

The Specification for Integrated Degree Apprenticeships should be read as a companion document to the Programme Specification for the academic award linked to the apprenticeship.

This document applies to Academic Year 2021/22 onwards

1.	Apprenticeship title	Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Degree)
2.	Qualifications	MSc Advanced Clinical Practice
3.	Level	Level 7
4.	Professional registration	Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Independent & Supplementary Prescribing (V300) (MACP4007); General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) Principles and Practice of Independent Prescribing for Pharmacists (MACP4015)
5.	Duration	Part-time (30 - 36 months)
6.	Managing institution/Main Provider	University of Worcester
7.	Teaching institution(s)	University of Worcester
8.	Apprenticeship Standard and Number	Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Degree) ST0564. Approved - 27 th March 2018
9.	Date of Apprenticeship Specification preparation/revision	Approval 4 th May 2020 Approved ASQEC June 2020 August 2020 QAA reference updated August 2021 – AQU amendments

10. Distinguishing features of the apprenticeship

Higher level or Degree Apprenticeships combine higher education study and work-based/work-integrated learning to enable apprentices to achieve a higher-level award (e.g. a Foundation Degree, Bachelors or Masters qualification) whilst in work. The provision of an academic award is integrated with experience, practice and learning in the workplace where the apprentice has paid employment status. Higher level/Degree Apprenticeships are co-designed by training providers and employers to ensure that apprentices are equipped with the skills employers need and to develop apprentices' careers.

The Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) role is reflected in the [NHS \(2019\) Long Term Plan](#) in its aim of delivering improved care for patients over the next 10 years. By completing this course ACP apprentices will have achieved the capabilities across the 4 pillars of advanced practice: clinical practice, leadership and management, education and research, outlined in the NHSE (2017) [Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice](#) and the [Apprenticeship Standard ST0564: Advanced Clinical Practitioner \(Degree\)](#) (Institute for Apprentices Technical Education (IfATE) 2018) which requires demonstration of knowledge, skills and behaviours to challenge areas of concern and work to best practice whilst being adaptable, reliable and consistent.

The ACP apprenticeship has been based on the occupational standard for Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Degree) as set out by the IfATE and approved for delivery by the healthcare trailblazer (March 2018). Given the broad scope of patient care of the University of Worcester (UW) Practice Partners', the focus of the UW ACP

apprenticeship will be across a wide spectrum with the ACP apprentices individualising their knowledge, skills and behaviours through individual learning plans within their own area of practice.

The ACP apprentices will be taught alongside the fee-paying students studying the [Masters in Advanced Clinical Practice](#). This ACP apprenticeship (ACPA) is a flexible programme of study and it is anticipated that the majority of ACP apprentices will normally complete the end point assessment within 36 months of part time study.

11. Occupational Profile

Advanced Clinical Practitioners (ACP) are experienced clinicians who demonstrate expertise in their scope of practice. Advanced Clinical Practitioners lead manage defined episodes of clinical care independently, from beginning to end, providing care and treatment from the time an individual⁽¹⁾ first presents through to the end of the episode, which may include admission, referral or discharge or care at home. They carry out their full range of duties in relation to individuals' physical and mental healthcare and in acute, primary, urgent and emergency settings (including hospitals, general practice, individuals' homes, schools and prisons, and in the public, independent, private and charity sectors). ACPs combine expert clinical skills with research, education and clinical leadership within their scope of practice. Advanced Clinical Practitioners work innovatively on a one to one basis with individuals as well as part of a wider team. They work as part of the wider health and social care team and across traditional professional boundaries in health and social care.

⁽¹⁾ Individuals includes patients, service users, clients and customers

12. Admissions Requirements

Admissions policy

The University aims to provide fair and equal access to university education to all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it.

The Advanced Clinical Practice apprenticeship aims to recruit apprentices who are healthcare professionals registered with a Professional Statutory Regulatory Body. Applicants must be currently working in a health care environment for a minimum of 30 hours a week, in order for them to be in a position to develop an appropriate, safe level of competence in the ACP skills. ACP apprentices will be progressing in their skills, knowledge and behaviours in their own clinical areas, through work-based learning, supported by the academic programme.

Work-related entry requirements

Under UK Government requirements, Higher Level or Degree Apprentices normally must be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week and must have the right to live and work in the UK. A Degree Apprentice cannot be self-employed.

All applicants must be employed in a role related to the subject matter of the apprenticeship and be sponsored by their employer. The support of the employer is articulated in an apprenticeship agreement. Applications can only be made through the sponsoring employer. Working in partnership with the employer the University will consider all such applications and will have the final decision whether to accept individuals based on whether they meet the minimum entry requirements for the academic programme as stipulated below.

Entry requirements

Before an applicant can be accepted onto the course the applicant must hold:

- A Contract of Service with the employer
 - An Apprenticeship Agreement with the employer
 - A signed commitment statement compliant with the funding rules
 - Professional registration with Professional Statutory Regulatory Body e.g. NMC/HCPC/GPhC
 - A completed UW ACP declaration of good character form by employer
 - Level 2 English and math (recognised equivalent)
 - Where an applicant has not obtained or the applicant cannot evidence achievement of a level 2 qualification (or acceptable alternative) in Maths and English, the commitment statement must include confirmation by the employer stating the applicant will be provided with *ADDITIONAL* study leave time to achieve this award.
 - Condition of apprenticeship completion is that level 2 in Maths and English (or acceptable alternative) is obtained *BEFORE* the gateway and apprentices will not be able to progress to the End Point Assessment (EPA) without evidence of achievement.
 - **Either**
 - A lower second-class Honours degree (2:2) in a health-related subject or an overseas equivalent.
- OR**
- Qualifications and experience considered to be equivalent to the above.

When assessing a non-standard applicant's suitability for entry onto the programme, candidates will need to demonstrate their potential to achieve the aims and outcomes of the programme, and that their experiences are equivalent to having achieved a 2.2 at undergraduate level

Students whose first language is not English will be expected to have reached a sufficient standard on admission to the programme; usually a minimum IELTS of 7.0 (with no less than 6.5 in any component). Other equivalent English qualifications will also be considered.

The Independent and Supplementary Prescribing modules (MACP4007 or MACP4015) have specific entry criteria, as they are associated with an award from a regulatory body (GPhC, NMC and HCPC). The entry criteria and admissions process are fully detailed in [the Independent and Supplementary Prescribing \(V300\) Programme Specification](#). Applicants for the MSc, wishing to undertake one of these optional modules must also complete a separate regional prescribing application form, prior to acceptance for the MSc.

Recognition of Prior Learning fees

Assessment of any RPL claims will be made by the UW Admissions Tutor in line with the University of Worcester's [Recognition of Prior Learning guidance and process](#). Where RPL is agreed negotiation to adjust the fees with the employer will be undertaken to reflect where the content, and/or duration of the apprenticeship has been adjusted to recognise prior learning.

On initial assessment UW RPL & RPEL policies will be enacted where there is credits can be transferred or awarded, the apprenticeship fee and learning programme will be adapted in line with employer and apprentice needs. To be an apprenticeship the minimum duration of the programme must be 12 months.

Independent and Supplementary Prescribing

The Independent and Supplementary Prescribing modules (MACP4007 or MACP4015) have specific entry criteria, as successful achievement enables annotation with the apprentices' Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (NMC, HCPC or GPhC). The entry criteria and admissions process are fully detailed in [the Independent and Supplementary Prescribing \(V300\) Programme Specification](#). Applicants for the apprenticeship wishing to undertake one of these optional modules must also complete a separate West Midlands Regional prescribing application form, prior to acceptance for the apprenticeship.

Appropriate employment in a suitable clinical environment is essential to complete

This Advanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship includes a requirement to have an appropriate Clinical Supervisor and therefore, apprentices must have identified a Clinical Supervisor for the duration of the apprenticeship and where appropriate have their manager's approval and support, prior to acceptance for the apprenticeship.

Admissions procedures

The Employer is responsible for identifying suitable candidates in a contract of service they are willing to enter into an apprenticeship; the employer screens employee suitability for application prior to entering into an apprenticeship agreement. Nominations from the sponsoring Employer, together with an online UW application, will be reviewed against the entry criteria by the UW Admissions Tutor and all applicants who meet all the entry requirements will be invited to a co-interview to meet with the representatives from the Employer and University to discuss their application, realistic expectations of the course, appropriateness of the course for their role and to ensure that they have an appropriate Clinical Supervisor arranged to support them throughout the course.

Selection criteria

Following identification and nomination of an apprentice by an employer, the following selection criteria will be used to shortlist for ACP Apprenticeship interview:

- The applicant's potential to succeed in the Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprenticeship
- Academic or professional qualifications and grades, to meet the entry requirements above
- Relevant work or other experience required for the specific module entry requirements as above
- Applicants' own statements of interest in the course
- Reference(s) from the employer confirming the applicant's experience and appropriateness of the course for their role
- Successful demonstration of communication skills, team working and understanding of the ACP role
- Contextual consideration of merit and potential

13. Structure of the apprenticeship

Higher level or Degree Apprenticeships involve both work-integrated learning in paid employment and academic study. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) specify that at least 20 per cent of an apprenticeship must involve 'off-the-job' learning, while the remaining proportion takes place 'on the job' i.e. through their job

role. The requirements for this apprenticeship will follow the academic programme as articulated in the [MSc Advanced Clinical Practice](#) programme's award map and programme requirements

To meet this requirement, the ACP apprentices will typically complete 23% 'off the job' learning as shown below:

Year	Theory hours	Directed Study hours*	Protected Learning Time hours	Total hours	% off the job hours
One	144	192	72	408	25%
Two	144	192	72	408	25%
Three	22	289	n/a	311	19%
Total	310	673	144	1127	23%

*Directed study hours includes 50% of the directed study/preparation for assessment hours recorded in module specifications.

Completion of 'off-the-job' learning will be monitored through individual learner reviews and employer reviews.

14. Knowledge, skills and behaviours

Higher level or Degree Apprenticeships support apprentices in progressively developing the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) required to meet the relevant Apprenticeship Standard.

Grid showing the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by [Apprenticeship Standard Advanced Clinical Practitioner](#) mapped to the [MSc Advanced Clinical Practice modules](#) and the [NHSE \(2017\) Multi-professional ACP framework capabilities](#) are included in the Apprenticeship Handbook.

15. Learning and teaching

The programme adopts a student-centred approach to learning, teaching and assessment, supporting apprentices to achieve the learning outcomes. It incorporates, a balance of approaches, including *constructivist*, where construction of knowledge occurs through experiences and engagement. Apprentices are encouraged to take the initiative for their own learning experiences and behaviours, which focuses on learning that is observable. It uses a blended learning approach with modules being delivered by a blend of face-to-face and online activities. A number of modules are further complemented by supervised work-based learning in the apprentices' placement of employment.

Teaching

The role of the academics and clinical supervisors is highly valued to develop the clinical practice and learning of apprentices. The 'off the job' learning and teaching methods in University includes: lectures, flipped classroom, web-based learning using Blackboard to support an online discussion forum, Blackboard Collaborate, seminars and workshops, problem-based learning, observed and supervised learning, practical sessions, project supervision, independent self-study. Apprentices will undertake

learning in their workplace guided by their clinical supervisors and utilise specialist resources such as the clinical skills laboratory for simulated practice.

Apprentices will commence the course with a mandatory first module (MACP4001), which introduces them to Level 7 study through an exploration of Advanced Clinical Practice. The University places emphasis on enabling apprentices to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. A mixture of directed study, teaching and academic support from [Student Services](#) and [Library Services](#), and also the [Personal Academic Tutoring](#) system enables apprentices to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful.

Personal Academic Tutoring and Individual Learner Plan (ILP) Reviews

[Personal Academic Tutoring](#) is central to supporting the ACP apprentices personally, professionally and academically. The programme team believe that the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) system is fundamental to ACP apprentices' success. All ACP apprentices will be allocated a PAT from within team of lecturers. Opportunities will exist to meet PATs at induction; this early introduction is built on by regular meetings across the academic year. At the induction the PAT provides a group tutorial to support the development of capabilities for the practice learning (work based learning) module (MACP4013). PATs will act as the first point of contact for ACP apprentices experiencing problems or concerns arising while at university, offering signposting to wider University support services. They promote the academic and professional development for the apprentice and provide an official University reference for their apprentices if it should be required.

Individual Learner Plan (ILP's) reviews with the University, Employer and Apprentice are a requirement of all Higher-Level Degree Apprenticeships to monitor learning, ongoing progress and achievement. For this programme, the ILP reviews will be undertaken in the practice learning setting by the PAT, the clinical supervisor and ACP apprentice. Quarterly monitoring (which is scheduled in the programme planner) will track individual progress and achievement against the ILP review pro-forma, the Capabilities document via a PebblePad Workbook, and ensure protected learning time hours are being met.

16. Assessment

Assessment for the theoretical modules will follow the award map set out for the [MSc Advanced Clinical Practice](#).

In addition, the ACP apprenticeship assessment will include:

- **Gateway to end point assessment:** In order to progress to the End Point Assessment, the apprentice must have:
 - achieved 160 level 7 credits by completing the mandatory and optional modules
 - completed the ACP Apprenticeship KSBs and ACP Capabilities
 - evidence GSCE grade 4/ level 2 Maths and English
 - continued registration on an appropriate professional register (NMC, HCPC or GPhC)
 - the Employer will agree that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard and is thus ready to take the EPA.

- **End point assessment (EPA):**

Apprentices will have access to a Virtual Online Learning Environment (VLE) Blackboard throughout their apprenticeship and this will continue as the designated online resource area once they have reached the Gateway. Confirmation for being ready to enter the gateway will be ratified by the Apprenticeship exam board and confirmed with the employer. This VLE will host an EPA Guide (module guide) outlining the EPA assessment, assessment schedule and templates for assessment preparation. In addition, the University of Worcester will provide access to study space for apprentices to independently work and meet to prepare for the EPA.

During the ACP apprenticeship and before the Gateway, preparation for the EPA will have been offered through the achievement of the capabilities aligned to the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours, the ILPs, the ILP reviews and some assessments for modules undertaken. For example, an assessment for Enhancing and Challenging ACP (MACP4001) requires the completion and submission of a change report based on the apprentice's area of practice and for Health and Social Needs Assessment for ACP (MACP4002) a case study is completed.

The EPA date will be set within 12 weeks of the Gateway and agreed by the Employer.

- The EPA will consist of two assessments:
The first is a 2-hour open book examination comprising of 8 questions that are independently set and assessed by the EPA assessor. Apprentices submit these 3 case studies 5 days in advance of the examination and bring with them to the exam three 1500-word case studies they will have developed for the EPA 2-hour open book examination.
- There will also be a 1500 word clinical change report which is submitted 5 days in advance of a 25 minute presentation to the EPA and Independent assessor with an additional 10 minutes for questions totalling 35 minutes the independent assessor will be responsible for the final grade given for the EPA but will consider the panels views.
- Apprentices that have been identified as requiring Disability Informed Assessment will receive the extra time or resource as identified in their individual plan.
- Apprentices who fail the EPA will in conjunction with employer support be offered one additional assessment attempt only.

17. Awarding the Apprenticeship

Upon successful completion of all the modules (180 credits) the apprentice will receive two awards the MSc Advanced Clinical Practitioner and the Advanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship degree. Both awards will be classified in line with University of Worcester degree classification; the MSc award will be based on the results from all the modules undertaken during the Course. The classification of distinction, merit or pass for the apprenticeship will be awarded from the results of the End Point Assessment.

18. Reference points

The following reference points were used in designing the apprenticeship:

[Advanced Clinical Practitioner \(Degree\) apprenticeship standard](#) (Institute of Apprentices 2018)

[Multi-professional framework for Advanced Clinical Practitioners](#) (NHS 2017)

[Characteristics Statement: Masters Degree](#) (QAA, 2020)

Part 1: [Standards framework for Nursing and Midwifery Education](#) (NMC, 2018)

Part 2: [Standards for student supervision and assessment \(NMC, 2018\)](#)

Part 3: [Standards for prescribing programmes \(NMC2018\)](#)

[Prescribing Competency Framework for All \(RPS 2016\)](#)

[HCPC Standards for Prescribing \(HCPC 2019\)](#)

[Standards for the education and training of pharmacist independent prescribers \(GPhC 2019\)](#)

[MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice – Programme Specification](#)

Annexe 1 Delivery Plan for the ACP Apprenticeship

Year One ACP Apprenticeship		
Semester 1 (Winter)	Semester 2 (Spring)	Summer
MACP4001 Challenging and Enhancing Advanced Clinical Practice (15 credits mandatory module)	MACP4003 Complex Decision Making in ACP (15 credits mandatory module)	Clinical supervision; Directed Study as per ILPs; preparation towards EPA; demonstration of knowledge, skills and behaviours
MACP4002 Health and Social Needs Assessment in ACP or MACP4014 Health and Social Needs Assessment for Pharmacists (30 credits mandatory module)		
MACP4013 Advanced Clinical Practice Capability (0 credit, mandatory module) – ongoing through apprenticeship		
Year 2 ACP Apprenticeship		
Semester 1 (Winter)	Semester 2 (Spring)	Summer
MACP4004 Coaching and Guidance in ACP (15 credits mandatory module)	MACP4005 Research Methods (15 credits mandatory module)	Clinical supervision; Directed Study as per ILPs; preparation towards EPA; demonstration of knowledge, skills and behaviours
<i>* Optional modules [30 credits] from those below. Apprentices can only take one Negotiated Learning Module</i>		
MACP4007 Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (V300) or MACP4015 Principles and Practice of Prescribing for Pharmacists (30 credits optional*)		
MACP4008* Negotiated Learning in ACP (30 credits)		
MACP4011* Newborn Physical Examination (15 credits) Or MHML4004* Negotiated Learning 1 (15 credits)	MACP4010* Professional Advocate (15 credits)	
MACP4013 Advanced Clinical Practice Capability (0 credit, mandatory module) – ongoing through apprenticeship		
Year 3 ACP Apprenticeship		
Semester 1 (Winter)	Feb-March	April - June
MACP4016 Dissertation for Apprenticeship (40 credits mandatory)	Gateway Confirmation	MACP4017 Advanced Clinical Practice Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (20 credits mandatory) End Point Assessment