

Programme Specification for Graduate Certificate Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in Specialist Adult Mental Health

This document applies to Academic Year 2025/26 onwards

Table 1 Programme Specification for Grad Cert Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in Specialist Adult Mental Health

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	British Psychological Society (BPS)
4.	Final award or awards	Graduate Certificate Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in Specialist Adult Mental Health (MHWP)
5.	Programme title	Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in Specialist Adult Mental Health
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Blended learning including synchronous and asynchronous online teaching, and in-person clinical skills workshops at the University of Worcester. Students are in full time paid employment in the NHS for the duration of the course where work-based learning takes place alongside the taught components of the course.
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	The course is full time for a duration of 12 months, with teaching delivered over two 12-week semesters. Students will be based primarily in their NHS employing organisation for the majority of the week (3-4 days) throughout the year.
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	This programme of study meets the QAA descriptor at Undergraduate Level 6 (QAA Psychology Benchmark Statement, 2023); the descriptor for a higher education qualification at Level 6 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and the Health Education England Quality Framework (2021) .
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	February 2022 August 2022 – AQU amendments July 2023 – annual amendments September 2024 – annual amendments October 2024 – BPS accreditation

12. Educational aims of the programme

The University has a strong reputation for delivering high-quality, innovative and contemporary health professions and psychology education. The Graduate Certificate in Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in Specialist Adult Mental Health is an applied practitioner training programme designed to equip students with the clinical competence to work in specified NHS mental health positions. This programme will prepare Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioners (MHWPs) to work alongside multi-disciplinary team members to co-ordinate care, supporting collaborative decision-making about care and treatment. MHWPs will also be enabled to deliver a set of wellbeing-focused psychologically-informed interventions, aligned to cognitive-behavioural principles, based on the best evidence available, that address problems often experienced by people with severe mental health problems. Through the completion of this programme, MHWPs will

be empowered to work collaboratively with carers and families as appropriate to enable connectedness and informal support. This programme will further enable MHWP's to share decision-making and deliver interventions that are underpinned by generic therapeutic competences within the [NICE-recommended interventions for severe mental health problems](#).

This programme is aimed at people with an interest in, passion for and the relevant values for a career in NHS mental health services. The programme has been co-produced with NHS mental health services and service users across the Midlands and follows a nationally agreed curriculum and assessment strategy set out by Health Education England. This role has been created in response to the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) which sets out a commitment to new and integrated models of primary and community mental health care.

To achieve this, the course sets out to ensure that graduates can:

1. Demonstrate the clinical and professional competencies required to practice as Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioners within the NHS.
2. Develop the core clinical competencies required to engage with and support people experiencing severe and enduring mental health difficulties.
3. Apply clinical competencies in identifying appropriate goals, care planning and co-ordinating care in collaboration with people with severe and enduring mental health difficulties, their carers/family/partners and other multi-disciplinary team members.
4. Be proficient in delivering psychologically-informed interventions based on the best available research evidence to improve psychological well-being in collaboration with people with severe and enduring mental health difficulties.
5. Contribute to a culture of providing person-centred, recovery-oriented, trauma-informed, and evidence-based psychological care in close collaboration with service users, their carers/family/partners and other mental health professionals within the NHS.
6. Reduce inequity of access and outcome among those from minoritised groups accessing mental health services.
7. Seek to eliminate all forms of discrimination from the experience of the mental health service users and staff.

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	Critique and apply the principles, theory and practice of trauma-informed, recovery-orientated care in adult mental health services to assessment, formulation and intervention;	MHWP3101 MHWP3102 MHWP3103
2	Evaluate the role of multi-disciplinary mental health teams in delivering holistic, collaborative care for users and families/carers;	MHWP3102
3	Critically analyse the predominant presenting problem(s) for an individual by comprehensively drawing on available research evidence and multiple sources of clinical information;	MHWP3101 MHWP3102 MHWP3103

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	Integrate understanding of the appropriateness of a diagnostic/symptom-focused and formulation/recovery-focused approach into clinical decision-making;	MHWP3102
5	Engage effectively in reflective practice and supervision to recognise own needs/limitations, competence and boundaries, managing administrative clinical duties and supporting wider team wellbeing;	MHWP3102 MHWP3103
6	Using evidence-based practice, analyse and justify selection of psychologically-informed interventions based on collaborative goal setting, research evidence and formulation;	MHWP3101 MHWP3103

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
7	Engage with professional and ethical standards to manage risk and respond sensitively to diverse needs and backgrounds in all areas of psychological assessment, formulation and intervention;	MHWP3101 MHWP3102 MHWP3103
8	Demonstrate skills in conducting collaborative assessments, formulations and care plans using a specified framework, with inclusion of families/carers as appropriate;	MHWP3101 MHWP3102
9	Conduct competent wellbeing-focused psychologically-informed interventions;	MHWP3103
10	Apply competent patient-centred care to identify readiness for, progress with and appropriateness for a given psychologically-informed intervention;	MHWP3102 MHWP3103

Learning, teaching and assessment

The programme is based upon knowledge and clinical competency development through active learning across the university environment and the employing NHS adult mental health service. Interactive theoretical and skills-based teaching days include online learning activities in the Virtual Learning Environment, work-based learning activities involving observation and skills practice in a simulation and clinical setting, and guided, supervised clinical practice in an employing NHS mental health service. The course is rooted in contemporary evidence-based mental health care, based on the principles of trauma-informed care and a client-led, recovery ethos.

The course comprises three modules that are designed to build upon each other, with knowledge development being closely tied to in-session opportunities to practice skills under supervision from course tutors, which is then taken into actual skills practice in the NHS setting under supervision from an NHS practitioner. Assessments are designed to enable students to demonstrate their critical awareness of trauma-informed care and the required clinical competencies, such as collaborative care planning, the selection and

delivery of appropriate psychologically-informed interventions with involvement from multi-disciplinary colleagues and families/carers, and the use of supervision and self-reflection.

Teaching

Students are taught through a combination of online teaching days, on campus clinical simulation skills days, enhanced work-based learning days and guided study time. Online teaching days will include a blend of 'live' or synchronous lectures and group-based working alongside documents or recorded videos (asynchronous) guiding the students for their independent study. The on-campus clinical simulation skills days involve live clinical practice and feedback from tutors to facilitate clinical competence development.

In addition, students will have a minimum of four meetings with their Personal Academic Tutors, timed to coincide with key points such as induction or assessment, which enables on-going monitoring of competency development and attainment of the required clinical and supervisory hours.

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 also 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.

Contact time

Before the course formally begins, a one day university induction will be provided and the NHS employer will also provide a trust induction if required. Taught content takes place over two 12-week semesters with the remaining time being spent in clinical practice, supervision, and completing assessments.

The first module takes place over the first six weeks and provides the students with the basic skills and knowledge to begin clinical practice, including six online teaching days and three on campus clinical simulation skills days. The second and third modules will then commence, with a typical week including one day of online teaching, three days of employment and one day of either practice based learning, on campus skills simulation or a study day. Tutor support for assessments will be ongoing.

Work-Based Learning

Student learning also takes place predominantly in their employing organisation, where students engage in practice-based learning, such as role plays, observing live clinical sessions and conducting assessments and interventions under supervision. This involves clinical skill development, practice and feedback.

Students spend three to four days each week in their place of employment (depending on the balance of their teaching) in an NHS adult mental health service, working under supervision to conduct case assessment and formulation as well as delivery of psychologically informed wellbeing interventions. Supervision lasts for the full 12 months of the course and will consist of weekly case-based supervision to ensure patient safety, as well as fortnightly skills supervision from an NHS-employed Practitioner Psychologist or British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies-accredited practitioner in the service. Students are employed within the NHS service and remain there for the duration of their programme. The University will provide support to co-ordinate and manage the work-based learning. Practice-based learning days, typically one day per week, take place in clinical practice and provide opportunities to consolidate learning, reflect on experience, and engage in inter-professional learning opportunities with support to promote inclusive learning in the practice setting.

All NHS-based clinical supervisors will be invited to undergo bespoke training via a Continuing Professional Development workshop delivered by University of Worcester course tutors. Supervisors will then meet with course staff on a quarterly basis to ensure a consistent alignment between course delivery, work-based learning activities and assessments. Student competency development will be monitored by the Personal Academic Tutor in close liaison with their NHS-based clinical supervisor.

In order to pass the programme, a minimum of 80 clinical contact hours must be completed in their NHS employment, of which 40 clinical hours must have involved the delivery of the specified psychologically-informed interventions. Students must also demonstrate a minimum of 40 supervision hours (including 20 hours of case management supervision and 20 hours of clinical skills supervision) in order to pass the course. This requirement forms part of the final assessment for the course in module MHWP3103.

Independent study

It will be an expectation for employing NHS trusts to provide one day per week in employment as study time for students to engage in reading, self-reflection on practice, seek tutorial support, work on assessments and course documentation.

Independent study 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 Lecturers and Senior Lecturers in Clinical Psychology, Mental Health and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and where appropriate from a range of associated practice backgrounds including Clinical Psychologists working in the NHS, people with lived experience of mental health difficulties and multi-disciplinary NHS mental health staff.

Teaching is informed by research and practice, and all of the lecturers on the course have or are working towards a higher education teaching qualification or are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy.

14. Assessment strategy

The assessment strategy for this course is specified by Health Education England requirements. Students complete two assessments per module, which are closely aligned to the knowledge- and competency-based learning outcomes for the programme, with a final additional Practice Outcomes Portfolio signifying demonstration of competence. All assessments are graded as pass/fail using adapted versions of the [University of Worcester Level 6 Grade Descriptors](#) as checklists, or HEE-dictated competence assessment scales. Three of the assignments are reflective and case study-based essays, within which students demonstrate their theoretical knowledge from the learning activities and practice-based learning in the context of specific cases. Further assessments include a formally assessed role play and a recording of an intervention session. These are assessed using standardised practitioner-competence assessment tools, during which students are required to demonstrate procedural clinical competencies in undertaking set clinical activities. The portfolio assessment directly assesses completion of the required competencies and supervision hours during their NHS employment via a clinical log book and supervisor report.

Formative assessments provide early opportunities for demonstration and development of learning, and form part of the curriculum for each module, such as reviews of early drafts of reflective essays, course tutor monitoring of log book progress, and the

opportunity to engage in formative role play of clinical techniques with the NHS-based clinical supervisor.

Assessments:

Role Play
Reflective Essay
Case Report x 2
Portfolio of Collaborative Care Plans
Assessed Recording of An Intervention Session
Practice Outcomes Portfolio

15. Programme structure and requirements

The Graduate Certificate in Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in Specialist Adult Mental Health programme is a 12 month full time course. Only those students successfully completing the programme will be eligible to apply for NHS band 5 roles as a Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner.

Table 5 award map for each level of the course

Module Code	Module Title	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	
		Credits (Number)	Grad Cert
MHWP3101	Engaging and assessing people with severe mental health problems	15	M
MHWP3102	Care planning in partnership	15	M
MHWP3103	Wellbeing-focused psychologically-informed interventions for severe mental health problems	30	M
Total Credits		60	
Graduate Certificate Students must complete all three modules (MHWP3101, MHWP3102, MHWP3103) for 60 credits total to be awarded the Graduate Certificate.			

In order to pass the course, all modules must be passed successfully (60 credits total).

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at Level 6 of the [OfS sector recognised standards](#). This programme of study meets the QAA descriptor at Graduate Certificate Level 6 ([QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Annex D](#)).

17. Support for students

Induction

There are two forms of induction delivered on commencement of the course. There is one full day of University induction to introduce student to the learning environment including library services, general administrative processes of the University, APA referencing formatting and full IT induction. This involves opportunities to bond with fellow students and to meet the course team. Students will also be signposted to relevant student societies such as the Psychology Society which includes a wider network of students spanning applied allied health courses and psychology, alongside a network of student committees, student support services and hobby and interest groups. Secondly, all students undergo a full NHS induction programme in their employing NHS Trust, involving safeguarding training, health and safety and risk management. They will also initially meet with their supervisors and the team and under-go a phased start involving observing other professionals in the team.

Personal Academic Tutors

Students will be assigned a Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT) at the university and will have at least four set meetings with their assigned PAT over the year. These occur at key points and are available as a source of personal and professional development, progress monitoring and support, reflection on skill and competence development and pastoral support where appropriate. All PATs will have applied clinical experience in a similar field they will be working as well as being Course Tutors, as such they will be able to guide and signpost for any queries or identified needs. Additional meetings can be booked as and when the student requires.

Clinical Supervision

The second source of regular support comes from the two forms of supervision which occur on placement every week. The programme benefits from close working relationships with all of the involved NHS Trusts and supervisors. All NHS supervisors will be invited to complete MHWP Supervisor Training with the University of Worcester and will therefore have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to ensure that students have a coherent and positive learning experience across teaching and practice. There is a named co-ordinator for placements within the UW course who has a background in clinical practice and University lecturing, to ensure that students are supported from both sides, and all placements involve clear contracting with the student and supervisor around expectations to ensure transparency. The placement co-ordinator meets regularly with placement supervisors and students to review progress and the placement experience. There is a clear process in place for students to raise any supervision concerns with the course team.

All students will have an allocated NHS-based case supervisor, who will be a suitably qualified mental health practitioner working within their placement. They will meet with the student weekly to review their entire caseload, discuss risk, support skill development and discuss care planning. Every fortnight every student will also have fortnightly individual or group supervision with a qualified Clinical/Counselling Psychologists or British Association of Cognitive and Behavioural Psychotherapies registered therapist, which involves on-going formative activities around clinical competence development (e.g. role plays, feedback on recordings of actual sessions, observing supervisor and being observed in practice, theoretical discussions). Supervisors will also provide pastoral support and signposting where helpful.

By having support from both the University and the NHS, students will have access to a range of support services, such as Occupational Health within the NHS including counselling services, physiotherapy and health assessments.

Additional support is available for students from the wider University for the duration of their studies via the following links:

<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/>

18. Admissions

Admissions policy

The University aims to provide fair and equal access to education for all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it. The Graduate Certificate: Mental Health Wellbeing Practitioner is only open to applicants who are already employed, or who have an offer of employment within mental health services as a Trainee Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner. This will include those who are experienced in working alongside

service users with severe mental health problems, families, carers, and multi-disciplinary team members and those new to this area of practice who wish to increase their learning to a more advanced level and who wish to engage further with mental health and wellbeing through research and wider understanding of the issues involved.

The programme is not open to international students and those not in employment with the NHS in a Trainee Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner role.

Applications are initially screened jointly by UW staff and employing NHS Trust colleagues to the below academic, experience and values-based criteria. Shortlisted applicants are invited to a joint interview to assess academic, clinical and values-based suitability involving academic and administrative staff from the University of Worcester and practice partners from the employing NHS Trust.

Entry requirements

A typical applicant will be able to demonstrate:

- Evidence of recent successful study (within last 5 years) at Levels 4 and 5 or equivalent;
- Sufficient numeracy and literacy to meet the requirements of the course, for example Maths and English at Grade 4 and above. University of Worcester GCSE Maths and English equivalency tests will be accepted. See Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications;
- Applicants whose first language is not English are required to provide a language test certificate as evidence of their proficiency and must ensure that it is, or is comparable to, IELTS level 7.0 with no element below 6.5;
- A strong interest and understanding of the breadth of the values, role and the skills required to be a Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner;
- An offer of employment as a Trainee Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in an NHS mental health service.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

Applicants will need to have completed DBS clearance through their employing organisation. The employer will be asked to provide evidence of the applicants DBS certificate number.

Recognition of Prior Learning

As modules in this programme are closely linked and lead to a specific set of practitioner skills, recognition of prior learning is not applicable to this programme.

Admissions/selection criteria

Applicants apply for advertised Trainee Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner job vacancies in the NHS (via NHS Jobs or similar websites), which is an application for the job role and for a place on the course. Applications directly to the University are not possible as the programme is only available to those with an offer of employment as a Trainee Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner. As well as meeting academic entry requirements for this course, all applicants must have a broad understanding of the role of the Mental Health Wellbeing Practitioner and demonstrate their ability to meet the requirements for study at level 6.

Interview

Applicants will be invited to a values-based selection event facilitated jointly by the employing NHS Trust and a member of the course team. This involves a series of activities and an interview facilitated by the academic team, practitioners/ employers,

and service users, allowing applicants to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and values, numeracy and literacy skills, and a commitment to succeeding on the programme.

Academic staff, service users and practice learning partners attend training in the principles of selection, equality and diversity through the University or the practice partners employing organisation.

Where a candidate is unsuccessful at interview, they are offered written feedback, against individual performance and interview outcome. Those candidates who meet all the criteria for entry and are successful at the selection event 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.
- In accordance with the agreed variation to the TCRF all assessments are marked on a pass/fail basis (the minimum pass mark being a 'pass' for each module).
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module.
- 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 an assessment item that is marked on a Pass/Fail basis after the due date, will not have the work marked. A grade of "L2" will be used to indicate that work had been submitted. (TCRF 7.10)
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to re-sit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module.
- A student who fails 60 credits 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 6 requirements for awards

Award	Requirement
Graduate Certificate	Passed MHWP3101, MHWP3102 and MHWP3103 to achieve 60 credits at level 6, as specified on the award map

Graduate Certificate awards are unclassified.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Students are employed within the NHS at Agenda for Change Band 4 for the duration of the programme, and upon completion are guaranteed a position at Agenda for Change Band 5 as a Mental Health Wellbeing Practitioner within the service they were on placement with.

Graduate destinations

All graduates of the programme are guaranteed paid employment within the NHS as a Mental Health Wellbeing Practitioner, in the service in which they were on placement. Graduates of the programme can develop in these roles further, such as becoming a supervisor, lecturer and team leader. Graduates may also pursue further training in relevant professions such as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist.

Student employability

The programme provides a clear employment route and subsequent progression opportunities into an NHS career. It achieves this through the close relationship it holds with NHS colleagues and modern practice trends through the on-going provision of the work-based learning placement and associated activities.

Links with employers

The course benefits from being closely integrated with the collaborating NHS partners and those accessing services. Course delivery, development and review takes place through frequent meetings with NHS colleagues, service users and commissioners to ensure that stakeholder experience is integrated into the delivery and review of the programme.