally count towards the maximum permissible RPCL.

Normally, no more than 25% of the credits with which a student wishes to gain an award can be contributed through recognition 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 RPCL or through the modules offered within that award) cannot normally be used again in respect of an award in this framework.

## **13. How are students supported on the programme?**

The Course Director is an experienced senior rheumatology nurse and Honorary Professor with the School of Nursing and Midwifery who will provide pastoral support, personal and professional guidance and formative feedback and encouragement to the student during the length of their programme.

All module leaders are experienced members of staff at Keele University or work in the Rheumatology Department at the Haywood Hospital. Module leaders are responsible for the module delivery and will support the student within the completion of the given assessment tasks.

In addition a supportive learning network will be facilitated by the academic team via the Keele Learning Environment [KLE] for email communication, group discussion, tutorial support and peer support.

### **Additional support**

Additional support is available from:

- The Director of Learning beyond Registration who has disciplinary responsibility.
- The Student Support and Guidance Lecturer within the School of Nursing and Midwifery provide an additional layer of support for all students, but particularly for those with special learning needs.
- Keele University provides support, guidance and advice for all its students via the following departments.

Learning Support and Academic Guidance Dept.; Disability Services; English Language Unit; Independent Advice Unit; Student Support and Counselling Department; The Occupational Health Department / University Health Centre.

## 14. 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 University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust. 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. Most of the links below relate mainly to the Campus Library.

Students will be given a Programme Handbook and a specific Module Handbook as relevant to their studies.

## 15. 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/RPL Co-ordinator.

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.

## 16. Additional Costs

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

## 17. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree



- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:  
<http://www.keele.ac.uk/ga/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

## 18. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>
- Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

### References

Department of Health (2004) *The NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (NHS KSF) and the Development Review Process* London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2006) *The Musculoskeletal Service Framework: A Joint responsibility doing it differently.* London, HMSO

Department of Health (2008) *NHS Next Stage Review: A High Quality Workforce* London, HMSO.

NICE (2009) *Rheumatoid Arthritis: The Management of Rheumatoid Arthritis in Adults.* Clinical Guideline 79, National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

NICE (2008) *Osteoarthritis.* Clinical Guideline 59. National Institute for health and Clinical Excellence

Report of the Prime Minister's Commission on the Future of Nursing and Midwifery in England (2010) *Front Line Care: the future of nursing and midwifery in England.* London, HMSO.

Ryan S and Hill J (2004) A survey of practice in nurse led rheumatology clinics. *Rheumatology* 43 supplement 2:441

## Version History

### This document

**Date Approved:** 18 April 2023

### Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2022/23	SARAH RYAN	24 August 2022	