



**UNIVERSITY OF  
PLYMOUTH**  
Faculty of Health

**School of Nursing & Midwifery**

## **Programme Specification**

Master of Science

Advanced Professional Practice  
(Nursing and Midwifery Professions)

2021/22

Date of Re-Approval: 28 July 2021

Date of Implementation: September 2021

Year of first award: 2022

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## **1. Award Titles:**

### **Final Award:**

MSc Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions)

### **Level 7 Intermediate Award titles:**

Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions)

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions)

### **Exit award only for students who have attempted but fail the PgCert core module:**

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Advanced Professional Development

UCAS Code: N/A

HECoS Code: 100246 Health Sciences

**Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth

**Teaching Institution:** University of Plymouth

**Accrediting Body(ies):** Not applicable

## **2. Distinctive features of the Advanced Professional Practice/Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions) programme**

Through the contemporary focus of the programme, as the students advance their knowledge and skills they will be well positioned to develop and improve practice in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and quality. This will lead to improved ways of working with a resultant impact on patient care ensuring a culture that fosters research-informed excellence, enhanced competency, advanced decision making and sustainability for future workforce development needs.

The programme has been re-developed to reflect changes to service, and acknowledges political and professional growth, whilst maintaining a clear focus on the University's strategy of ensuring a quality student experience. The programme offers students opportunities for a deeper and more advanced knowledge within their professional setting, whether that is an academic setting or a clinical setting, for example. This advanced level of knowledge is gained through the core modules that further develop knowledge of research as well as within the option master's modules that can be accessed as part of the programme. The programme offers a flexible design, in that students are able to plan a programme of learning that meets their own needs, accumulating credit from just two core modules and the remaining credit from option modules. Research-informed teaching will support the programme, which has a sound contemporary evidence base and utilises the range of skills and experience available within the programme team.

The programme development team has been conscious of the need to enhance UK/EU and international student experience and promote academic excellence whilst ensuring that the programme meets contemporary service needs. The advanced professional practice (APP) programme attracts students from a diversity of backgrounds. Due to its developing blended nature of delivery, will promote recruitment from international, as well as national and local students.

The teaching team have international, national and local research collaborations and regularly publish and present on topics in their own relevant areas. Graduates from the APP programme take leading roles in their area of practice and many publish and present their dissertations locally nationally and internationally.

**The programme offers:**

- the student the opportunity to build an MSc around their personal and professional needs by selecting option modules relevant to their area of practice
- a student-centred approach to the programme structure providing flexibility
- opportunities to study in an inter-professional setting with inter-professional core and option modules
- a contemporary and dynamic programme responsive to the changing health and social care environment;
- professorial level input into curriculum design and delivery of modules, all with international, national and local profiles
- research informed teaching embedded throughout the curriculum; a team with extensive experience in the delivery of Masters level modules and a lecturing team with a diverse range of health and social care experience
- close partnership working with clinicians contributing to the teaching and assessment strategy

### **3. Relevant QAA subject Benchmark Group(s)**

The programme is informed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for level 7 study (QAA for Higher Education 2008).

### **4. Programme Structure**

The programme will offer exit awards of Postgraduate Certificate Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions); Postgraduate Diploma or Masters Degree Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions). Providing the student with the opportunity to achieve their award with five option 20 credit (or 40 credit) modules from the level 7 module provision. The programme structure is illustrated in **Tables 1, 2 and 3 and Table 4** offers further guidance for those on a full time route.

**Table 1: Programme Structure**

<b>PgCert/PgDip/MSc Programme Structure</b>			
Option Module 20 credits	<b>CORE APP758 Advanced Concepts of Research: Methodology and Methods 20 credits</b>	Option Module 20 credits	<b>PgCert Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions) 60 credits</b>
Option Module 20 credits	Option Module 20 credits	Option Module 20 credits	<b>PgDip Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions) 120 credits</b>
<b>CORE APP753 Dissertation Module 60 credits</b>			<b>MSc Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions) 180 credits</b>

**Table 2: Full time study**

Year	Modules (and Credits)	Semester 1	Semester 2
1	APP758 Advanced Concepts of Research: Methodology and Methods (20)		
	Option module 1 (20)		
	Option module 2 (20)		
	Option module 3 (20)		
	Option module 4(20)		
	Option module 5 (20)		
	Dissertation (60)		

**Table 3: Part Time study**

Year	Modules (and Credits)	Semester 1	Semester 2
1	APP758 Advanced Concepts of Research: Methodology and Methods (20)		
	Option module 1 (20)		
	Option module 2 (20)		
2	Option module 3 (20)		
	Option module 4(20)		
	Option module 5 (20)		
3	Dissertation (60)		

**Table 4: Recommended Route for Full Time Students**

Semester	Module
Semester 1	<p><b>APP758 Advanced Concepts in Research Methodology and Methods – 20 credits (core module)</b></p> <p><b>APP753 Dissertation – 60 credits (core module)</b></p> <p><b>Optional Module(s) – 20 or 40 credits</b>  <i>students select either one or two optional modules from those listed below:</i></p> <p>APP749 Supervision of Learning and Assessment in Practice (20 credits)  APP736/HEAD355 Leadership and Innovation (20 credits)  APP764 Public Health and Health Promotion (20 credits)  APP749/HEAD338 Supervision of Learning &amp; Assessment in Practice (20 credits)  APP752/HEAD392 Work Based Learning (20 credits)  APP721/HEAD377 Perinatal Mental Health (20 credits)</p>
Semester 2	<p><b>Students may select a further 80 credits (or 60 credits if 120 taken in Semester 1) from the following optional modules:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● APP705 Advanced Psychosocial Assessment &amp; Formulation (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP707 CBT Interventions for Mental Health Professionals (Psychosis) (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP709 Working with People with a Diagnosis of Personality Disorder (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP718 Ethical and Legal Issues in Healthcare Practice (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP721 Perinatal Mental Health (20 credits)*</li> <li>● APP727 The Child and Young Person with Mental Health Needs – (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP729 Enhancing End of Life Care and Palliative Care Practice (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP766 Developing Expertise in Clinical Practice (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP767 Mental Health Assessment in Urgent, Emergency and Acute Care (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP732 Advancing the Care and Support of the Person with Dementia and their Carer (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP736 Leadership and Innovation (20 credits)*</li> <li>● APP739 Enhancing Practice in Paediatric Palliative Care (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP744 Substance Misuse and Dual Diagnosis (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP749 Supervision of Learning and Assessment in Practice (20 credits)*</li> <li>● APP751 Critical Care of Children and Young People, Advancing Knowledge and Skills (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP752 Work Based Learning (20 credits)*</li> <li>● APP754 Diabetes Mellitus (20 credits)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● APP759 Advancing Knowledge of Learning and Teaching for Practice (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP764 Public Health and Health Promotion (20 credits)*</li> <li>● APP761 Enhanced Maternal Care (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP766/UEC610 Developing expertise in urgent and emergency care (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP767/UEC611 Mental Health Assessment in Urgent &amp; Emergency Care (20 credits)</li> <li>● APP727/HEAD385 The Child and Young Person with Mental Health Needs (20 credits)</li> </ul>
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\*if module not already taken in Semester 1

**The three year PT route can be undertaken flexibly up to a maximum of 6 years in duration, in line with University Regulations.**

Students will discuss their choice of modules with their Programme Lead/Personal Tutor to ensure that their selection is appropriate for their chosen award title. Students will also discuss their proposed timeline with their Programme Lead/Personal Tutor and this will be reviewed at regular points in line with the personal tutor guide. Students will be advised that option modules are subject to minimum numbers and are therefore advised to check with the Professional Development Unit two months prior to the proposed delivery date, to confirm that the module will be running.

## 5. Programme Aims

The aim of the programme is to equip health professionals to advance knowledge and skills by:

1. gaining a deeper understanding of advanced professional practice and how this level of practice is used to enhance the patient journey
2. developing a critical understanding of the contemporary issues that influence service delivery and how the advancing level of practice influences the provision of high quality, patient centred care
3. developing a contemporary approach to health and social care through advancing and utilising knowledge and skills in professional practice
4. ensuring professional practice is underpinned by a focus on excellence and sustainability by developing a critical, analytical and creative approach
5. critically reviewing trends in theory, practice and management relating to practice
6. equipping individuals for lead roles in management, clinical practice and/or education
7. promoting an understanding of the philosophy and procedures involved in research and use of evidence
8. designing and undertaking research that will enhance and develop health care and/or health provision

## **6. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes**

These are mapped against modules and awards, see **table 2, section 12**

### **6.1 Knowledge and understanding**

On successful completion graduates will have developed:

- 1) a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice
- 2) a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- 3) originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- 4) knowledge gained from advanced study to professional practice
- 5) a deeper understanding of advanced professional practice and how this level of practice is used to enhance the patient journey
- 6) a deeper understanding of the influences, drivers and policies that inform the level of advanced practice

### **6.2 Cognitive and intellectual skills**

On successful completion, graduates will have developed the ability to:

1. critically analyse policy, research and theoretical literature
2. synthesise arguments and results from varying sources including research, policy and theoretical literature
3. critically reflect on professional practice and incorporate knowledge to enhance practice
4. develop critical arguments around research, policy and theory
5. apply knowledge gained from advanced study to professional practice
6. use critical thinking skills relating to the professional, political, legal and ethical demands of working within the context of advanced practice

### **6.3 Key and transferable skills**

On successful completion, graduates will have developed the ability to:

1. deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences



2. demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level; non-specialist audiences
3. accept responsibility for their own professional practice applying ethical, legal and professional principles

#### **6.4 Employment related skills**

On successful completion, graduates will have developed the ability to:

1. exercise initiative and personal responsibility
2. utilise decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts; and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development
3. demonstrate sound understanding of the importance and relevance of evidenced based practice to the delivery of safe effective patient/client care.
4. evaluate the context of risk and development of quality, patient/client safety and clinical governance agenda critically reflecting upon student's individual development
5. develop a contemporary evidenced based proposal for research that will inform practice

#### **6.5 Practical skills**

On successful completion, graduates will have developed the ability to:

- 1) accept responsibility for their own professional practice applying ethical, legal and professional principles
- 2) facilitate the provision of an environment of care in which the uniqueness of each individual is valued and is a commitment to fair and anti-discriminatory practice
- 3) proactively adopt appropriate strategies to enhance learning for patients and colleagues
- 4) propose and develop a researchable question and critically analyse the evidence from the research to fill a practice - theory gap
- 5) undertake self-motivated research, critically appraise and present data

### **7. Teaching and Learning Methods and Assessment Strategies**

The student will achieve the learning outcomes through teaching and learning strategies, appropriate to the module outcomes. These include a variety of student centred delivery methods such as action learning sets, interactive lectures, group discussion, group and individual tutorials, on-line study tasks, seminars, workshops, self-directed study, and the use of communication and information technologies, for example, narrated PowerPoint presentations, podcasts plus synchronous and asynchronous discussion fora. Modules with a clinical skills element will be delivered in simulated settings. Delivery methods will include a virtual environment where

applicable. The two core modules are delivered in a purely online setting because of; the broad geographical area of our student population; the positive feedback from stakeholders and students regarding accessibility of the online delivery; and the diverse contribution made by lecturers, external experts and students themselves, all of which have contributed to the success of their online delivery.

A diverse range of assessment methods will be utilised such as written reports, critical literature reviews, research proposals, posters, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), case studies, critical reflections on practice, essays, dissertations, oral presentations, small group presentations, active participation in group discussions, portfolios, and project outputs.

## **8. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS arrangements**

In order to commence this programme, the student must meet the University's entry requirements for study at postgraduate level. Applicants will normally have a first degree, BSc (Hons) at 2.2 or above; or European first cycle equivalent plus a professional qualification in health or social care. Those individuals without a degree but with appropriate practice related experience relevant to the programme may be eligible to apply.

Applicants where English is not the first language must also provide evidence of competence in written and spoken English in accordance with the University's Admissions Code of Practice, that is, IELTS of 6.5 overall with a minimum of 5.5 in each part.

Potential students are assessed for their ability to study at Masters Level and therefore an interview will normally be necessary. Candidates without a first degree at 2.2 or above (or European first cycle equivalent) will normally be required to submit a short piece of writing as part of the admissions process.

Students will be required to be working in a clinical environment, should they select a module with a clinical element/focus, in order to facilitate the successful completion of the programme/module outcomes. International students will select modules with non-clinical assessments.

### **8.1 AP(E)L**

Claims for credit for prior learning, whether certificated or experiential are accepted and will be considered following University regulations and Faculty procedures.

### **8.2 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)**

This programme is equivalent to 90 ECTS credits (second cycle) with 30 ECTS credits at post graduate certificate, 60 credits at postgraduate diploma and 90 credits at Master's degree. Each 20-credit module has the equivalent of 10 ECTS credits and assumes a notional student effort of between 200-300 hours.

### **8.3 Disability Services**

The programme design enables students to have an equitable experience. We work collegiately with expert colleagues in Disability Services (within the Student Hub) to ensure students, who consider studying the MSc Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions), receive timely advice on the support available. Students can declare a support requirement or disability – via the ‘Disclosure for applicants’ pages on the University website.

### **9. Progression Criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards**

The programme will offer exit awards of:

PgCert Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions) – 60 credits, including APP758 and 40 credits from optional modules.

PgDip Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing & Midwifery Professions) – 120 credits, including APP758 and 100 credits from optional modules.

PgCert Advanced Professional Development – 60 credits – this award is for students who have attempted but fail the first core module of the programme. Students who receive this award will be unable to progress any further. Students who achieve 60 credits of optional modules but do not attempt the first core module will not be eligible for this exit award.

#### **Final Award:**

MSc Advanced Professional Practice (Nursing and Midwifery Professions) – 180 credits, including APP758, APP753 and 100 credits from optional modules.

### **10. Non-Standard Regulations**

The following non-standard regulations will apply to this programme:

1. All elements and components of assessment within the programme must be achieved, with a minimum of 50% for all percentage-weighted assessments.
2. There is no compensation within or across modules.

### **11. Transitional Arrangements**

The MSc Advanced Professional Practice programme has been redeveloped to meet the changing needs of healthcare and the wider international market. The transitional arrangements for current students on this generic programme who have only 40 credits remaining and had planned to use this credit for SPP702 (the project) will be supported to undertake SPP702.

Any students who have undertaken APP758, APP745 or APP702 (latter two modules were previous versions of APP758) *and had planned* to undertake SPP702 and where their assessment focused on the project, these students will also be supported to undertake SPP702.

Any students who enrolled on MSc Advanced Professional Practice generic programme but who have not undertaken APP758 or APP745 prior to September 2021, will not be able to access SPP702. These students, along with new enrolled students on the re-approved programme will undertake APP753 Dissertation module, as their final core module.

## **12. Mapping**

### **Table 5: Module contribution to meeting Award Learning Outcomes**

**Note:**

There is no specific mapping for the Knowledge and Skills Framework (2004). The core and specific dimensions of the framework have been considered and reflected in the above mapping exercises.

**Programme Specification Mapping (PGT): module contribution to the meeting of Award Learning Outcomes**

**Table 5: CORE and Option Modules Level 7**

Core Modules And credits L7	Award Learning Outcomes contributed to:																								Comp Y/N	Assessments	
	Knowledge and understanding						Cognitive and intellectual skills						Key and transferable skills			Employment related skills					Practical skills						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4			5
APP 758 c 20		√	√			√	√	√		√		√		√	√					√				√	√	N	C1 A1
APP 753 c 60	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N	C1 A1
Confirmed Award LOs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			

## **APPENDIX 1: Intended Learning Outcomes - Exit award PgCert Advanced Professional Development (only for students who have attempted but failed the PgCert core module)**

### **Knowledge and understanding**

On successful completion, graduates should have developed:

- A deep, comprehensive and systematic understanding in key aspects of professional practice;
- An understanding of international, national and local policies and guidelines informing their practice area;
- An ability to apply knowledge and skills to their individual area of practice

### **Cognitive and intellectual skills**

On successful completion, graduates should have developed ability to:

- Relate their advanced knowledge base, skills and professional behaviour to their own professional practice area;
- Use personal reflection to analyse self and own actions, through a critical thinking, problem solving, enquiry based approach;
- Critically discuss the competencies and components required for safe, efficient and ethical health and social care practice;

### **Key and transferable skills**

On successful completion, graduates should have developed the ability to:

- Critically evaluate relevant information in their professional practice in order to determine timely interventions and appropriate care pathways;
- Critically apply contemporary policy and guidelines in relation to their professional practice;
- Systematically and critically review databases using appropriate search terms;

### **Employment related skills**

On successful completion, graduates should have developed:

- Advanced communication skills required to liaise with the healthcare team involved in their own professional practice;
- An ability to systematically review the evidence base within their own professional practice;
- A problem solving approach to their area of professional practice based on critical reflection, appraisal and application of evidence;

### **Practical skills**

On successful completion, graduates should have developed the ability to:

- Demonstrate advanced communication skills and application of these within a health and social care environment;
- Use critical personal reflection to problem solve the critical application of skills in a problem solving approach;
- Effectively maintain their own development, through identifying, evaluating and maintaining capabilities and qualities to support effective working within their role.

**Please note all modules below map directly to the above learning outcomes for PgCert Advanced Professional Development exit award.**

- APP701 Advancing Practice in Context
- APP705 Advanced Psychosocial Assessment and Formulation
- APP707 Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Interventions for Mental Health Professionals (Psychosis)
- APP709 Working with People with a Diagnosis of Personality Disorder
- APP710 Advanced Assessment for Clinical Practice
- APP711 Managing Clinical Complexity
- APP717 The Fundamentals of Health Assessment
- APP718 Ethical and Legal Issues in Healthcare Practice
- APP719 Advanced Newborn and Infant Examination
- APP720 Advanced Newborn and Infant Examination (APL)
- APP721 Perinatal Mental Health
- APP722 Maternal Critical Care
- APP723 Enhanced Knowledge and Skills in Children's High Dependency Care
- APP724 Paediatric Critical Care 1: Essentials of Care and Interventions
- APP725 Paediatric Critical Care 2: Foundations of Care and Interventions
- APP726 Paediatric Critical Care 3: Enhanced Care and Interventions
- APP727 The Child and Young Person with Mental Health Needs
- APP728 Preceptorship (APEL)
- APP729 Enhancing End of Life Care and Palliative Care Practice
- APP766 Developing Expertise in Clinical Practice
- APP767 Mental Health Assessment in Urgent, Emergency and Acute Care
- APP732 Advancing the Care and Support of the Person with Dementia and their Carer
- APP734 Sociology of Health and Illness
- APP736 Leadership and Innovation
- APP737 Assessment, Management and Escalation of the Acutely Ill Adult
- APP738 Management of Children/Young People Requiring Urgent or Emergency Care
- APP739 Enhancing Practice in Paediatric Palliative Care
- APP740 Advocacy and Education for Quality Improvement in Practice (A-EQUIP)  
Bridging APEL Module
- APP741 Advocacy and Education for Quality Improvement in Practice (A-EQUIP) Full  
Module
- APP743 Minor Illness and Injuries – the principles and practice of management for  
unscheduled care
- APP744 Substance misuse and dual diagnosis
- APP748 Surgical First Assistant
- APP749 Supervision of Learning and Assessment in Practice
- APP750 Collaborating in a culture of risk enablement
- APP751 Critical Care of Children and Young People, Advancing Knowledge and Skills
- APP752 Work Based Learning
- APP754 Diabetes Mellitus
- APP758 Advanced concepts in research: methodology and methods
- APP759 Advancing Knowledge of Learning and Teaching for Practice