



**INFORMATION PACK FOR APPLICANTS**

**BSc (Hons)  
Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing(SPQ)  
District Nursing (DN Pathway)**

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for Expression of Interest for a commissioned place on the above course.

**It is essential that you read this applicant pack in full prior to applying; this will help you complete your application form. It should be noted that the location of this post will not be fixed. In the interest of the service the post holder may be required to change location within the Trust during or after completion of the course.**

I would also wish to take this opportunity to draw your attention particularly to the personnel specification which details the skills, abilities and experience necessary to successfully undertake the requirements of this course. The criteria for short-listing will be derived from the Personnel Specification section and the shortlisting of candidates for interview will be based on the information contained against each criterion in the job specific questionnaire for each candidate. It is therefore essential that all candidates demonstrate through each criterion how and to what extent their experience and qualities are relevant to the personnel specification. Please note that all sections of the application form must be fully completed – CV's will not be accepted. Candidates should also note that any attempt to influence the panel's decision either directly or indirectly will result in disqualification.

To apply, please complete **the EOI application and your Line Managers 'confirmation of support letter'** (both of which are in Applicant pack). The closing date for receipt of completed form is **28<sup>th</sup> April 2021. All correspondence will be made via email; therefore, it is important that applicants continuously check emails including your junk mail to avoid missing important correspondence.** Candidates will be advised of the outcome of their application at each stage of the process (to the email address provided), once short-listing and subsequent interview has been completed.

Please ensure you fully understand the study requirements detailed in the BHSCT Assistance to Study Policy.(link below)

<http://intranet.belfasttrust.local/policies/Documents/Study%20Assistance%20Policy.pdf>

The programme is funded by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.  
**Confirmation of funding for the Specialist Nursing - District Nursing Option Training Programme 2021/22 by the DHSSPSNI is still pending. Please note that if funding for the Training Programme cannot be fulfilled the number of positions available may be reduced.**

If you have any further queries in relation to the SPQ District Nursing, please contact:

Trust Area	Contact Person	Contact Details
BHSCT	Oonagh McGurnaghan (NDL) Community Health	<a href="mailto:Oonagh.mcgurnaghan@belfsatrust.hscni.net">Oonagh.mcgurnaghan@belfsatrust.hscni.net</a> Mob. 07563 420389

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## **SECTION ONE**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

#### **Ulster University**

#### **BSc (Hons)/Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing (SPQ) District Nursing (DN Pathway)**

##### **Overview**

The Post Graduate Diploma Specialist Nursing (with pathways) prepares Nurses for Leadership roles in Specialist Nursing.

##### **Summary**

The Post Graduate Diploma Specialist Nursing (with pathways) is aimed at preparing Nurses for Leadership roles in District Nursing.

The programme leads to more than one qualification. You will obtain a diploma from Ulster University and a professional qualification from the United Kingdom Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). District Nursing students also obtain a further professional qualification in Nurse Prescribing. The course details can be accessed online from the Ulster University website.

##### **About**

The term, 'Specialist Nursing' refers to, the exercising of higher levels of judgment and decision-making in relation to the nursing care of individuals, families and communities. As a future Leader you must display this higher level of decision-making across four areas; clinical practice, care and programme management, clinical practice development and clinical practice leadership.

At Ulster we focus on developing you as a Leader and help you achieve academic and professional competence in all these areas. This programme is a 50-50 programme, meaning that 50% of the programme is university-based and 50% based in the practice learning setting. In the Practice Learning setting, you will be allocated a Practice Assessor. The Practice Assessor who has the SPQ DN Pathway and is a Leader in Clinical Care will supervise you throughout the Programme. He/she will assess you and sign off your competencies prior to recording the professional qualification with the NMC. You will also be allocated to a Pathway Leader who will supervise your academic development and provide support throughout.

The BSc (Hons) Specialist Nursing (with Pathways) is a recognised academic and professional qualification across Europe. The quality of the education is high as is the academic expectation on you as a student. You will receive the latest ideas on academic writing, research and critical analysis. The quality of the learning resources at Ulster University are very high and the support of students is also good

The academic component of the programme consists of a four 30-credit modules.

- Research Module
- Leadership Module
- + Two Specialist Focus Modules relative to specialist practice- District Nursing
- District Nursing students have an additional 20 credits to complete in order to evidence outcomes related to Nurse Prescribing.

## **Attendance**

**Full-time students** are expected to attend the University for at least 2 days per week, with the remaining time allocated to Practice Learning. Full-time students are normally time-tabled for Mondays and Fridays although this is subject to change.

**All students** are expected to attend all classes associated with the programme and be punctual and regular in attendance. Attendance will be monitored both at the University and in the Practice Learning setting and Employers are informed of all absences.

## **Start date**

September 2021

## **Modules**

Courses are continually reviewed to take advantage of new teaching approaches and developments in research, industry and the professions. Please be aware that modules may change for your year of entry. The exact modules available and their order may vary depending on course updates, staff availability, timetabling and student demand. Please contact the course team for the most up to date module list.

- ***Evidence and Research Underpinning Nursing Practice***

This module provides students with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to review evidence, in particular research findings on which to justify or change current practice, and use certain research techniques. Teaching methods will comprise introductory lectures and workshops. Assessment is by coursework and equates to a research-based dissertation in an honors degree.

- ***Specialist Nursing Leadership.***

This module aims to facilitate specialist nursing students develop knowledge and skills in leadership, enabling them gain a wider strategic understanding in order to become effective leaders within an interdisciplinary team. Learning and teaching methods include lectures, seminars and an opportunity to explore personal leadership in a practice learning setting. Assessment is by 100% examination.

- ***The Managerial Role of the District Nurse***

This module provides District Nursing students with the theory and evidence underpinning the professional role of the District Nurse in the context of management and organisation of care and service improvement to effectively manage patient care and contribute to the development of the district nursing service. This module will relate to other modules within the programme. This module is 100% coursework.

- **Community Practitioner Nurse Prescribing V100**

This programme will help to prepare Specialist Practitioner students to undertake an active role in Community Nurse Prescribing within their area of practice. The legislative framework and professional and ethical principles which underpin prescribing practice are explored. Assessment is by a combination of coursework, examination and practice assessment document.

- **Specialist Practice Assessment Document**

All Specialist Nursing Practice Programmes at Ulster require students to complete a 75-day (600 hrs) practice learning period where they work under the supervision of a Nursing Midwifery Council approved Practice Supervisor and a Practice Assessor plus an Academic Assessor. This period of Practice Learning constitutes 50% of the programme at both undergraduate and post graduate level. Furthermore this practice learning period runs alongside the theoretical part of the programme, one year for full time students and two years for part-time students. Course regulations state that the academic award is wholly dependent on completion of the Specialist Practice Assessment document.

- **Fundamental Care in District Nursing**

This module provides District Nursing Students with the knowledge and skills required to deliver effective care to those people with long term conditions, acute, palliative and end of life illnesses, their families and informal carers. The module content reflects the specialist role of the District Nurse and is underpinned by research, clinical guidelines, policies and strategies in the delivery of person-centred care. The students increasing knowledge base and clinical placement experience will facilitate critical thinking through reflection. This module will relate to other modules within the programme. Assessment is by 100% coursework

## **Teaching and learning assessment**

Teaching methods on the programmes are innovative and interactive. Clinical experts and Users of Health Services and/or Independent Sector are invited to teach students about current practice, developments in the field and personal experiences of specialist nursing services.

Seminars enable students to take responsibility for leading discussions on practice based issues and reviewing the current literature in their field. Tutorial sessions enable small group work to be carried out that facilitates a specific focus for particular specialisms. Skills classes, role plays, use of table-top scenario simulation (including computerised manikin) and video play back are used where appropriate to develop skills in a range of professional interventions.

All of the above methods encourage active student participation and empower individual students to recognise that as experienced nurses each have a wealth of experience that can be utilised to illustrate the points being made in classes.

Assessment is seen as crucial part of the learning process. A range of assessment methods including OSCEs, Reflective and Academic Essays, Case Studies and Portfolio are used. Patients and families are involved in the assessment process.

## **Exemptions and transferability**

Due to the professional requirements of this programme, normally no exemptions are permitted. In saying this, District Nursing students who have recently completed the V100 Nurse Prescribing and are active prescribers are permitted to apply for exemption.

## **Career options**

Graduates of this programme take up posts as Specialist Nurses. Most are in Team **Leadership** positions. There is 100% Employability associated with this programme.

## **Work placement**

All students must complete 75 days Practice Learning in an approved setting. Students must have direct interaction with patients and families during this period. Supervision by an expert Specialist Nurse (**Sign-Off Mentor**) will occur during Practice Learning. A Specialist Practice Qualification (SPQ) Assessment Document is required to evidence achievement of professional outcomes.

## **Professional recognition**

Recognised by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) for the purpose of recording as Specialist Practice Qualification (SPQ) (adult)

## **Annual Leave whilst on the Programme**

**NB: This is a full time course of study, you should not plan any leave between 13th September 2021 and the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022.**

You will be informed of the timetable and academic holidays as soon as you commence the programme.

## **Contact Person**

Who will I contact if I have any queries about **the university information** provided in this guide?

Course Director: Hilary Thompson Email: [hs.thompson@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:hs.thompson@ulster.ac.uk)

## SECTION TWO

### PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

#### **BSc (Hons) / Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing (SPQ) District Nursing (DN) Pathway)**

**A shortlist of candidates for interview will be prepared solely based on the information contained against each criterion in the job specific questionnaire below. It is therefore essential that all candidates demonstrate through each criterion how and to what extent their experience and qualities are relevant to this post.**

**Essential Criteria for applicants to the Specialist Nursing (SPQ) District Nursing (DN) Pathway programme is as follows:**

1. Currently registered as a RN 1 Adult Nurse Level 1 of the NMC live Register.  
Clearly stating NMC PIN number
2. Have a BSc Hons/ BSc degree in Nursing or a health related area (postgraduate study).

**OR**

A Diploma of Higher Education in nursing, which is equivalent to 240 academic credits.

**OR**

Applicants without a Diploma of Higher Education in nursing must have successfully completed a portfolio of evidence for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), which demonstrates the achievement of all Level 4 and Level 5 learning outcomes.

**Please note this APL portfolio must be successfully completed and assessed by Ulster University at time of application.**

3. International students must achieve a score of 7 overall and 7 on each sub-scale on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test of proficiency in English.
4. <sup>1</sup>Equivalent of at least two years' full-time experience in the last five years, (excluding courses), of working in a clinical area as registered nurse at time of application.
5. Applicants who have registered for or completed a DoH post-registration funded specialist practice programme or MSC professional Nursing Graduate entry programme within the past two years are not eligible to apply. This exclusion does not apply to applicants who may have attended a short course or stand-alone modules.
6. Hold a full current driving license (valid in the UK) and have access to a car at the closing date or have \*access to a form of transport which will permit the applicant to carry out the duties of the post in full. (\*This relates only to any person who has declared that they have a disability, which debars them from driving).

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<sup>1</sup> This is to ensure equality of opportunity for all staff

**SECTION THREE**

**Expression of Interest**

Please detail below how you meet the Essential Criteria  
(detailed in **SECTION TWO**)

**Candidate Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Present Job Role/Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail for correspondence:** \_\_\_\_\_



## SECTION FOUR

### **Letter of Confirmation of Support of Application for secondment to BSc (Hons) Post Graduate Diploma in Specialist Nursing (SPQ) District Nursing (DN Pathway)**

The candidates' line manager must provide the following:-

1. **Provide evidence in writing below** - that the applicant proposed for Secondment for the above course has the potential and ability to undertake this course of study and progress towards a District Nursing Sister/Charge Nurse post.
2. **Provide written support below** of Secondment for 10-month placement following successful interview.
3. **Detail below** any concerns of practice or other relevant information.

**CANDIDATES MUST SUBMIT THIS COMPLETED FORM WITH THEIR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Candidate Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Line Manager) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Band \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please note 75% backfill is available at end of financial year for this secondment\*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<b>Question:</b>	Am I eligible to apply?
<b>Answer:</b>	See essential criteria enclosed.
<b>Question:</b>	I will not have had 2 years post registration experience until the course starts in September. Can I apply?
<b>Answer:</b>	You need 2 years post registration experience at time of application.
<b>Question:</b>	Am I guaranteed a Specialist Practice post at the end of the course?
<b>Answer:</b>	Following successful completion of the course candidates will be expected to apply for a post as a District Nursing Sister/Charge Nurse.
<b>Question:</b>	I do not have a diploma in nursing but have a lot of stand-alone modules can I apply?
<b>Answer:</b>	<p>A Diploma of Higher Education in nursing, which is equivalent to 240 academic credit, is required.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Applicants without a Diploma of Higher Education in nursing must have successfully completed a portfolio of evidence for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) which demonstrates the achievement of all Level 4 and Level 5 learning outcomes. <b>Please note this APL portfolio must be successfully completed and assessed by Ulster University at time of application.</b></p>