

Programme Specification for PG Cert General Practice Nursing

This document applies to Academic Year 2020/21 onwards

Table 1 Programme Specification for PG Cert General Practice Nursing

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	NA
4.	Final award or awards	Postgraduate Certificate
5.	Programme title	General Practice Nursing
6.	Pathways available	NA
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Standard taught course delivered using blended learning with weekly scheduled classes, combining face to face with online activities and supervised clinical practice hours
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Part-time, 12 months duration.
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	QAA Master's Degree Characteristics
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	December 2020

12. Educational aims of the programme

The Postgraduate Certificate in General Practice Nursing course has been carefully designed to support Registered Nurses who are new into post as a General Practice Nurse (GPN). The course aims to equip nurses with the core technical skills, complex decision-making skills and specialist knowledge required for baseline competence in the evolving and diverse role of the General Practice Nurse.

The course reflects the Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI 2020) *Standards of Education and Practice for Nurses New to General Practice* and General Practice Foundation (Royal College of General Practitioners/Royal College of Nursing (2015) *General Practice Nurse Competencies* to ensure the course is contemporary and innovative, providing a student-centred academic and work-based learning experience. These new national standards have been designed to provide a structured overview of expected best practice for nurses embarking on a General Practice Nursing career pathway.

The course aims to produce, highly-skilled General Practice Nurses who can provide an essential high standard of care to their local populations, enabling the local health economy to deliver the priorities of integrated care systems, the NHS Long Term Plan (2019) and NHS People Plan (2020). With the continued shift of complex patient care from secondary to primary care and the increasing diversity of patient need across the lifespan, commissioners and employers need and expect a more consistently prepared and competent workforce.

The course aims to:

1. Provide appropriate learning opportunities and resources, which facilitate the integration of theory and work-based learning to support students to confidently achieve the requirements of QNI (2020) *Standards of Education and Practice for Nurses New to General Practice Nursing* and the General Practice Foundation (Royal College of General Practitioners/RCN) (2015) *General Practice Nurse Competencies*;
2. Support a transformational, stimulating and inclusive learning environment that facilitates the development of evidence-based knowledge, reflective practice, advanced critical

thinking and complex decision-making skills which promote autonomous practice as a General Practice Nurse.

3. Facilitate resilience, supervision and leadership skills to challenge current clinical practices and support learners to shape further health and social care provision across the primary care network.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Table 2 knowledge and understanding outcomes and which module/code they relate to

Knowledge and Understanding		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1	Critically evaluate the core health knowledge and skills required to implement and evaluate safe and effective care and promote decision making in general nursing practice;	GPNC4001
2	Critically explore professional and clinical leadership qualities in the context of general nursing practice to support, develop and facilitate learning in members of the health and care team;	GPNC4001
3	Critically explore contemporary evidence-based practice that underpin the delivery of general practice nursing care within the Primary Care population;	GPNC4001/4002

Table 3 cognitive and intellectual skills outcomes for module code/s

Cognitive and Intellectual skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
4	Apply evidence-based consultation models to further the development of safe and effective practice in the general practice nurse setting;	GPNC4001
5	Apply a shared approach to decision making, by assessing patients' long-term health needs, demonstrating critical awareness of their wishes and values and those of their family or carers;	GPNC4002

Table 4 learning skills and capabilities related to employability outcomes for module code/s

Skills and capabilities related to employability		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
6	Demonstrate advanced communication skills, working effectively in partnership with the multidisciplinary team, individuals, families and carers to facilitate informed decisions relating to individual's health and care;	GPNC4001
7	Demonstrate the clinical skills and capabilities required within the scope of general practice nursing with confidence and competence, including leadership and collaborative management skills;	GPNC4001/4002

Table 5 transferable/key skills outcomes for module code/s

Transferable/key skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
8	Critically reflect on personal learning and development, professionalism, accountability, autonomy and limits of own competence as a general practice nurse;	GPNC4001
9	Promote, develop and enhance concordant relationships with clients and their carers with the aim of positively influencing their health, wellbeing and self-care through the facilitation of informed decisions.	GPNC4001/4002

Learning, teaching and assessment

The course adopts a student-centred blended approach to learning, teaching and assessment, facilitating the integration of theory and work-based learning to support students to be engaged, resilient, lifelong learners who are critically aware problem solvers. It builds on existing knowledge and skills as a Registered Nurse, taking a constructivist, approach where construction of knowledge occurs through experiences and engagement, students are encouraged to take the initiative for their own learning experiences and behaviours, which focuses on learning that is observable, active and deep in nature.

A key element of the design of the course, is the academic support to facilitate students transition to master's level study, with a focus on academic writing and scholarship embedded within induction, the course modules and Personal Academic Tutoring.

A flexible range of blended strategies utilising a problem-based learning approach, reflecting the real world of contemporary General Practice Nursing. Blended learning will take a blended campus-based approach and will include synchronously and asynchronous delivery, complemented by supervised work-based learning in the General Practice Nurse setting.

The QNI (2020) Standards of Education and Practice for Nurses New to General Practice Nursing four domains are aligned across the course:

1. Clinical care;
2. Leadership and management;
3. The facilitation of learning;
4. Research and development.

Teaching

Students are taught through a flexible, blended learning approach, with a blended campus-based approach adopted. Synchronous sessions will include both campus-based and online (using the VLE) lead lectures, workshops, group activities, skills and simulation. Asynchronous delivery will be facilitated through the recording of synchronous sessions, flipped classroom approaches, guided reading, online discussion forums and e-learning packages.

At the beginning of the course students are allocated a Personal Academic Tutor who they will meet with to discuss academic progress at induction and then at least once each semester. Personal Academic Tutor meeting can either take place in person on campus, or virtually.

The University places emphasis on enabling students to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from Student Services and Library Services, and the Personal Academic Tutoring system enables students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful.

Supervised work-based learning takes place in a General Practice Nurse setting, which is the students own work setting. This setting will normally be the students place of employment and it is usually expected that students are employed in a General Practice Nurse setting for a minimum of 20 hours per week. Students will need the support of their employer and be allocated a Clinical Supervisor who is an experienced and appropriately prepared General Practice Nurse.

Full details are in the dedicated Clinical Supervisors handbook.

Work-based learning is assessed by a Portfolio of General Practice Nursing Competencies, aligned to the General Practice Foundation (Royal College of General Practitioners/RCN) (2015) *General Practice Nurse Competencies*.

Contact time

Students will complete 6 hours (one day) contact time per week. Typically, students will complete 75% of these days on campus and 25% virtually. On a typical campus-based day, contact time will be structured around:

- Lead lecture
- Interactive workshop or clinical skills and simulation
- Seminar or tutorials

On a typical virtual day, contact time will be structured around:

- Flipped classroom
- Lead lecture available synchronously or asynchronous via the VLE
- Asynchronous online discussion forum
- Virtual tutorials

Students will also complete 120 hours of supervised work-based learning across the course, this will normally include 60 hours in semester one and 60 hours in semester two. Supervised work-based learning hours will be recorded within the Portfolio of General Practice Nursing Competencies and signed by the Clinical Supervisor.

Independent self-study

In addition to the contact time, students are expected to complete 13 hours of independent self-study per week. Typically, this will involve searching for evidence, reading, making notes, practising academic writing in preparation for assessments, reflecting on development. Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

Teaching staff

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes experienced academics, PhD students, General Practice Nurses, advanced clinical practitioners and senior registered healthcare professionals from a variety of backgrounds. Teaching is informed by research, publication and consultancy, and 85% lecturers on the course have a higher education teaching qualification or are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy.

Assessment

Assessment enables students to learn about themselves as learners, critically reflecting on their learning experiences and providing opportunity to demonstrate their academic, practical, technical and professional progress and achievement in theory and work-based learning. The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formal or 'summative' assessment which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade. Summative assessment activities consist of:

- A presentation or micro-teaching session with accompanying 1000-word critical evidence-based rationale

- An evidence-based quality improvement plan
- Completion of a Portfolio of General Practice Nursing Competencies

14. Assessment strategy

The assessment strategy meets the requirements of the [University's Assessment Policy](#). Assessment forms an integral part of the course design and underpins authentic and holistic learning, facilitating the integration of master's level study with the completion of Clinical Competencies. Formative assessment is central to student learning, it provides opportunity for students to learn about themselves as learners and to gain constructive feedback that supports summative assessment. Students are strongly advised to engage with formative activities to increase confidence and active engagement in the learning process. Students and teaching teams are partners in the learning, assessment and feedback process and engagement in a dialogue about these processes is essential, with formative feedback provided from a number of sources including the module teaching team, Personal Academic Tutors and Clinical Supervisor. Peer and self-assessment strategies are incorporated across the course, supporting students to make judgments about their own and others' work.

It is recognised that students require opportunities to discuss their assessments and feedback with the module teaching team and therefore group and individual tutorials are available throughout the course. During the first module, GPNC4001, support is provided to emphasise the critical assessment and analysis necessary to develop thinking and academic writing at master's level. The assessments are powerful opportunities for individualised learning and developing self-management and self-direction; they are a central aspect of the learning process.

Students are guided and assessed in the work-based setting using a Portfolio of Clinical Competencies. It contains all the formative and summative elements of the assessment process. The Portfolio of Clinical Competencies is pass/fail only, with the summative assessment taking place upon completion of the required work-based learning hours. The Portfolio of Clinical Competencies is attached to both GPNC4001 and GPNC4002.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The Postgraduate Certificate in General Practice Nursing requires the successful completion of two 30 credit modules at level 7.

The course is studied part-time across 12 months, with a maximum registration period of 2 years.

Table 6 award map for each level of the course

		Status	Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)
Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	PG Cert
GPNC4001	General Practice Nursing: Core skills for professional practice	30	M
GPNC4002	The management of health and wellbeing in General Practice Nursing	30	M
Total Credits		60	
PG Certificate To be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate General Practice Nursing students must successfully complete 60 credits at Level 7 (GPNC4001 & GPNC4002).			

Please see the course handbook for a detailed schedule for the course showing how modules are delivered over the academic year and detailed information about part-time study.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

The award is located at Level 7 of the FHEQ and is constructed to enable students to demonstrate achievement QNI (2020) *Standards of Education and Practice for Nurses New to General Practice* and the General Practice Foundation (Royal College of General Practitioners/RCN) (2015) *General Practice Nurse Competencies*.

The following sources have been used throughout the development of the course:

[QAA \(2020\) Master's Degree Characteristics](#)

[NHS \(2019\) The Long-Term Plan](#)

[Queen's Nursing Institute \(2020\) Standards of Education and Practice for Nurses new to General Practice](#)

[General Practice Foundation \(Royal College of General Practitioners/RCN\) \(2015\) General Practice Nurse Competencies](#)

The course takes account of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. As the course has a work-based learning requirement, it takes account of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance Work-based Learning](#)

17. Support for students

Student support is a central component of the General Practice Nursing course and is available from within the Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery and from the wider University. Examples of wider University support is Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service:

<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/firstpoint/>

<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx>

<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/>

Induction

Students are invited to attend an induction day that will familiarise them with the University, the Department, the Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery and the course. They meet representatives from Student Services, Registry Services, Library Services and ICT and hear more about their services as well as meeting the course team.

Personal Academic Tutors

All students are allocated a Personal Academic Tutor for the duration of the course and are encouraged to meet with them within the first three weeks of starting the course and then at least once each semester. It is the role of the Personal Academic Tutor to support and guide the student's academic, personal and professional development throughout their university journey. The Personal Academic Tutor system is fundamental to student success and is essential in supporting the student's transition to postgraduate study, working in partnership with the student to promote self-directed learning and the achievement of personal and academic goals.

The University of Worcester personal tutoring policy seeks to enable staff to ensure students achieve a sense of belonging, build resilience and ensure that academic and non-academic success is achieved through engagement and effort. If a student experiences difficulty that fall beyond the scope of the role, the Personal Academic Tutor will signpost students to [student services](#).

Clinical Supervisor

The student's employer will identify and allocate a suitable Clinical Supervisor at the outset of the course who will support and assess the student completing the work-based learning elements of the course. The Clinical Supervisor will be an experienced General Practice Nurse who has completed appropriate preparation for the role provided by the course team. There will be tripartite collaboration between the Clinical Supervisor, the General Practice Nursing student and the Personal Academic Tutor or Course Leader. The Clinical Supervisor will support the student on a day-to-day basis and work with the student to facilitate the achievement of the Portfolio of

General Practice Nursing Competencies and act as a professional role model. The Clinical Supervisor may be supported in practice by additional Registered Healthcare Professionals, who can act as a Verifier of the student's competence in specific skills, as appropriate.

General Practice Nurse Mentors

The University of Worcester has a close working relationship with the [Hereford and Worcestershire Primary Care training hub](#) who with funding from the NHS England 10-point plan for General Practice (2016), developed the role of the General Practice Nurse mentor. There are currently three General Practice Nurse Mentors in Worcestershire and one in Herefordshire. The mentors are senior General Practice Nurses who provide specialist knowledge and pastoral support to nurses in practice, General Practice Nursing and Pre-Registration Nursing students. The role was developed to raise the profile of General Practice Nursing, to increase the number of pre-registration student nurse placements and to enhance recruitment and retention in the General Practice Nurse workforce. The General Practice Nurse Mentors work closely with practices to support learners and facilitate the application of clinical excellence and with the Education Lead Nurse to promote General Practice Nurse careers across the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

18. Admissions

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 Postgraduate Certificate in General Practice Nursing aims to recruit applicants who are Registered Nurses and who are usually newly employed in a General Practice Nurse role, to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary for the role.

Applicants must be currently working/self-employed in a General Practice environment for usually a minimum of 20 hours a week, in order for them to be in a position to safely and effectively meet the General Practice Nursing competencies, which they will be required to complete through work-based learning in their own place of employment.

Entry requirements

Applicants must hold professional registration with Nursing and Midwifery Council as a Registered Nurse.

In addition, applicants must have:

Either:

A lower second-class Honours degree (2:2) or above in a Health-related subject

OR

Qualifications and experience considered to be equivalent to the above. All students applying via this route will be assessed and interviewed by the Admissions Tutor/Course Lead.

When assessing a non-standard applicants' suitability for entry onto the course candidates will need to demonstrate their potential to achieve the aims and outcomes of the course. The candidate will also need to demonstrate that their experiences are equivalent to having achieved a 2.2 at undergraduate level. The following criteria may be taken into consideration:

- Evidence of successful academic study at level 6 or equivalent.
- Currently new in post as a General Practice Nurse
- Ability to write in a clear, coherent and critical manner
- Awareness of the demands of studying at postgraduate level
- Interest and motivation for successful study on the course
- Support from employer to undertake course

See [Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications.

Applicants must demonstrate employer support and an appropriate Clinical Supervisor. UK students being sponsored by their employer must provide evidence of employer approval and payment agreement.

All Applicants will be invited to a selection day event, held at the University, which will be supported by Clinicians and Practice Partners. This will give potential students an informal opportunity to speak with the Course Leader, General Practice staff and the Course team and to explore the campus and facilities. Individual interviews may also be arranged for this day.

Students whose first language is not English will be expected to have reached a sufficient standard on admission to the course; usually a minimum IELTS 6.5, with a minimum of 5.5 in each element, or equivalent. Other equivalent English qualifications will also be considered.

See [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#) (Section 2).

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

Work-based learning in the students place of work is a requirement of the course, therefore all applicants must have a reference from their employer which confirms a declaration of good character.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

Admissions procedures

Part-time applicants apply directly to University of Worcester. Applications are initially reviewed by the Admissions Office and then reviewed by the Admissions Tutor/Course Lead and assessed against the course entry requirements.

Students with non-standard qualifications but who believe they have the requisite experience and potential for development are encouraged to discuss their application with the Admissions Tutor/Course Lead ahead of submission online.

Applicants with non-standard qualifications, may be asked to provide a piece of academic written work, for consideration by the course team and will be invited to an interview (telephone, face to face, or Skype) to discuss their application.

Candidates who meet the entry criteria or who are successful following the interview process (for non-standard applications) are offered a place.

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#)

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

This course is subject to the University's fitness to practice procedures

Requirements for Awards

Table 7 requirements for awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert General Practice Nursing	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map

Postgraduate Certificate awards are unclassified.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

All students are already Registered Nurses and in employment, or self-employed. The course provides students with the opportunity to develop the nationally recognised and standardised competencies required for employment as a General Practice Nurse. For those not already in a substantive role as a General Practice Nurse, the aim is usually to obtain a substantive General Practice Nursing role within their employing organisations. As part of the journey of professional and academic development students are encouraged to continue on their academic journey through access to a range of higher degrees including MSc, PhD, professional doctorate and other taught doctorates.

Student employability

The overall emphasis of the Postgraduate Certificate in General Practice Nursing is to facilitate the expert knowledge and clinical competencies required to facilitate a career in General Practice Nursing. The course has been developed in partnership with local employers and stakeholders and as such is closely mapped to both the needs of the student and the needs of the employer. This ensures our Continuing Professional Development provision is both current and relevant to ensure our courses enhance practitioner employability.

Links with employers

The Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery has excellent working relationships with a wide range of practice partners. The Course Leader and course team work closely with partners at the [Hereford and Worcestershire Primary Care training hub](#) to ensure the course is current

and meets national and local policy drivers. A key aim of this partnership is to grow the primary care workforce including General Practice Nurses. The relationship between university and employer is a mature one that has developed over a number of years. Employers are closely involved in course management initiatives, course development and curriculum design. Employers also contribute to the annual review process and the periodic review of course provision.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.