



Queen Margaret University

EDINBURGH

Programme Specification

Where appropriate outcome statements have be referenced to the appropriate Benchmarking Statement (**BS**)

1	Awarding Institution	Queen Margaret University
2	Teaching Institution	Queen Margaret University
3	Professional body accreditation	Nursing and Midwifery Council, Health and Care Professions Council
4	Final Award	40 credits
	Subsidiary exit awards	n/a
5	Programme Title	Non-medical Prescribing
	UCAS code	V300
7	SCQF Level	10 & 11
8	Mode of delivery and duration	Part-time
9	Date of validation/review	10 July 2017 (NMC); 30 April 2019 (HCPC)

10. Educational Aims of the programme

The aim of the programme is to prepare NMAHPs to prescribe safely and competently within the context of their professional role as NMPs. The outcomes of the programme are derived from the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2006) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) prescribing standards (2013), but in addition students will be required to demonstrate achievement of associated clinical competencies set out by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS 2016). The RPS standards are used in the clinical assessment documentation within the portfolio as these are the competencies required by all prescribers. They are mapped in the documentation to the programme learning outcomes and NMC standards in the programme documentation.

11. Benchmark statements/professional and statutory body requirements covered by the programme

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL 2013. Standards for prescribing.

<http://www.hpcuk.org/assets/documents/10004160Standardsforprescribing.pdf>: HCPC

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL 2006. *Standards of proficiency for nurse and midwife prescribers*, London, NMC.

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL 2008. *Standards for Learning, Assessment in Practice*, London, NMC

12. Learning Outcomes of the Programme

On successful completion of the NMP programme, learners at SCQF Level 11 will be able to:

1. Critically appraise and utilise a range of evidence and decision-making tools and support systems to make person-centred prescribing decisions
2. In consultation with the person, apply history-taking and consultation skills to make appropriate person-centred clinical assessments of patients and clients across the lifespan and within their own sphere of practice
3. Critically appraise and apply knowledge of pharmacology in prescribing practice
4. Generate clinical management plans and/or prescriptions safely in partnership with the patient, appropriately and cost-effectively within a public health context
5. Critically evaluate the influences on prescribing practice and reflect on own practice
6. Drawing on relevant legal, ethical and professional frameworks make prescribing decisions within own sphere of competence and articulate own responsibility and professional accountability
7. Critically appraise the teamwork and communication networks involved in prescribing and effectively prescribe in a variety of contexts.

Only the level 11 module descriptor will be available to AHP students.

On successful completion of the NMP programme, learners at SCQF Level 10 will be able to:

1. Critically reflect on and utilise a range of evidence and decision-making tools and support systems to make person-centred prescribing decisions
2. In consultation with the person, apply history-taking and consultation skills to make appropriate person-centred, clinical assessments of patients and clients across the lifespan and within their own sphere of practice.
3. Understand and apply knowledge of pharmacology in prescribing practice
4. Generate clinical management plans and/or prescriptions safely in partnership with the patient,, appropriately and cost-effectively within a public health context
5. Critically discuss the influences on prescribing practice and reflect on own practice
6. Practice within relevant legal, ethical and professional frameworks and articulate own responsibility and professional accountability
7. Critically reflect on the teamwork and communication networks involved in prescribing and effectively prescribe in a variety of contexts.

The NMP programme has been developed considering the NMC Standards of Proficiency for Nurse and Midwife Prescribers (NMC 2006). The professional requirements are reflected in the module descriptors (Appendix 1).

The learning outcomes will enable the practitioner to:

- assess and consult with patient/clients, clients, parents and carers
- undertake a thorough history, including medication history and current medication (including over-the-counter, alternative and complementary health therapies) to inform diagnosis
- understand and apply the relevant legislation to the practice of nurse/midwife prescribing
- critically appraise, use sources of information/advice and decision support systems in prescribing practice
- understand the influences that can affect prescribing practice, and demonstrate your understanding by managing your prescribing practice in an ethical way
- understand and apply knowledge of drug actions in prescribing practice
- demonstrate an understanding of the roles and relationships of others involved in prescribing, supplying and administering medicines
- prescribe safely, appropriately and cost effectively

- practise within a framework of professional accountability and responsibility
- develop a clinical management plan within legislative requirements (supplementary prescribing only).

10. Teaching and learning methods and strategies

The learning, teaching and assessment strategy is framed by our core philosophical concepts of personhood, person-centredness, human valuing, healthful relations, human potential and development, supportive and enabling environments. More detail is included in the Person-centred Practice Framework. Central to this strategy is the need for learners to engage in learning experiences, a readiness to listen and explore; preparedness to be open to experiences and a resolve to keep going.

This requires an effective student-centred learning environment for learners and teachers based on intellectual space to learn, with an open andragogical relationship of shared values of honesty, trust, authenticity, respect and reciprocity. The environment should generate an ethos of engagement and criticality where students can explore and challenge theories, practices and different sources of knowledge creatively in an atmosphere of high challenge and high support. We will achieve this learning environment through a focus on 3 pillars of learning activity (Figure 4)



Figure 4: Three Pillars of Learning Activity

Embedded in these pillars are methods of co-creation and production, philosophical enquiry, transformative conversations and deep critical reflective practice. Students will be supported to challenge their thinking, values and beliefs; through the posing of complex activities and questions, and develop resilient and sustainable approaches to their learning and practice in response to these. Critical to this process is the use of diverse knowledge, scholarly inquiry processes and evidence-informed materials to engage and enliven the processes of learning. The engagement in life-long learning and co-creation of communities of learners and practice is integral to this process. Further study will increase breadth and depth of advancing and specialist practice nurturing both praxis and interaction with research and enquiry-based approaches to professional practice.

The programme is inquiry-based and themed. For example, students will be presented with a case around particular topics e.g prescribing for the older person or prescribing for the patient who has long-term conditions and/or whose condition is deteriorating. There will be learning packages developed by the team to support each topic area. During case studies, students will be encouraged to integrate themes running through the programme. These themes are consultation, decision making, therapy including referral; clinical pharmacology, including the effects of co-morbidity; prescribing in a team context, Influences on and psychology of prescribing; evidence-based practice and clinical governance in relation to nurse prescribing; legal policy and ethical aspect; professional accountability and responsibility; prescribing in a public health context. Through dialogue and facilitated critical reflection, students will be enabled to identify knowledge

gaps and supported to find ways to address these. Learning will be augmented by engaging in discussion threads on Hub@QMU. This will be a forum where further dialogue with others will help students to synthesise, apply and embody their emergent knowledge.

Weeks 1-9 The majority of face-to-face sessions with specialist teaching staff will take place during the first third of the programme. Students will be introduced to the themes of :

- Consultation, decision making, therapy including referral.
- Clinical Pharmacology, including the effects of co-morbidity.
- Prescribing in a team context
- Legal policy and ethical aspects
- Professional accountability and responsibility

This will give students the opportunity to get settled into the programme, understand university processes and the opportunities for support available. Particular attention will be paid to fostering effective working and supportive relationships between students, students and the teaching team, students and the support staff available throughout the university. The aim is to develop a supportive learning environment and a community of practice. These themes will continue to be threaded through the whole programme.

Practice requirements

During this time students will be expected to have negotiated a learning contract and learning plan with their DMP for their 12 days of clinical learning in their own workplace.

Weeks 9-15 Students will be expected to consolidate their learning of the above topics using the HUB@QMU and prepare for the written examination which will be mid-way through the programme.

Practice requirements: They will use protected time allocated by their employer for learning (and study).

Weeks 14-26 Students will have one face to face study day during this period. Content will address needs of the particular cohort and be negotiated with the teaching team ahead of the event.

During this time students will continue to be supported by Hub@QMU. As students continue with their experience in practice, they will continue to engage with theoretical content around:

- Influences on and psychology of prescribing
- Evidence-based practice and clinical governance in relation to nurse prescribing
- Prescribing in a public health context

Practice requirements: Students will learn in their own workplace and again using protected study time for on-line learning, they will be expected to build up a portfolio that demonstrates the achievement of the learning outcomes and practice competencies of the programme. This will be through the application of prescribing theory to practice and the provision of rationale for prescribing decisions and reflective practice.

14 Assessment strategies

Assessment strategies are designed to meet professional requirements whilst reflecting the programme philosophy. Assessment methods are designed to recognise the process of learning as well as the product of learning.

Students will be issued with their NMP prescribing portfolio at the beginning of the programme which offers guidance for their learning experiences in practice. They will present evidence of their learning within a portfolio. Assessment of the portfolio is 70% of the final mark. Within the portfolio there are three parts:

Part 1: Required Clinical Assessment Documentation

Part 2: Reflective accounts and other evidence of prescribing practice

Part 3: compilation of a core formulary

The portfolio will:

- demonstrate the achievement of the learning outcomes and practice competencies of the programme.
- prescribing in a range of scenarios
- Evidences numeracy skills,
- Demonstrates safe, competent prescription generation

Further information is available in the Portfolio of Evidence document.

Additionally, there is a written final examination, again reflecting professional requirements that consists of a total of twenty, short answer and multi-choice questions (MCQ) to test pharmacological knowledge and its application to practice. Students must achieve a minimum 80% pass. Additionally, numerical assessment within the context of prescribing practice is also included. Students must achieve a 100% pass of this element. Both the portfolio and the examination must be passed.

15. Programme structures and features, curriculum units (modules), credits and award requirements (including any periods of placement)

The programme is 26 weeks and will be delivered in semester 2 in the first instance, but if demand is such that it run more often, it will run in semester 1 & 2. A minimum of 12 days will be face-to face in university. Students will be assess at the mid-point in the programme when they will sit an examination. The portfolio will be submitted during week 26. There are a minimum of 12 days supervised learning in practice equates to 12 x 7.5 hours (6.5 hours excluding breaks) days. The NMP programme has the equivalent of 26 days directed learning and assessment. 12 days of this will be facilitated at Queen Margaret University.

Weeks 1 - 9	Weeks 10 & 11	Weeks 12-18	Week 19 - 26
1 day per week teaching in university (9 days)	2 days holiday	3 days facilitated study in university (3 days)	1 optional day in university (1 day)

Learning is person-centred and allows flexibility of learning within the students’ specific clinical field. The first third of the programme is where most theoretical content is delivered. This is augmented by opportunities to engage in a range of methodologies that will enable students to get the most of their experience during the programme. Engagement with the programme team will continue throughout the duration, mainly using Hub@QMU. Students will enjoy a range of teaching and learning experiences that draw on theory and practice and give them opportunities to engage with self and others to develop as person-centred prescribers. As fitting with the Person-centred Practice Framework philosophy, students are encouraged to be active participants, and take responsibility for their own learning. Through these approaches, the intention is to develop a community of learners and practice and students’ learning will be grounded in research and scholarship. It will be demonstrated through praxis, prescribing competence and practice development.

Academic credit gained in this programme can be used as part of the PG Dip / BSc(Hons) Person-centred Practice (District Nursing) or MSc Person-centred Practice.

16. Criteria for admission

Candidates:

- will normally be graduates with evidence of recent academic study.
- must be registered nurses, midwives or Allied Health Professionals.
- must work in the defined clinical areas that will meet the requirements for NMP
- must have identified the support of a DMP
- must hold a post that involves working with patients and/or service-users and have the support from Employer
- have PVG clearance

Entry criteria for each professional body will be adhered to.

For nurses, midwives and health visitors, NMC entry criteria apply.

The criteria are:

- Candidates must be a registered first level nurse, midwife and/or specialist community public health nurse
- Candidates must have at least three years' experience as a practising nurse, midwife or specialist community public health nurse and be deemed competent by your employer to undertake the programme.
- Of these three years, the year immediately preceding application to the programme must have been in the clinical field in which they intend to prescribe, eg. neonates, mental health. Part-time workers must have practised for a sufficient period to be deemed competent by their employer

For AHP's the criteria are:

- Candidates must be a HCPC registered chiropodist/podiatrist, paramedic, physiotherapist, radiographer or dietitian.
- Candidates must have at least three years post-qualification experience in the clinical area in which they will be prescribing
- Be working at an advanced practitioner or equivalent level.
- Be able to demonstrate how they reflect on their own performance and take responsibility for their own Continuing Professional Development (CPD) including development of networks for support, reflection and learning.
- All candidates must provide a health and character declaration, declare if they have been convicted of any criminal offence or issued with a formal caution, and declare if they have been subject to any adverse determination that their fitness to practise is impaired by a professional or regulatory body (including those responsible for regulating or licensing a health and social care profession).

In addition, all candidates must have written confirmation from:

- Their employer of their support for them to undertake the preparation programme.
- The programme lead about their selection on to the preparation of prescribers education programme. This should also be given to candidates and their employer.
- A DMP who meets NMC and HCPC eligibility criteria for medical supervision of nurse or AHP prescribers and who has agreed to provide the required term of supervised practice.

There are specific requirements of self employed applicants and those out with partner NHS partners. There will be a guarantee of clinical supervision from an appropriately qualified supervisor that meets DMP requirements.

1. They will have 3 years recent clinical experience in the same field of practice as the student.
2. Be a general practitioner or a specialist registrar, clinical assistant or a consultant within a NHS Trust or other NHS employer.
3. Have the support of the employing organisation to act as the Designated Medical Practitioner who will be able to facilitate a minimum of 90 hours supervision, support and learning opportunities.
4. Have some experience or training in teaching and / or supervising in practice.
5. Work with the student but can be objective in assessing and verifying their competence.

Applicants must produce evidence:

- Of competence to take a history, undertake a clinical assessment, and diagnose in their area of practice. Evidence can be in the form of continuing professional development, or successful completion of an accredited programme of study within 3 years of applying for the prescribing programme
- Of one satisfactory professional and one academic reference from their current post and most recent academic course.
- Of an up to date protection of vulnerable groups certificate in accordance with NMC circular 29/20076
- Of a self declaration that they are of good health and good character
- that the student will work within a robust clinical governance framework in private prescribing practice.
- That their learning in practice environment is suitable for the candidate to observe and contribute to prescribing in action. This will generally require a visit to the clinical area by a member of the programme team and completion of practice placement audit.

17. Support for students and their learning

QMU is committed to meeting the needs of learners with disabilities. All applicants are asked to declare any illness or disability during the application process. If they are offered a place then they are invited to an appointment with the Disability Advisor as early as possible to discuss their requirements. Should this arise during the programme, students should seek pastoral support from the PAT. They can be signposted for appropriate support.

Applicants will not be discriminated against and reasonable adjustment will be made in accordance with the QMU policy and anti-discriminatory laws.

The University will take appropriate steps to ensure that its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001), and extended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005), are enacted in a way that promotes the independence of disabled students and staff and which tackles and eliminates discrimination against such individuals. The University will also be guided by the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice: Student with Disabilities (1999) to embed inclusivity and equality of provision for all students and staff, and with due consideration to the University's duties (including general and specific duties) under the Equality Act 2010.

Opportunities are offered to students to become student representatives on the programme student/staff consultative committee and also the programme committee. As is usual with part time mature learners who have commitments external to postgraduate degree study, uptake of these opportunities is often limited and other strategies are offered to enable the student voice to be heard. One way in which this has been addressed is by providing an electronic medium for student comments (anonymous) throughout the duration of each semester.

Personal Academic Tutors

All students are allocated a personal academic tutor (PAT) who offers support and academic advice on the module choices, academic work and other support services. Personal Academic Tutors with due regard will be allocated for student undertaking the programme with a professional outcome. Students are encouraged to meet with their PAT once a semester and an agreed record is maintained of all meetings. Students may also consult their module co-ordinators on an individual basis for information about specific modules. PATs are allocated by the programme leaders and school office who takes cognisance of the relevant discipline, experience and knowledge of the PAT team in making decisions particularly for issues of culture, equality and diversity. Nurses are usually offered a PAT who is also a nurse to meet NMC requirements.

QMU programmes normally provide the following student support:

- a. Personal Academic Tutors
- b. Support in practice
- c. Student handbooks
- d. Access to Student Learning Services, Library and IT support
- e. Access to Student Services: careers, counselling, disability advice
- f. Representation through Student-Staff Committees

18. Quality Assurance arrangements

This programme is governed by QMU's quality assurance procedures. See the QMU website for more detail: <http://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/>

The External Examiner who has current tenure for the PG Dip /BSc(Hons) Person-centred Practice (District Nursing) programme will act as external examiner for nurses and midwives. For AHP students, The external examiner will normally be an HCPC registered AHP and in addition will normally hold an independent prescribing qualification.