

Programme Specification for FdSc Nursing Associate

This document applies to Academic Year 2024/25 onwards

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| 1. | Awarding institution/body | University of Worcester |
| 2. | Teaching institution | University of Worcester Dudley College |
| 3. | Programme accredited by | Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) |
| 4. | Final award or awards | FdSc |
| 5. | Programme title | FdSc Nursing Associate |
| 6. | Pathways available Linked Honours Degree progression route/s | FdSc Nursing Associate FdSc Nursing Associate Apprenticeship BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) Degree Apprenticeship BSc (Hons) (Mental Health) BSc (Hons) (Mental Health) Degree Apprenticeship BSc (Hons) Nursing (Children's) BA (Hons) Applied Health & Social Care Top-Up |
| 7. | Mode and/or site of delivery | Delivered using blended learning which combines work-based learning, face to face and online activities. Practice Learning facilitated by NHS and Independent healthcare providers |
| 8. | Mode of attendance and duration | Full time programme over 2 years delivered as a standard student route and apprentice route. Apprentice route delivered at University of Worcester and Dudley College. Standard route is delivered at University of Worcester only |
| 9. | UCAS Code | Nursing Associate B745 Nursing Associate Apprenticeship NA |
| 10. | Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement | Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (QAA, 2020) NMC (2023) Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education NMC (2023) Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment NMC (2023) Part 3: Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes Standards of proficiency for nursing associates (NMC, 2018) Apprenticeship Standard for Nursing Associate (NMC 2018) |

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| 11. | Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision | April 2019 August 2020 QAA Benchmark link updated September 2020 AQU amendments to Section 19 September 2020: minor course amendments to remove zoned academic role and change personal academic tutor role. March 2021 Award map updated July 2021 Award map updated August 2021 – AQU amendments August 2022 – Change to shared module codes & PAT August 2022 – AQU amendments July 2023 – CMAS changes and annual updates April 2024 updates for delivery at Dudley College |
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12. Educational aims of the programme

Health and care settings are experiencing complex challenges, with increasing demand placed on services. There is a need to ensure patients get the right care at the right time and in the right place. Key to this, is building new health and care partnerships, integrating care and developing new roles. The Nursing Associate role is a response to the need to develop the health care support worker role and support the role of the Registered Nurse. It is a role in its own right, sitting at Band 4 of [NHS Agenda for Change](#) acting as a bridge between and complementing, the unregulated health care workforce and the Registered Nurse. It also widens access to further career development as a Registered Nurse.

The current FdSc Nursing Associate has been developed in response to a number of key policies and drivers, including the [NHS Five Year Forward Plan](#) (2014), [Shape of Caring: Raising the Bar](#) (2015) Health Education England (HEE, 2017) [Nursing Associate Curriculum Framework](#).

Since the development of this innovative role in 2017, there has been an increasing demand nationally and numbers to educate Nursing Associates has risen from 1000 (2017) to 7500 for 2020. UW, as part of the Hereford and Worcester Partnership is a 'fast follower' site and has delivered the FdSc Nursing Associate programme since April 2017. As a 'fast follower' site, lessons learned from ongoing monitoring and evaluation by the Health Education England and current students have informed this new curriculum. In January 2019, the NMC became the new regulators of the Nursing Associate title. As the new regulators, from July 2019, Nursing Associate programmes must comply with the NMC (2018) standards (as indicated in section 10).

The FdSc Nursing Associate programme is a flexible, authentic practice learning course aimed to develop competent, confident and compassionate Nursing Associates, providing high quality, safe and responsive person-centred care across the lifespan in diverse care setting. This course includes significant practice (or work-based) learning.

This programme aims to:

1. Develop Nursing Associates who are competent, confident, compassionate, autonomous and accountable professionals who are fit for purpose in accordance with the NMC (2018) [The Code: Professional Standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates](#). For Nursing Associate Apprentices this will also include the [Apprenticeship Standard for Nursing Associate \(NMC 2018\)](#).
2. Provide opportunity through the integration of practice learning with theory, to safely and effectively support students to confidently and competently achieve the six platforms and associated skills annex in the NMC (2018) [Standards of proficiency for nursing associates](#). Ensuring eligibility to register with the NMC as a Registered Nursing Associate. For Nursing Associate students (apprentices) this will also include achievement of the

occupational duties and associated knowledge, skills and behaviours in the [Apprenticeship Standard for Nursing Associate \(NMC 2018\)](#).

3. Facilitate the development of contemporary knowledge, skills and attributes to facilitate partnership working with patients, their families and the wider health and social care team, to meet the holistic, person-centred care needs of individuals from across the life-span on the health-illness continuum.
4. Develop knowledge and understanding of caring for people with complex co-morbidities' and complex needs to support delivery of mental, cognitive, physical care needs across a range of integrated care settings
5. Empower and support students to become resilient, caring, reflective, life-long learners, applying a wide-range of evidence-based knowledge to underpin their professional practice in evolving and diverse healthcare environments.
6. Develop decision-making, problems-solving, team working and leadership skills to participate to the implementation of quality improvement strategies and safely delegate nursing care/interventions to ensure delivery safe, effective, high quality care provision.

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

| Knowledge and Understanding | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| LO no. | On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to: | Module Code/s |
| 1. | Apply knowledge of biological science including anatomy, physiology, therapeutics and pharmacology to safely deliver person-centred care across the lifespan in diverse contexts | NURS1002 FDNA2202 |
| 2. | Apply knowledge and understanding of human development, aging, death, social and behavioural sciences to the delivery of nursing practice across the lifespan | NURS1002 FDNA2202 |
| 3. | Recognise and apply knowledge of commonly encountered mental, physical, behavioural and cognitive health conditions to the delivery of person-centred care across the life-span | FDNA1202 |
| 4. | Apply knowledge and understanding of co-morbidities and complex nursing, health and social care needs across the lifespan | FDNA2202 |
| 5 | Apply the principles of health promotion, protection, prevention and improvement to identify and respond to health priorities across diverse communities and the health-illness continuum | NURS1001 |
| 6 | Apply knowledge and understanding of local and national policy, legal, ethical, regulatory and professional frameworks and their application to contemporary nursing practice | FDNA1201 FDNA2201 |
| 7 | Apply evidence-based nursing practice to safely, effectively, with sensitivity and compassion deliver person centred care across the lifespan | NURS2001 FDNA2201 |

Cognitive and Intellectual skills

| | | |
|---|---|----------------------|
| 8 | Apply evidence-based practice to inform problem-solving, individual and shared decision-making in diverse situations | NURS2001 FDNA2201 |
| 9 | Evaluate reflective practices, to develop resilience and take responsibility for own learning and continuing professional development | FDNA2203 |

Skills and capabilities related to employability

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| 10 | Demonstrate professional values, competence, confidence and autonomous nursing practice underpinned by the NMC Code and Standard of Proficiency for Nursing Associate. (For Nursing Associate Apprentices this will also include Apprenticeship Standard for Nursing Associate (NMC 2018)) | FDNA1201 FDNA2201 |
| 11 | Recognise own role in safeguarding vulnerable individuals and apply a professional duty of candour, to escalating concerns and learn from critical incidents to ensure public protection | FDNA2101 |
| 12 | Develop and apply leadership and team working skills to safely delegate care and contribute to risk monitoring and implementation of service improvements | FDNA2203 |

Transferable/key skills

| | | |
|----|---|----------------------|
| 13 | Apply numeracy, literacy, digital and technology skills to own learning and professional clinical practice | FDNA1201 FDNA2201 |
| 14 | Effectively utilise communication and relationship management skills which promote optimum engagement with people of all ages, with diverse needs and limitations | FDNA1201 FDNA2201 |
| 15 | Work in partnership with people, families and carers and as an active and equal partner in inter-professional teamworking | FDNA1201 FDNA2201 |

Learning, teaching and assessment

At the heart of this creative and innovating programme, are learning, teaching and assessment strategies that promote active student engagement. Flexible, blended and inclusive learning, teaching and assessment occurs across academic and practice settings in an integrative and transformational way. The course is challenging and student-focused, utilising scenario-based and e-learning strategies, rooted in the real world of contemporary health and care practice.

The unified, mandatory nature of the programme, with core and practice learning modules, provides opportunities for shared learning with Pre-registration student nurses (across fields of practice). Pre-registration Nursing Associate students and student nurses will share 2 modules (NURS1001 & NURS1002) in year one and 1 module (NURS2001) in year two. Nursing Associate students will also have opportunity to learn and work alongside each other during skills and simulated learning sessions and during practice learning, providing the opportunity to appreciate each other's complementary roles in providing nursing care.

Opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and working with a range of other professionals including midwifery, social work, paramedic, occupational therapy and physiotherapy students is facilitated in enhanced learning days and workshops, during skills and simulated learning and in the practice setting.

The six NMC (2018) platforms spiral across the curriculum, supporting the construction of new knowledge:

1. Being an accountable professional
2. Promoting health and preventing ill-health
3. Providing and monitoring care
4. Working in teams
5. Improving safety and quality of care
6. Contributing to integrated care

These platforms are revisited across the programme, introducing new content, allowing revision of existing knowledge to the mastery of key concepts. The platforms, associated proficiencies, communication and relationship management skills and procedures, underpinned by the NMC (2018) [The Code: Professional Standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates](#) form the backbone of the programme, evident throughout theory and practice learning modules. The curriculum design allows Nursing Associate students to comprehensively develop knowledge, skills and attributes to allow them to meet the holistic, person-centred needs across the lifespan and across a range of clinical settings.

Teaching

Theory: Theory comprises of 15 hours per week, in which 7.5 hours (1 day/week) will be taught theory sessions and 7.5 hours (1 day/week) independent study across each semester. Nursing associate 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.

Seminars enable the discussion and development of understanding of topics covered in lectures, and simulation learning is focused on developing subject specific skills in a safe environment. Service user developed case studies (across the lifespan) support a scenario-based approach to learning, which guides learning and assessment strategies, ensuring all learning is centred on real-life situations. A blended learning approach uses a range of strategies including Blackboard Collaborate, flipped classroom and e-learning packages. Safe-medicate, will facilitate numeracy and medicines management development and clinicalskills.net to support essential skill development. Blackboard will be used for all modules for directed and e-learning activities including links to '[e-learning for health](#)', which is an e-learning for healthcare practitioners and includes preventing falls in hospital and cultural competence.

All Nursing Associate students will have a named [Personal Academic Tutor](#) for the whole of the programme. Students will have opportunity to meet with their Personal Academic Tutor at four scheduled group meetings in the first year to ensure they are settling into University life, to signpost to any University services needed and to provide academic support, enabling nursing associate students to reflect on progress and set future goals for achievement academically and for employability, and to become autonomous learners. In Year 2, to reflect growing confidence, a combination of individual and group meetings will be facilitated, with the expectation of three planned meetings. Students can request at any point across their programme an individual personal academic tutorial. There will also be designated sessions provided by the Personal Academic Tutor relating to Academic Integrity, academic and reflective writing skills. These will be scheduled during Independent/Directed Study weeks.

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/directed 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. With study skills embedded into the early stages of the course to help promote student achievement and confidence with learning and assessment. Study skills are further enhanced by the delivery of academic study days, provided by the Language School, available to all students.

Practice Learning: At the core of the Nursing Associate programme is learning in a range of clinical settings, learning in the real world which facilitates work-readiness, personal and professional development. Mandatory practice learning equates to 50% of the programme credit for each year. Nursing Associate placements will be arranged by the Placement Learning Support Team (PLAST) and will run throughout each semester across the year, with experiences normally in a minimum of two practice placements each year. The use of 'spokes' will also maximise the learning opportunities offered by diverse and non-traditional settings, offering exposure to opportunities to care for people across the lifespan, with mental and physical health needs and learning disabilities. Enhanced practice learning days rooted in clinical practice, provide opportunities to consolidate learning, provide opportunity for reflection and interprofessional learning, including added value learning experiences and seek additional support as necessary to promote inclusive learning in the practice setting.

Nursing Associate students on placement are supernumerary. For apprentices only, completing their primary placement they will have protected learning time. Students are supported by a practice supervisor and assessed by a practice assessor, both having undergone appropriate preparation for their roles. Further support is provided by an academic assessor allocated for each part of the programme. Nursing associate students will have access to internet and library resources whilst on placement.

Nursing Associate students will be provided with opportunities to complete skills and simulated learning activities. All skills and simulation activities involve a range of people including students, peers, service users/carers, practitioners, technicians, academics and includes role play, 'hands on' practical skills sessions using a range of simulation manikins, video recording and playback. Formative feedback on performance is provided to facilitate safe and effective support for essential skills development, in simulation suites, replicating clinical practice learning environments. 2 weeks (37 hours per week) and 5 enhanced practice learning days (37 hours) across both semesters will be allocated each year for simulated practice learning. An induction to practice placements will also be included so all nursing associate students are prepared for placement.

Contact time

In a typical week, Nursing Associate students will have around 7.5 hours (over 1 day) of contact hours of teaching. Typically, students will complete over 90% of these days on campus and 10% virtually.

On a typical campus-based day, contact time will be structured around:

- Group and lead lectures
- Interactive workshop or clinical skills and simulation
- Seminar or tutorials

Independent self-study

In addition to contact time, nursing associate students are expected to undertake around 7.5 hours of personal self-study per week across the academic year. In addition, pre-planned independent study weeks are scheduled across the year. Typically, this will involve reading, preparation for assessments, e-learning activities. For apprentices all independent study and theory related activity must be recorded in an activity log.

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

Nursing Associate 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 is made up primarily of Registered Nurses from different backgrounds, with expertise in their chosen field of practice/area of expertise. Teaching is also supported by the inter-disciplinary and multiagency team, when specialist knowledge is required. Contributions by service users, carers and their families, provides opportunity for them to share their lived experiences, with service users as appropriate having a role in the assessment process.

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy, 80% of permanent lecturers in the School of Nursing and Midwifery have or are studying for a Higher Education teaching qualification, with 76% Fellows of the Higher Education Academy, including 19% Senior Fellows (February 2024).

Assessment

Assessment enables students to learn about themselves as learners, reflecting on their learning experiences and providing opportunity to demonstrate their academic, practical, technical and professional progress and achievement in theory and practice. Both formative (informal and developmental) and summative (formal) assessment strategies are incorporated. Each module has one or more 'summative' assessments which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade.

The University has a strong commitment to social and educational inclusion. The assessment strategy is student-centred to promote inclusivity. The course offers a combination of traditional and innovative assessment activities with some modules offering a choice of assessment strategies. This ensures that assessments are equally accessible and provide equal opportunity for nursing associate students to demonstrate their achievement and their development of Higher Education skills and those needed for future employment as a Nursing Associate.

Summative assessment activities include written assignments (essays/reports), exams (seen and unseen), scenario-based individual and group presentations, including posters. Practice learning assessment involves assessment of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values progression from guided participation in care (Year one) to leading to active participation in care (Year 2). Formative and summative assessment of practice is recorded in the England Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document (NAPAD). Numeracy and medicines management is assessed developmentally across the programme, culminating in a calculation of medicines test (using safe medicate), which must achieve a 100% score.

A typical formal summative assessment pattern for each year of the course is;

Year 1

Group presentation

E-poster or patient leaflet with supporting paper

Unseen examination

Scenario based essay

Assessment of practice learning using England Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document (NAPAD), with evidence of reflection on proficiencies and learning and evidence of medicines calculation test at 80%.

Year 2

Written report

Individual presentation

Unseen exam

Scenario based essay

Assessment of practice learning using England Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document (NAPAD), with evidence of reflection on proficiencies and learning and evidence of medicines calculation test at 100%.

14. Assessment strategy

Assessment reflect the [UW Assessment Policy](#) and the [Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes](#) (NMC, 2018). Assessment is designed to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, essential skills and professional values, attitudes and behaviours across both the academic and practice learning context, to demonstrate safe and effective practice. Assessment is planned across the programme, with a specific emphasis on learning and assessment in authentic practice learning environments, enabling nursing associate students to develop the skills needed for future employment as a Nursing Associate and the academic skills of higher education.

An integrated approach has been taken to ensure assessment is appropriate, valid and reliable and aligns to module learning outcomes. In-line with NMC requirements, no compensation exists between the assessment of theory and practice or with the assessment of individual items of assessment in a module, ensuring all programme outcomes are met.

Academic assessment facilitates the integration of theory with professional practice, many assessments draw upon practice learning experiences or utilise a scenario-based approach. Both formative (informal and developmental) and summative (formal) assessment strategies are incorporated. A student-centred combination of assessment strategies is utilised, with all summative assessment constructively aligned to the modular learning outcomes, while ensuring the development of key, transferable, employment skills.

Formative assessment is featured across the programme. It plays a key role in student learning and achievement and students are expected to engage with all formative activities in order to receive regular feedback on their progress, facilitating self-assessment of their achievement. Formative assessment is closely aligned to summative assessment, increasing student confidence in achievement. Students will receive formative feedback from a number of sources including teaching staff, their Personal Academic Tutor, visiting lecturers, clinical practitioners, service user and carers and from their peers. A range of formative strategies are utilised including self-directed, e-learning, in-class activities and tests, practice presentations and tutorial support.

Summative assessment is developmental, with opportunities for nursing associate students to develop competence in the assessment process, with similar assessment strategies appearing in both years of the programme. Formal assignment guidance is provided for all assessment activities whether formative or summative. For all summative assessments, a comprehensive assignment guide containing explicit assessment criteria, aligned to the module learning outcomes clearly indicating what nursing associate students need to do to successfully complete the assessment. Each assessment item will have clear marking criteria, benchmarked to the University Grade Descriptors at levels 4 and 5, with assignments marked using a marking matrix. All summative written theory assignments are submitted electronically.

Peer assessment, both formative and summative are featured. Formative service user feedback on presentations is also incorporated, and service users will also play a role in the development of some of the scenarios which form the basis for assessment.

Assessment of Practice Learning

The assessment of practice learning is aligned to one 60 credit Essential Skills and Nursing Associate Practice module (FDNA1201/FDNA2201) that run across each year.

Nursing Associate students are supported and assessed in the practice setting using the England Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document (e-NAPAD). There is one document per Part (with a Part equating to a year). There is an ongoing achievement record (OAR) and guidance

document. These are mapped to the Nursing Associate proficiencies and skills annexes, which are generic in nature and must be achieved by all Nursing Associates at the point of professional registration. Nursing associate students will be supported by practice supervisors and practice assessors to achieve the proficiencies and skills. The e-PAD contains all the formative and summative elements of the assessment process, including professional values, proficiencies, skills, medicines management and episodes of care. The e-PAD also includes structured reflections, which are reviewed by Practice Assessors and Academic Assessors for each Year (Part) of the programme. Evidence of achievement of numeracy at 80% in year one and 100% in year 2 must be included with the submission of the e-PAD. The e-PAD is pass/fail only, with the summative assessment taking place at the end of each year.

Nursing Associate students are required to complete a minimum of 624 practice learning hours per year (see table 1, p10). The hours per year are identified in the Essential Skills and Nursing Associate Practice module specifications and must be completed to allow progression. All practice learning hours must be recorded via timesheets, which facilitates the recording on the nursing associate students training record by the Placement Support team.

Full details of the practice learning assessment process and compliance with the Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment are contained within the England e-NAPAD Guide to the Practice Assessment Document, Essential Skills and Nursing Associate Practice module specifications and the Course Handbook.

A grid showing assessment methods and weightings mapped to modules at each level, together with an assessment calendar of submission dates is included in the Course Handbook.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The course structure is made of 8 mandatory modules (with an additional zero credited mandatory module for apprentices only) and designed to meet the requirements of the [Standards for student supervision and assessment](#) (NMC, 2018) and the [Standards for preregistration nursing associate programmes](#) (NMC, 2018). See Award Map (page 11).

The FdSc Nursing Associate is a 2-year full time programme and timetabled for 45 weeks per year, including 7 weeks pre-planned annual leave per year. Nursing associate students will attend a 1-week induction each year. Theoretical modules require attendance at University one day/week for 12 weeks each semester. Independent/directed study is allocated throughout the programme.

Table 1: Total hours per 2 year programme

| Part (year) level | Theory Hours | Practice Hours | Weeks |
|-------------------|---|--|---|
| One L4 | 217.5 Taught 382.5 Independent Study | 550 Placement (Inc. 37 enhanced practice learning hours) 74 hrs. Skills and Simulation | 41 + 4 weeks *PD/reassessment |
| Two L5 | 217.5 Taught 382.5 Independent Study | 549 Placement (Inc. 37 enhanced practice learning hours) 74 hrs. Skills and Simulation | 41 + 4 weeks *PD/reassessment |
| Totals | 1200 hours | 1248 hours (which includes 225 hours of clinical skills and simulation & enhancement learning) | 82 + 8 weeks PD/Placement *reassessment weeks |

***Professional Development (PD)**

The course complies with NMC requirements of a minimum of 2300 hours of theoretical and practice learning education and provides an equal balance of theory and practice learning hours. For this programme the minimum number of hours equate to 2448 hours and equal balance of hours (see table 1). Skills and simulated learning proportionality and effectively contribute to practice learning hours, to a maximum of 74 hours per year. All skills and simulation activities involve a range of people including students, peers, service users/carers, practitioners, technicians, academics. Practice learning allows Nursing Associate students to experience the full range of hours expected of qualified Nursing Associates.

Foundation Degree Nursing Associate – Award Map

| LEVEL 4 | | | |
|-------------|--|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Module Code | Module Title | Credits (Number) | Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O) |
| NURS1001 | Communication and Professional Values to Promote Health and Well-being across the Lifespan | 30 | M |
| NURS1002 | Human Anatomy and Physiology for Person Centred Care | 15 | M |
| FDNA1201 | Essential Skills and Nursing Associate Practice 1 | 60 | M |
| FDNA1202 | Principles of Nursing Associate Practice | 15 | M |

Requirements at level 4; Students must take all the mandatory modules identified above and successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 4.

| LEVEL 5 | | | |
|-------------|--|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Module Code | Module Title | Credits (Number) | Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O) |
| NURS2001 | Evidence-Based Practice for Health and Care | 15 | M |
| FDNA2201 | Essential Skills and Nursing Associate Practice 2 | 60 | M |
| FDNA2202 | Developing Integrated Person-Centred Care | 30 | M |
| FDNA2203 | Working in Teams in Health and Social Care | 15 | M |
| FDNA2204 | End Point Assessment Gateway for Nursing Associate Apprentices | 0 | M* |

Requirements at level 5: Students must take all the mandatory modules identified above and must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 5.

NB: All credited modules are mandatory and non-compensatory.

***All apprentices must complete FDNA2204. Non-apprentices are not required to take FDNA2204.**

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at Level 5 of the [OfS sector recognised standards](#), and is constructed to enable Nursing Associate students to demonstrate achievement of the proficiencies, communication and relationship management skills and procedures as detailed in [Standards of proficiency for nursing associates](#) (NMC, 2018) and the professional requirements of the NMC (2018) [The Code: Professional Standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates](#). Only those Nursing Associate students successfully completing the FdSc Nursing Associate course are eligible to apply to register with the NMC.

The following key documents have informed the development of this programme:

- [Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement](#) (QAA, 2020)
- [NMC \(2023\) Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education](#)
- [NMC \(2023\) Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment](#)
- [NMC \(2023\) Part 3: Standards for pre-registration nursing associate programmes](#)
- [Standards of proficiency for nursing associates](#) (NMC, 2018)
- [Apprenticeship Standard for Nursing Associate \(NMC 2018\)](#)

Practice learning meets the requirements of the [UW Policy for Management of Placement and Work-based Learning](#)

In addition, the programme has taken account of a number of national and local policy drivers including, the [NHS Five Year Forward Plan](#) (2014), [Shape of Caring: Raising the Bar](#) (2015) [Delivering high quality, effective, compassionate care: Developing the right people with the right skills and the right values](#) (DH, 2016) and [NHS Long Term Plan](#) (DH, 2019).

17. Support for students

Student support is a central element of the Nursing Associate programme and is available from within the Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery and from the wider University (for example [Student Services](#)).

Disabled students

The University is committed to building on the principle of inclusion and promote educational and social inclusion and Equality (UW. Strategic Plan, Values and Vision (2019)). [The Disability and Dyslexia Service](#) within [Student Services](#) provides specialist support. Additionally, the [University's Policy and Procedures on Inclusive Assessment](#) sets out policy, procedures and guidance to ensure that disabled students are not discriminated against in relation to assessments.

Induction

Pre-induction consists of 2 days of on-line synchronized learning sessions available for students to meet each other and discuss key concepts of the course delivery. For Nursing Associate apprentices, pre-induction days include 'on boarding' activities, where the Nursing Associate apprentices are provided with an overview of apprentice specific requirements and includes an opportunity for the apprentice to review their Initial Needs assessment (INA).

There is a comprehensive induction programme for both theory and practice. The first week of the programme provides students have the opportunity to meet other students, the teaching team, including practice educator/ facilitators, their Personal Academic Tutor, and the Placement Learning Support Team. Sessions exist on introducing students to the principles of learning and teaching in Higher Education, introduction to information and learning systems including library resources, an introduction to student services, the Student Union, and professional and representative bodies. A Trust induction day will be included as part of the induction processes. In addition, at the start of each placement an individual placement induction/orientation takes place.

Personal Academic Tutors

Personal Academic Tutoring is central to supporting students personally, professionally and academically. The programme team believe that the Personal Academic Tutor system is fundamental to individual's success.

Your Personal Academic Tutor will help to develop students:

- Awareness of individual's strengths and weaknesses
- A clear vision of what it is possible to achieve through HE studies
- Greater understanding of how study in the discipline area at the University can help towards goals
- Responsibility for choices in modules, work and social life
- A reflective approach to all the feedback received on work
- A sense and a record of progression and achievement in the development of subject and generic skills and attributes (qualities)
- An ability to use this greater awareness to articulate the benefits of the HE experiences to others including employers.

The Personal Academic Tutor will also:

- Respond to requests for support and help with problems which affect academic work either at subject level or by referral to other University facilities
- Provide information for and assist in the drafting of the University reference.

Opportunity will exist to meet Personal Academic Tutors during induction week, this early introduction is built on by regular meetings across the academic year. A group tutorial session is scheduled in the induction week each year to formally meet with the Personal Academic Tutor to facilitate sharing of experiences and provision of general professional and academic development. Following this, a minimum of four group/individual meetings will be scheduled in the independent study weeks and semester 2 for year one. For year two a minimum of three group/individual meetings will be scheduled during independent study weeks.

Personal Academic Tutor will also normally act as the students' Academic Assessor for either year one or year two. The Personal Academic Tutor and Academic Assessor will be a member of the academic staff who is also a Registered Nurse and a member of the module team for each year of study.

Personal Academic Tutors act as the first point of contact for students experiencing problems or concerns arising while at university, offering signposting to wider University support services. They promote the academic and professional development of their tutees, including supporting employability and provide the official University reference for their tutees. Students are advised to maintain regular contact with their Personal Academic Tutor, with email being the communication tool of choice. All tutorial contact is recorded via SOLE and within the Practice Assessment Document.

While it is unlikely, students can request a change of Personal Academic Tutor/Academic Assessor (or vice versa), This is usually possible by the completing a 'change of tutor' form, available on Blackboard, which is forwarded to the Course Lead, at whose discretion the change may be permitted.

Academic Assessors

All students will be allocated Academic Assessors (for either year one or year two, the Academic Assessor will also be the Personal Academic Tutor). As required by the NMC, students' will be allocated a different Academic Assessor for each year (Part). Academic Assessors must communicate with Practice Assessors at identified points across the academic year to monitor student progress, with a discussion about student learning, progression and achievement of proficiencies across theory and practice taking place prior to the end each year. The Academic Assessor and Practice Assessor are responsible for recommending the student for progression

to the next year of the programme, recording this in the Ongoing Achievement Record and attending practice panel is required. This recommendation is ratified at the exam board.

Additional information on the academic assessor will be detailed in the Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document

Course lead

The Course Lead works closely with Academic Assessors and Personal Academic Tutors to carefully monitor student progression and achievement on the programme to facilitate early intervention strategies to support Nursing Associate students struggling to make satisfactory progression.

Placement support

Prior to commencing their first placement all Nursing Associate students will have a joint Trust induction and preparation for practice learning sessions. These will include professional responsibilities and expected conduct in line with the NMC Code, introduction to the Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document, policy and guidance. They will also complete an individual placement induction/orientation on the first day of each placement and documented in the Practice Assessment Document. All Nursing Associate students will complete mandatory training prior to commencing their first placement including: Basic Life Support, Moving and Handling, Conflict Resolution, Safeguarding and Prevent and Fire training.

All practice learning and assessment is further supported by:

- Placement Support Team
- Practice Facilitators/Educators/Nominated
- Academic Practice Liaison Team (PLT)
- Person Practice Supervisor(s)
- Practice Assessor (for each placement or group of placements)
- Academic Assessor
- Personal Academic Tutor

Practice Supervisors, Practice Assessors and Academic Assessors will have all received appropriate preparation for the role and receive ongoing support to undertake the role.

Further details related to practice learning support and assessment are available in the Course Handbook, Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document, Guide to the Practice Assessment Document.

18. Admissions policy

The University aims to provide fair and equal access to a university education to all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it. Admissions to nursing are made in line with the University's [UW Admissions Policy](#) and Diversity and Equality policies. The University wishes to recruit Nursing Associate students who have a strong commitment to Nursing, as a career and are able to demonstrate values in accordance with the NMC (2018) Code and the ability and capacity to learn the required professional behaviours, develop numeracy, digital and technological skills to meet the programme requirements.

Entry Requirements

32 UCAS tariff points from either

- A Level (minimum Grade C) or max of 3 A levels.
 - BTEC National Diploma
 - Access to HE Diploma's (45 credits at level 3) or other equivalent Level 3 qualifications
- GCSE Grade C/4 (or above) or a Level 2 equivalent in Maths and English Evidence of recent academic study (within 5 years)

Nursing Associate students whose first language is not English must have a minimum standard of English at IELTS Level 6.0 (with no less than 5.5 in any component), Other equivalent English qualifications will be considered (see [UW Language Requirements and Support](#))

The current admission requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW website <https://www.worc.ac.uk/journey/a-z-of-courses.html>

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

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

Nursing Associate students are required to demonstrate health and character sufficient to ensure safe and effective practice. This includes a satisfactory enhanced DBS and occupational health assessment.

For further details please see Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery (2019) Nursing, Midwifery and Nursing Associate Pre-Registration programmes: Good Health and Good Character Processes, contained within the course handbook.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University webpages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111). Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

For Pre-registration Nursing Associate programmes, the NMC (2018) permit RPL that is capable of being mapped to the Standards of Proficiency for Nursing Associates and programme outcomes, to a maximum of 50% of the programme. This maximum limit of 50% does not apply to applicants to Pre-registration Nursing Associate programmes who are currently an NMC Registered Nurse without restrictions on their practice.

Admissions procedures

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS the following UCAS code apply:

- Nursing Associate B745

Students already studying at University of Worcester (UW) can apply directly to UW.

Nursing Associate apprenticeship applications are via their employer, who may offer the choice to study at University of Worcester or Dudley College.

Admissions/selection criteria

All applications received are scrutinised and short listed against set criteria which include both educational and professional requirements:

- Applicant meets/working towards academic entry requirements
- Personal statement has a clear understanding of the Nursing Associate role and rationale for undertaking the programme
- Coherent and logical expression of ideas
- Reference

Candidates who meet the criteria for admission are invited to attend a values-based selection event.

The values-based selection event involves mini-interviews facilitated by the academic team, practitioners and service users, allowing candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the Nursing Associate role, commitment to succeeding in nursing and suitability for the programme. A selection decision is made against set criteria based on the NHS 6 C's:

1. Care
2. Compassion
3. Competence
4. Communication
5. Courage
6. Commitment

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. In some instances, potential students may be advised to reapply at a later date or to seek further education. Those who meet all the criteria for entry and are successful at interview are offered a place, conditional upon confirmation of good health and good character.

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 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 5 days 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 5 days but within 14 days of the due date 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

- Students are 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-.
- Where an Essential Skills and Nursing Associate Practice module is failed students will be offered an opportunity of a minimum of a 4-week placement to facilitate retrieval of the fail
- Failure in the original and reassessment opportunity of a practice learning module will result in withdrawal from the programme

- No student will be reassessed in practice more than twice throughout the whole programme. Failure in excess of this will lead to withdrawal from the programme
- 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.

Requirements for Progression

- Nominated Practice Assessor and a nominated Academic Assessor evaluate and recommend a student for progression based on achievement of proficiencies and outcomes for each part of the programme. This is confirmed at the examination board through the ratification of module results.
- Students at Level 4 will be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed all modules (120 credits) at Level 4.
- A student will be permitted to progress with conditions from Level 4 to Level 5 if by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4 but have not exhausted all reassessment opportunities in the remaining 30 credits.
- A student progressing with conditions must take the outstanding reassessments at the next available opportunity.
- A student who, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, has failed 90 credits or more (after exhausting all reassessment opportunities) during the academic year, will have their registration with the University terminated;
- If a student has not passed at least 90 credits by the reassessment Board of Examiners, the student is not permitted to progress to the next level and will be required to either complete outstanding reassessment or retake of failed modules the following academic year. Students will be able to carry forward any passed modules.

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

Requirements for Awards

| Award | Requirement |
|--|--|
| Cert HE Healthcare Studies | To be eligible for the exit award of Certificate in Higher Education in Healthcare Studies, a student must have passed at least 120 credits at Level 4 or higher |
| Foundation Degree FdSc Nursing Associate | 120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5 as specified on the award map |

These awards are not classified.

The professional role title of Nursing Associate is linked to successful achievement of the FdSc Nursing Associate. Only graduates with this award title will be eligible for Registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Nursing Associate students who successfully complete the FdSc Nursing Associate will be eligible to apply for registration with the NMC as Nursing Associate. Nursing Associate students are required to register their award with the NMC within five years. Failure to register within five years, requires undertaking additional education and training or gaining such experience as specified in the [Standards of proficiency for nursing associates](#) (NMC, 2018).

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

The programme is professionally accredited by the NMC and achievement of the FdSc Nursing Associate normally indicates a student's *Fitness to Practice* and eligibility to enter the NMC

professional register, permitting use the title Nursing Associate. The most recent data for Nursing Associate apprentices (2020/21) indicates 100% gained employment or progressed onto further study within the first 6 months of completion. Of those who completed, 34 (89%) gained employment as Registered Nursing Associate – Band 4 (AFC) and 4 (11%) progressed onto further academic study. Many are employed locally with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Wye Valley NHS Trust, Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care Trust and Dudley Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Approximately 40% of Nursing Associates have progressed onto the BSc (Hons) Nursing programme, with as an apprentice or student undertaking a traditional route.

For nursing associate students who successfully complete the FdSc Nursing Associate they are eligible to apply for registration with the NMC as Nursing Associate. They are required to register their award with the NMC within five years.

Progression to Linked Honours Degree/Top-Up Degree

The identified progression routes to an honours award are:

BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) (Apprenticeship route available), BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health) (Apprenticeship route available) and BSc (Hons) Nursing (Children's.) Subject to current NMC regulations which only permit Recognition of Prior Learning of up to 50% of the programme. Students will be required to submit an internal application and will be formally invited to attend a selection event, following discussion with their Personal Academic Tutor, to identify which field of practice they wish to apply for. The BSc (Hons) Nursing team are integral to the teaching and learning on the FdSc Nursing Associate and will discuss progression to the BSc (Hons) Nursing programme with all Nursing Associate students to explain the requirements of the programme.

BA (Hons) Applied Health & Social Care Top-Up, aims to prepare students for a dynamic work environment, where service user well-being can be dependent on integrated health, care and welfare. It facilitates future careers in a range of operational contexts including; care leaver services, advice and guidance services, preventative health, care and welfare services, housing support services, social enterprise.

Student employability

A number of initiatives are embedded within the programme. During Year 2 skills and simulation weeks' Nursing Associate students are provided with opportunity to complete 'mock' interviews and are supported with CV writing. Personal Academic Tutors provide further support to nursing associate nursing associate nursing associate students with career planning and writing personal statements. Local employers from across the Black Country and the counties of Worcestershire and Herefordshire and surrounding areas are invited to meet with Nursing Associate students and discuss career opportunities and further professional development.

The course team, work with the University Careers & Employability Service ensuring details of Trust recruitment events and individual jobs are forwarded to Nursing Associate students during their final year.

Working with practice partners

The Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery has excellent working relationships with its practice partners. Regular strategic and operational meetings promote collaborative developments. A number of meetings including Practice Facilitator meeting and Practice Panels help facilitate open channels of communication. Placement Support team, practice education teams and the course team collaborate to review and confirm placement capacity. Practice partners and service users/carers (via the University experts by experience group: IMPACT) contribute to the ongoing monitoring and review of the programme and are partners in the development of any new curriculum developments. They are also involved particularly with the delivery of skills and simulated learning, with specialist practitioners providing expert input across the programme.

The University is also part of the Pan Midlands, Yorkshire and East of England (MYE) Practice Learning Group, which has worked closely with Health Education England and other Practice Learning groups including the Pan London Group, to develop the England Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document which was adopted by the University of Worcester and all other universities delivering Nursing Associate programmes. This group has developed a wide range of resources to support universities and their practice partners with the implementation of the new Practice Assessment Document and the introduction of the NMC standards for student supervision and assessment.

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 they take 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