

# Community Nursing Specialist (District Nursing)

PgDip Apprenticeship



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# Award-winning degree apprenticeships

Manchester Metropolitan University is one of the most popular universities in the UK, currently educating around 43,000 students (HESA 22-23). The University takes its responsibility for creating work-ready graduates very seriously and maintains close industry and sector links.

Our apprenticeships blend development of best-practice, with academic underpinning and theory. They equip our apprentices with the skills to ensure they are ready to take on the business challenges of tomorrow and make their mark. We develop our programmes in partnership with employers, to meet the needs of healthcare providers and service users.

As pioneers of degree apprenticeships, we have become industry leaders, allowing us to build unrivalled partnerships with some of the UK's largest employers and innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).



\* Nursing Times Post Registration Education Provider of the year 2023. Shortlisted for Apprenticeship Provider of the Year 2024.

**3,300**  
apprentices  
on 18 programmes

Leading university  
provider  
of degree apprenticeships

RateMyApprenticeship  
Awards 2019 – 2023

**92%**

merit or distinction  
at EPA in 2022

**130+**

apprentices  
recognised  
at regional and  
national awards

Winner

University  
of the Year

Multicultural Apprenticeship  
Awards 2022 and 2023

**600+**  
Employer  
partners

★ Rated ★  
'Outstanding'

by Ofsted 2022

Training Provider  
of the Year

North West Apprenticeship  
Awards 2023

# About the programme

## Community Nursing Specialist (District Nursing) PgDip Apprenticeship

The Community Nursing Specialist (District Nursing) PgDip Apprenticeship is an innovative blend of higher education and work-based learning, aimed at developing employees into competent and confident specialist nurses.

Developed with employers, this 13-month programme has been designed to meet the needs of service users in the 21st century. Supporting and caring people of all ages is increasingly being delivered in the community, in people's homes and in settings close to their homes. The programme prepares apprentices for the changing face of community nursing and the needs of service users in the future. Apprentices will strengthen their leadership attributes; become skilful specialist practitioners; and learn how to lead and bring about change in their practice environments.

The programme is designed to provide apprentices with the required knowledge, skills and behaviours to work as a Specialist District Nurse. It enables apprentices to obtain registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) as a Specialist Practitioner - District Nursing with integrated Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (V300). This programme was approved by the NMC in 2024.

### The qualification

Apprentices will qualify with a Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Practitioner - District Nursing with integrated Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (V300).



This programme is endorsed by the Queen's Nursing Institute.

### Who is the course for?

This Level 7 programme is suitable for existing nurses looking to further their knowledge and career in caring for service users with a wide range of health conditions. This new specialist community nursing qualification incorporates the NMC standards of proficiency that will support nurses working in the community to advance their clinical, managerial, research and educative practice. This will enable greater clinical autonomy, independent decision-making and leadership in complex and high-risk situations for the benefit of people and services. The programme prepares them to develop their community nursing roles for the future as their roles require a higher level of clinical autonomy.

In their daily work, District Nurses interact with service users, carers and relatives as well as a wide variety of health and social care professionals including GPs, social workers and hospital staff. District Nurses work with adults of all ages and communities. They work across numerous different organisations and settings, for example; primary care, social care, third sector organisations, hospitals including mental health hospitals, hospices, prisons and other community services to ensure that service users receive the right care, at the right time by the right nurse.

District Nurses will be responsible for their own work as an autonomous, independent practitioners, while contributing and leading collaborative work with other health and care professionals. In addition, the occupation will be responsible for a caseload of service users and the team responsible for delivering care to that caseload.



### **Core skills, knowledge and behaviours**

Apprenticeships develop a core set of skills, knowledge and behaviours relevant to the programme specialism. On successful completion of the programme, apprentices will be able to:

- Provide accountable, autonomous professional care in partnership with service users.
- Promote health and wellbeing.
- Prevent ill health.
- Assess people's abilities and needs.
- Plan community nursing care.
- Provide and evaluate evidence-based nursing care.
- Lead, support and manage teams.
- Lead improvements in safety and quality of care.
- Coordinate care for service users across different services and agencies.
- Provide system leadership to enhance communication and decision making.

# Creating a supportive environment

In order to create an environment where apprentices will be able to achieve successful outcomes, both academically and within their organisations, the University has put in place a wide range of support.

## Apprentices

### Dedicated Skills Coach

A dedicated enhanced Skills Coach will conduct termly reviews with the apprentice and employer, advise on University regulations and procedures, and provide pastoral support. Skills coaches for this programme are all qualified District Nurses.

### Personal learning plan

Where additional learning support requirements are identified, they will be met through a Personal Learning Plan.

### University services

Full access to University services – including disability services, wellbeing, the library, IT services and sports facilities.

### Online study environment

Study materials can be accessed 24/7 via our online study environment, Moodle. Our course is designed to support learners who live and work outside of the north-west. Moodle enables apprentices to access reading lists, download journal articles, contribute to online discussion groups, email tutors, listen to podcasts and submit assignments.

## Cutting-edge facilities

The Faculty of Health and Education is based in the state-of-the-art Brooks building.

The Brooks building hosts outstanding specialist facilities across all areas of health, psychology, social care, and education. This includes a simulation suite, nursing ward, VR room and skills rooms to simulate a health and social care setting.

### University Library

The main University Library is located on the All Saints Campus and is open 24/7 during the academic year.

The Library provides access to a wide range of books, texts, journals, and business information and statistics. It also runs a number of workshops for mature students on study and research skills.

Many of the Library's resources are available online. For example, apprentices can search the Library catalogue, renew and reserve books, and download journal articles and research information.



## Employers, practice assessors and practice supervisors

### Academic Support

- The programme lead and academic assessor is on hand to support employers during the recruitment process and is present at apprentice interviews. Additionally, the academic assessor conducts annual meetings to support the apprentice and practice staff supporting apprentices.
- Practice Assessors and Practice Supervisors are also supported through regular forums to tailor content and delivery as well as provide support whilst they have apprentices on programme.

### Progress reviews

Our enhanced Skills Coaches support Practice Assessors and Practice Supervisors through regular progress reviews to set, monitor and evaluate apprentice objectives and targets.

### Apprenticeships team support

The Manchester Met Apprenticeships Team is available to support employers throughout the apprenticeships process, including:

- Holding meetings with staff and managers to understand operational challenges and training needs.
- A dedicated account manager, providing a single point of contact with the University.
- Working in partnership to tailor content and delivery.
- Sending regular reports of apprentice progress.

# Delivery and structure

Based in the state-of-the-art Brooks building, apprentices have access to specialist facilities across all areas of health. Our innovative, vibrant courses reflect new and emerging research ideologies.

## Delivery

Delivered via a combination of blended learning (including face-to-face sessions, virtual sessions and directed study) and placements. Placements are based in the practice area and supported by Practice Assessors and Practice Supervisors as per the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2023) Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment. In line with NMC requirements, the programme is 50% theory and 50% practice. It is delivered by a core programme team with a strong focus on supporting apprentices across all aspects of the programme.

## Assessment

The units on this apprenticeship will be assessed through a wide range of methods that are designed to meet a range of learning styles.

As well as academic assessment, apprentices will complete an ePortfolio to record their work-based development.





# Programme content

## Advancing Practice using research

Learners are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the research process, apply related skills to an area of practice and make valid proposals regarding the value of knowledge gained.

## Assessing Adults in Specialist Practice

Equips learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to take a clinical history, perform a clinical examination of the main body systems and arrive at a clinically reasoned differential diagnosis using a red flag approach.

## Empowering Populations to Enhance Health and Wellbeing

This unit explores factors that affect health, how this influences work to promote health in general, and how this might shape learners own practice.

## Independent Study Project in Specialist practice

Learners who already have V300 will undertake an independent study unit to develop their research skills for the advancement of professional knowledge and practice development. As research underpins all specialist practice, school nurses, health visitors and district nurses will be taught together. However, each pathway will be guided throughout the unit to focus on their own area of specialist of practice.

## Influencing District Nursing

Learners to explore the leadership role of the District Nurse in relation to care management, provision, and service development. It offers opportunities for learners to examine the evidence base of district nursing interventions, pertinent to the management of care for patients with long-term/life limiting conditions, end of life and mental wellbeing and to explore the role of the District Nurse in service development/innovation.

## Non-Medical Prescribing

This unit prepares suitably qualified nurses (NMC registrants\*) to become safe and competent independent/supplementary prescribers. It enables nurses to be recommended to the NMC for the V300 qualification. Learners who already have V300, will be required to undertake an Independent Study Unit

All elements of assessment must be passed in order to pass the unit and the apprenticeship.

\*NMC registrants: all applicants must meet the admission and selection criteria in the NMC (2018) Standards for Prescribing Programmes.

## Responding to Contemporary Issues

Learners will explore contemporary issues of relevance to district nursing practice. It locates district nursing work within a context of evolving models of service delivery and examines District Nurses' contributions to the implementation of government and professional policy and initiatives.

## Specialist Practice of District Nursing

Working closely with their practice assessor/practice supervisor, learners will achieve the knowledge, skills, and clinical competencies to practise safely and effectively their area of community specialist practice.

## Quality Leadership in Action

Learners will critically explore how specialist practitioners enhance their own practice, develop quality services and effectively lead. As leadership underpins all specialist practice, school nurses, health visitors and district nurses will be taught together. However, each pathway will be guided throughout the unit to focus on their own area of specialist practice.

# Application information

## Entry requirements

It is a requirement of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) that those training to become a District Nurse are already registered nurses on Part 1 of the NMC register.

## Level 2 English and maths requirements

Applicants must be able to evidence Level 2 English and Maths, prior to starting the programme. This could be Functional Skills Level 2 or GCSEs grades 9 - 4/A\* - C.

## How to apply

Once an employer has confirmed that they will support their apprentice(s) on the programme, applicants will be asked to submit an online application. The application form enables us to build up a picture of the candidate, their experience and the knowledge and skill areas they are looking to develop.

## Workplace considerations

Workplace infrastructure should be sufficient to fully support the apprentice in working as a trainee District Nurse. Apprentices are required to have a Practice Assessor and Practice Supervisor for their time in practice as well as for NMP, who are able to assess clinical competency in practice and support the apprentice to develop as a competent District Nurse.

## Off-the-job training

Apprenticeship funding rules state that apprentices should spend at least 6 hours per week of their working time on developing relevant skills, knowledge and behaviours. However, apprentices on this programme must be supported by an employer in line with the NMC Standards for Proficiency, which require a balance of 50% practice and 50% theory. Learning time should be protected and apprentices must not have their own caseload.

Apprentices must undertake University tuition, online learning, and assessments in practice as per NMC standards (2022).

## Employer next steps

If you would like to discuss how this programme could work for your organisation, or if you have any further questions, please contact our dedicated Apprenticeships Team.

**E:** [apprenticeships-employer@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships-employer@mmu.ac.uk)

**T:** 0161 247 3720

As part of the course offer at Manchester Met, I was able to study a clinical diagnostic module which included certification in Non-Medical Prescribing (V300), which is something fairly new in District Nursing. This made my cohort feel like trailblazers, and for our organisation we've been able to upskill ourselves and use that to impact positively on our District Nursing service, the care provision we can offer to our patients and the support we can provide to staff in our team.

The apprenticeship was an amazing opportunity; I loved every minute of it. At the very end of the course lots of work needed to be done, lots of submissions, project work and preparation for the End Point Assessment, and it feels like it all just comes together at once. So naturally I did feel a bit overwhelmed at that time, particularly as I also have three children at home, so balancing work, study and family was challenging. However, my employer and my university Skills Coach were fully supportive, and when I raised my concerns, we came up with a plan to support me through the final push to the finish line.

Given those challenges and the support I received, I was really delighted and privileged to be awarded with a Queen's Nursing Institute Phillip Goodeve-Docker Memorial Prize for Outstanding Achievement.



The degree apprenticeship offers us as District Nurses a really wide spectrum of opportunity within the year to establish strategic relationships with partners, other employers, other trusts within the area, and I was then able to then enhance the development of our service in Bridgewater with that knowledge and those networks. And that's absolutely pivotal with regards to positive impact on patient care, patient safety and the development of staff. I am looking forward to passing on my new knowledge to team members and the current apprentices as I move forward with my role.

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**Jane Roberts**  
Community Nursing Specialist  
(District Nursing) Apprentice  
Bridgewater Community NHS Trust

## Get in touch

Our growing portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate apprenticeships include programmes in the following areas:

- Creative and digital technology
- Business, HR and management
- Science
- Health and social care

If you think one of our programmes could work for your organisation, please get in touch. We will be happy to provide further information and guide you through the next steps.

### Contact us:

#### Apprenticeships team

E: [apprenticeships-employer@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships-employer@mmu.ac.uk)

T: 0161 247 3720

W: [mmu.ac.uk/apprenticeships](http://mmu.ac.uk/apprenticeships)

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