Programme Specification Postgraduate Award in Professional Development Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (V300)

This document applies to Academic Year 2026/27 onwards

Table 1 programme specification for Postgraduate Award in Professional Development Independent and Supplementary Prescribing

1.	**Awarding institution/body**	University of Worcester
2.	**Teaching institution**	University of Worcester
3.	**Programme accredited by**	Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
4.	**Final award or awards**	Postgraduate Award in Professional Development
5.	**Programme title**	Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (V300)
6.	**Pathways available**	N/A
7.	**Mode and/or site of delivery**	Block taught programme delivered by blended learning combining face-to-face with online activities.
8.	**Mode of attendance and duration**	Part time over 2 terms
9.	**UCAS Code**	N/A
10.	**Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement**	QAA (2020) Master's Degree Characteristics NMC(2024) Standards for prescribing programmes NMC (2023) Standards for student supervision and assessment NMC (2023) Standards for nursing and midwifery education HCPC (2019) Standards for Prescribing RPS (2021) A Competency Framework for all Prescribers RPS (2019) - Designated Prescribing Practitioner Competency Framework
11.	**Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision**	March 2019 August 2019 AQU amendments to Section 19 August 2020 QAA benchmark links updated, AQU amendment Section 19. August 2021 – AQU amendments. August 2022 – AQU amendments September 2022 – updates to Benchmark Statements and Professional Body Statements July 2023 – annual updates November 2023 – amendment to title to conform to TCRF January 2024 – update to section 18

12. Educational aims of the programme

Through successful completion of this course, students will be eligible to achieve the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) annotated qualification for prescribing supported by NMC (2024) Standards for Prescribing Programmes and the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) (2019) Standards for Prescribing. The programme aims can be applied to all parts of the NMC register. The NMC (2018) state that the course can only be taken by nurses 1 year post registration, the HCPC (2013) promulgate autonomous working for independent prescribers and the College of Paramedics (2018) state that advanced paramedics will be those that undertake independent prescribing. Therefore, most students will be working, or aspiring, as advanced clinical practitioners

for whom prescribing becomes an integral part of their professional practice within the holistic care of a patient.

The course aims to provide:

- a flexible, multidisciplinary, student centred route to postgraduate achievement
- a stimulating environment based on the values of academic freedom, ethical awareness and critical appraisal
- intellectual challenge through the promotion of critical analysis, evaluation and problem solving in regard to the patient's treatment journey
- an environment in which students gain the confidence to feel they can provide holistic evidence-based practice to improve patient outcomes and develop clinical services
- the opportunity for the student to challenge their own values and attitudes towards prescribing and develop new ways of working in a supportive environment
- an opportunity for practitioners to develop autonomy, self-management, leadership skills, decision making skills, collaboration skills, high level communication and dissemination skills and clinical competence through taking on the prescribing role in their area of practice to facilitate patient safety and public protection.
- increased opportunities for career advancement

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:	**Assessment item**
1.	Critically appraise evidence and guidance to underpin cost effective, safe, and appropriate prescribing and de-prescribing utilising pharmacological and non- pharmacological approaches	001, 002. 003, 004
2.	Evidence advanced knowledge of drug actions and mechanisms across the life span and the impact on prescribing practice	001, 002, 003, 004

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

Cognitive and Intellectual skills		
3.	Critically reflect on personal and professional prescribing practice within legislative and ethical requirements and contemporary quality frameworks	001, 002, 003, 004
4.	Critically relate the psychology of prescribing and the influence of collaborative working to ensure shared decision making and continuity of care	004

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

Skills and capabilities related to employability		
5.	Effectively conduct and record complex holistic assessment demonstrating negotiation and individualised planning aligning current local, national and condition specific pathways and guidelines	004

6.	Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements for supplementary prescribing and the roles and responsibilities of tripartite working within a clinical management plan	004

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

Transferable/key skills

7.	Demonstrate skills of advanced critical thinking and clinical reasoning	001, 002, 003, 004

Learning, teaching and assessment
A blended learning approach is utilised. Active learning is facilitated through discussion and analysis of cases, policies and examples from the health and social care sector. Therefore, participation is encouraged and required throughout. Individualised learning is promoted by applying learning outcomes and content to the students' particular speciality and scope of practice, with subsequent discussion to compare and contrast interprofessional learning experiences.

Online sessions and e-learning via Blackboard will include virtual classroom sessions, a drugs calculations teaching and assessing virtual learning environment (Safe Medicate) and a discussion board.

Teaching
Students are taught through a combination of lead lectures, seminars, blended and on-Line learning activities, group and individual tutorials, enquiry based learning and self-directed and independent learning. Online learning is synchronous and asynchronous including flipped and virtual classrooms and discussion forums. Seminars focus on discussion of texts, experiences and ideas. Enquiry based learning allows students to choose their own enquiries, fulfilling their individual learning needs.

Tutorials are a key aspect of the teaching strategy with student being encouraged to share their assessment plans with tutors and peers, allowing structured questions and feedback. Tutorials can be face-to-face or utilise technologies such as Skype.

Personal Academic Tutors aim to support students to develop an awareness of their own strengths and weakness, identifying goals to complete their postgraduate study. These support students to develop a reflective approach to both their study, practice experiences and the feedback they receive on their academic work.

Personal Academic Tutors are students' regular point of contact within the University. Meetings with Personal Academic Tutors are scheduled at least once each semester to discuss feedback, development, and progression. This Personal Academic Tutorial support can be via face-to-face contact, email, phone, or Skype.

Contact Time

The course typically includes a balance of theory and practice learning with a minimum of 72 hours taught content and a minimum 72 hours of clinically supervised practice learning, relevant to the student's current professional working area over two terms. The taught component will be in 6 x 2-day blocks within the first term with independent study, including online learning component, throughout the duration of the course. The clinically supervised

hours should be arranged by the student in negotiation with the Practice Assessor and Practice Supervisor over the duration of the course.

Independent Self-Study

In addition to contact time, students are expected to undertake a significant amount of self-directed and guided study. Typically, this will involve 150 hours across the course. 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 course. The team includes Principal Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Practitioners and Service Users/Carers.

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy and 100% of lecturers on the course have or are working towards a higher education teaching qualification or are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy.

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or formative assignments.

The course learning outcomes and competence for independent and supplementary prescribing and are achieved by successful completion of a reflective case study and successful completion of a competency document which meets the requirements of RPS (2021) A Competency Framework for All Prescribers. In addition, there is an unseen numeracy assessment and pharmacology exam. The pharmacology exam must be passed with a minimum score of 80% and the numeracy assessment must be passed with a score of 100%.

Students must pass each assessment element and there is no compensation between assessments

14. Assessment strategy

The assessment is based on 4 key principles:
Adaptability: the assessment items normally allow the student to match their interests, needs and discipline.

Utility: Students are encouraged to use topics that will enable them to explore issues and questions from their own specialty with a view to innovating and enhancing practice.

Learning: The assessments are seen as powerful opportunities for personal, focused learning and developing self-management and self-direction; they are a central aspect of the learning process. In completing their competency document in practice under the supervision of the Practice Supervisor (PS) and Practice Assessor (PA) the students have an opportunity to contextualise their theoretical prescribing and pharmacology knowledge and apply it during prescribing practice through direct contact with patients.

Practice focused: All students are employed in clinical practice. Students are supported in practice by their PS and assessed by their PA. Students are able to utilise practice situations as a context or contribution for any of their assignments.

Support is given to help the student to apply the module learning outcomes to their assignment through written guidance in the module guide and in tutorials. All students are allocated a suitably qualified academic assessor for the duration of the Course. The Academic Assessor will liaise with the Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor to confirm progression and achievement.

This course applies the University's Assessment Policy and utilises the Generic Masters Grade descriptors - Level 4-7 for assessment of the assignment, competence document and portfolio of evidence.

15. Programme structures and requirements

This course requires the successful completion of one module that equates to 30 credits at level 7:

Table 6 award map

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status
MACP4007	Independent and Supplementary Prescribing	30	M

Following successful completion of the course the student will meet the standards of proficiency necessary for an annotation to be made against an entry on the NMC register as an Independent and Supplementary (V300) Prescriber or with the Health and Care Professions Council as an Independent and/or Supplement prescriber (as statutorily enabled). This will be registerable after the successful completion has been confirmed at an examination board and will be processed by the University. There is no compensation in assessments across theory and practice learning.

However, if a period of temporary absence is taken by the student, the course must be completed within a maximum of 2 years from the programme start date. Progression to a master's degree is possible by undertaking further modules within the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice programme.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at Level 7 of the OfS sector recognised standards and the following sources have been used throughout the programme.
QAA (2020) Master's Degree Characteristics (Whole Programme)
QAA (2014) the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications UK Awarding Bodies (Whole Programme)
NMC (2024) Standards for Prescribing Programmes
NMC (2023) Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment
NMC (2023) Standards for Nursing and Midwifery Education
RPS (2021) A Competency Framework for All Prescribers.
HCPC (2019) Standards for Prescribing
RPS (2019) - Designated Prescribing Practitioner Competency Framework

17. Support for students

There is extensive course information on UW Webpages, Blackboard VLE, in module flyers, and in the course handbook.

Module leaders and Personal Academic Tutors provide a high level of individual academic support and encouragement to students. The team are always aware of the competing

pressures on students and the difficulties of returning to study alongside a busy job and family. Tutorial support is personal, flexible, and proactive; it is tailored to the particular needs of students who are known to the team over a long period.

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

Advanced Clinical Practice Community
There is a Masters in Advanced Clinical Practice Community site accessed via the VLE which will provide ongoing support, information, and a way of enabling students to interact with each other.

The course leader provides individual academic support through module assessment specific tutorials in addition to personal academic tutor support.

University based support is available from:

- Firstpoint
- Your Student Support
- The Disability and Dyslexia Service

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 course benefits from a diversity of students working together and alongside one another. To that end students from a broad range of disciplines, experience, professional background, cultures, ethnicity, ability, faith and personal background are encouraged.

This course seeks to recruit from a wide range of healthcare professionals who have the ability, competence, and experience to prescribe. Typically prescribing students will have gained experience in their professional discipline and be in senior roles providing high quality care in a position that requires to give holistic and complex care.

Entry Requirements

Applicants should normally have:

EITHER
A lower second-class Honours degree (2:2) or above in a relevant subject from a UK university,
Or an overseas equivalent.

OR

Qualifications and experience considered to be equivalent to the above. All students applying via this route will be assessed and where necessary interviewed by the Course team.

See Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications.

The following criteria may be taken into consideration:

- Evidence of successful academic study at level 6 or equivalent.
- Experience of working in a health setting, the roles undertaken and the level of decision making undertaken
- Awareness of the demands of studying at postgraduate level
- Interest and motivation for successful study on the course
- Support from employer to undertake course

Course specific entry requirements
In order to undertake this course students must meet the following requirements as set out by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2024) Standards for Prescribers or the Health and Care Professionals Council (2019) Standards for Prescribing.

- Be a registered Nurse (level 1) or Midwife or Specialist Community Public Health Nursing registrant or Health and Care Professions Council registrant whose profession is legislated as being able to act as a prescriber
- Be employed or self-employed as a registered Nurse or a registered Health Care Professional (including NHS and non-NHS settings)
- Have the necessary governance structures (including clinical support, access to protected learning time and employer support) to undertake the course
- Capable of safe and effective practice in clinical/health assessment, diagnostics/care management and planning and evaluation of care. Applicants must have completed the Regional Prescribing Form which includes Employer declaration of capability of clinical/health Assessment. *Applicants are encouraged to complete a health assessment module in advance of applying for the prescribing module.*
- Be at least 1 year post registration prior to application on to the course
- Have an appropriately qualified Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor as outlined within the RPS (2019) - Designated Prescribing Practitioner Competency Framework
- Have a declaration of good character from the proposed student's employer that confirms the student practises in line with the requirements of NMC (2018) The Code, the professional standards of practice and behaviour or HCPC (2018) Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

Admission procedures
Following completion of the UW Application Form and Regional Prescribing Application form applications are reviewed by a member of the course team and assessed against the PSRB and course entry requirements. Students with non-standard qualification but who believe they have the requisite experience and potential for development are encouraged to discuss their application with the course team ahead of submission.

Applications received from candidates with non-standard entry profiles are reviewed by a member of the course team and where appropriate the student is offered an interview, which can be undertaken by video conference where appropriate. Candidates where admission is not appropriate at the time of application can seek advice from the course team on how to prepare for a subsequent application and a suggested timeframe for application.

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

In line with the NMC (2024) standards for prescribing, it is possible to request recognition of prior learning (RPL) to be considered for this course. This should be done prior to

admission by discussion with the Course Team who would be able to advise on this process and the documentation required for it.

Admissions procedures

- All applications will be via the Admissions Team and seen by a member of the course team
- Students will be invited to interview either in person or by telephone or video conference to ensure all admission criteria from the University and the PSRB standards are complied with.

Admissions/selection criteria

The process for interviewing students has been designed in partnership with Practitioners, Service Users and Carers. Following interview, the students will be offered a place when a member of the course team confirm they meet all the criteria for entry and are successful at interview.

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 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

- A student is required to submit assessment items by 3pm on the due date and in accordance with the published process described in the module outline.
- A student may request an automatic extension of up to seven days up to six times in an academic year (depending on the number of credits studied) as described in the Delayed Assessment Procedures.
- A student who submits work late will not have work marked unless they have an approved claim of exceptional circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to re-sit 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; the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- 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 Award

Table 7 requirements for awards

Award	Requirement

PG Award in Professional Development	Passed 30 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map. This award is unclassified

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

All the students are already in employment therefore their aim is to improve the patient experience and outcomes through ensuring patient safety and enhanced service delivery. The course equips students to develop their existing roles, develop into new roles within their area of practice and progress into innovative and autonomous roles. Student must register the award with NMC within five years of successfully completing the course or will have to retake and successfully complete the course. Students have the opportunity to progress onto the Masters in Advanced Clinical Practice.

Student employability

The provision offered through this course is developed in partnership with the PSRB and employers/Practice Partners and Service Users and Carers and as such is closely mapped to both the needs of the student, the patients, the profession, and the needs of the employer. Student may only prescribe once their prescribing qualification has been annotated on the appropriate PSRB (NMC or HCPC) register and they may only prescribe from the formulary they are qualified to prescribe from and within their competence and scope of practice. To that end, students exiting have specific, focused skills desirable to both local employers, but also in the wider health and social care community.

Links with employers

The course leader and course team work closely with partners in the local NHS economy to ensure the course is current and meets national and local policy drivers. The relationship between university and practice partner/ employer is a mature one that has developed over a number of years. Employers and commissioners 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.