



Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine and Social Care
FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Nursing)

Healthcare Assistant Practitioner Higher Apprenticeship (Nursing)

Frequently Asked Questions

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I. Introduction

We have written this Handbook to give you more information about the **FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Nursing)** and what it involves.

ARU's Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine and Social Care (HEMS) works with healthcare partners over an extensive geographical region in the east of England, developing and delivering practical, relevant learning solutions that meet the short and longer term demands for skills within the UK Healthcare sector.

ARU has delivered this course as a Higher Apprenticeship since September 2017, following the generic Level 5 Healthcare Assistant Practitioner Apprenticeship standard. Ours is specific to a Nursing pathway in order to support partner employers in 'growing their own' Registered Nurses through the Apprenticeship Levy.

The FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Nursing) aims to enable you to:

- Develop an understanding of the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes and attributes required of a health care practitioner when delivering safe and effective person-centred nursing care
- Act with integrity and adhere to professional values
- Competently practise fundamental health care skills with knowledge and understanding of associated evidence based theory
- Lay the foundations for a career as a registered Nurse, with field-specific modules in either Adult, Child or Mental Health Nursing in Level 5.

Successful completion of the course will also offer you a seamless transition into the final part of the BSc (Hons) Nursing (Degree Apprenticeship) to become a Registered Nurse in Adult, Child or Mental Health with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (subject to the support of your employer).

Jo Brown
Degrees at Work, Anglia Ruskin University

2. Is this degree for me?

The **FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Nursing) Higher Apprenticeship** is designed to blend learning with employment, and so you can apply the skills you've learned immediately to your work. Mapped to the Healthcare Assistant Practitioner Apprenticeship Standard at Level 5, successful completion of the FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Nursing) will equip you to work as highly skilled assistant practitioner within your organisation.

Whether you are a school or college leaver, level 3-4 apprentice or are an existing staff member at Band 2/3 looking to progress your career, this course is for you.

3. Why Anglia Ruskin University?

Anglia Ruskin University is based in Cambridge and Chelmsford and is one of the foremost universities in the UK for work-based learning. We have developed teaching methods and specialist teaching teams that will enable students to learn in a dynamic and supportive environment.

The university has a history of providing innovative courses, and an established reputation for delivering relevant and highly practicable learning programmes for working people. We work with clients such as Harrods, Barclays Bank, Specsavers, the RAF and the NHS to design work-based training that develops their employees' skills and enhances their contribution to their workplace.

In total there are 55 universities in England offering Nursing Degrees. In the Nursing Times *Best and Worst universities for Nursing*, Anglia Ruskin are rated the highest in the East of England.

In 2016 the Government introduced the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to recognise and reward excellent teaching, learning environment and student outcomes in UK higher education providers. Anglia Ruskin are delighted to have been awarded Silver.

You'll study in an exciting, modern faculty which has strong links with regional, national and international organisations, including healthcare trusts, social services, local and regional authorities, schools and academic institutions.

4. How will I benefit from the course?

You will engage with the concepts of reflective practice and evidence based practice to inform the delivery of safe and effective person-centred nursing care and develop the skills and attributes required for inter-professional team working, maintaining professional relationships, and acknowledge the contribution of a collaborative and integrated approach to care; recognising service users as partners in their care.

5. How is the course taught?

The course is a work-based blended learning course with tutor-led, self-led and practice-based learning. You will be supported in your work setting and developing within your existing role.

Emphasis is on you applying theory to practice and vice versa, using a range of learning approaches including; face to face, on-line learning and simulated skills. Development in practice will be via reflection, practice booklets, portfolios and personal development planning. You will be a student for one day per week either learning theory or working on practice competencies in your usual healthcare setting. The rest of your time you are an employee and will be applying your learning as part of your role.

Our online learning management system (LMS) offers a range of learning methods that include tutor-led online group discussions, review of texts and case studies, and reflective activities. You will develop skills such as critical thinking, decision making, communication, team working, leadership, problem solving, teaching and clinical skills for safe and effective practice.

Reflective activities are used to encourage you to bring issues from your workplace setting to the online forums for discussion with your peers.

You will acquire the knowledge and skills to support your team in providing quality care, as well as transferrable skills and professional values required within your role to ensure that the safety of the public remains paramount.

6. Will I have to attend the University's campus?

While much of the course content can be accessed at any time that suits you online via our Learning Management System (LMS), you will be required to attend face to face theory lectures, tutorials and skills sessions on campus.

Our course is delivered at both our Chelmsford and Cambridge campuses – you'll choose the campus that is most convenient for you.

You will also be entitled to use the University's facilities for the duration of your course such as the Library, Counselling Service, Students' Union, IT Services and Careers Service, even from a distance, and you'll be able to use the campus gym facilities when on site.

NB It is the responsibility of you and your employer to cover additional costs such as travel or accommodation expenses.

7. When does the course start?

The course commences in September and January each year on both our Cambridge and Chelmsford sites, with an additional intake each May on our Cambridge site, subject to viability.

8. How long will the course take?

The course is delivered over 20 months and has been specifically structured to meet the needs of the employer, to reflect the theory and practice components and allow more time to be spent in practice.

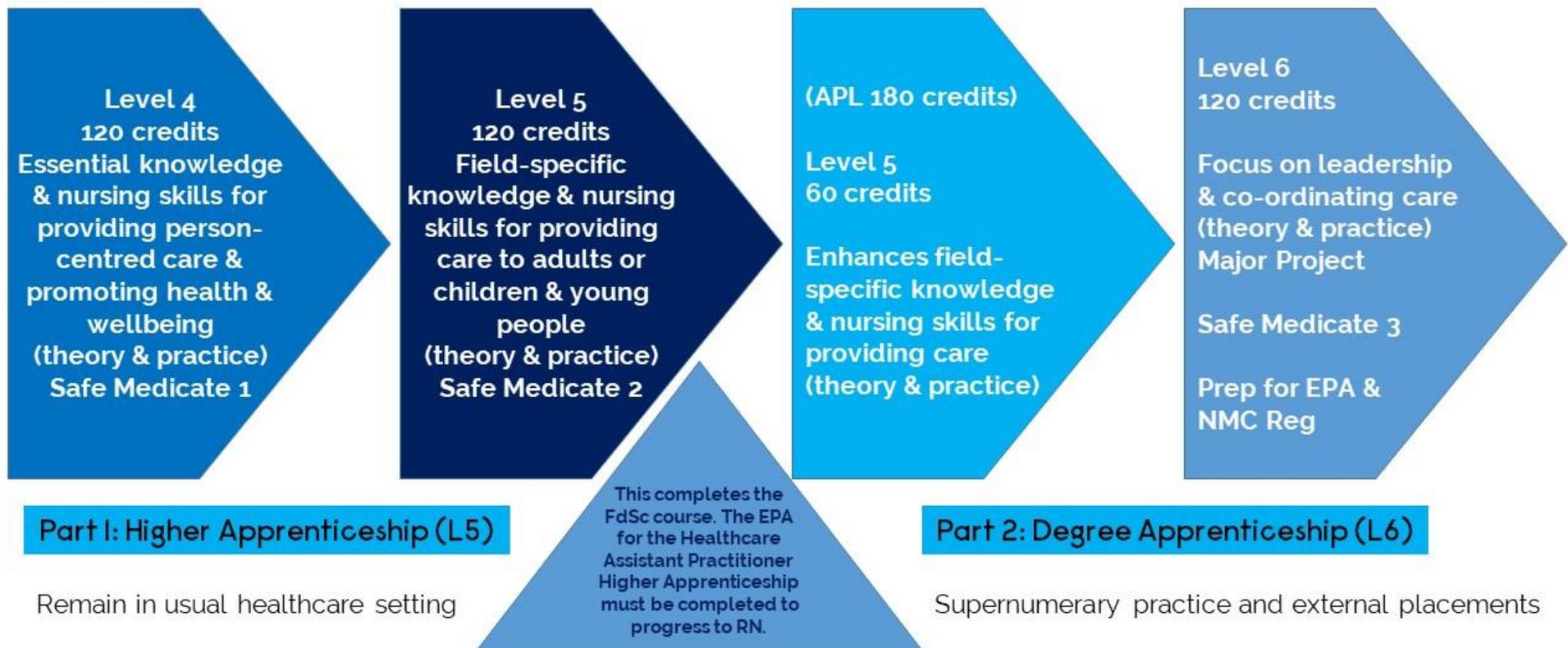
Submission dates for all modules assessments are in line with the university academic requirements.

9. 2+2 model

ARU's 2+2 Apprenticeship Model to Nursing – approx. 3 ½ Years duration (dependent on cohorts)

Part 1: FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Nursing)

Part 2: BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult, Child or MH)



IO. Course Structure

Trimester 1-2	Credits	Trimester 2-3	Credits	Year 1
Essential knowledge and skills for person centred care	30	Exploring and promoting health and well being	30	
Essential nursing skills and practice 1 Medicines Calculations for Safe Practice 1	30 0	Essential nursing skills and practice 2 Commence work-based learning long module	30	

Trimester 1-2	Credits	Trimester 2-3		Year 2
(Submit work-based learning long module)	60 30	End Point Assessment (Apprenticeship)		
Holistic care of people with long term conditions: Field specific (Adult/Child/Mental Health) Developing nursing practice 1 (Field specific) Medicines Calculations for Safe Practice 2	30 0			

II. What will I study?

The course is aligned to the [Healthcare Assistant Practitioner Apprenticeship Standard](#), following a Nursing pathway.

Essential knowledge and skills for person-centred care (30 credits)

Introducing you to the fundamental aspects of person-centred care for safe, compassionate and effective nursing care. You'll explore the NMC Code (2018) and begin to grasp the basics of the NMC Future Nurse Standards of Proficiency for Registered Nurses (2018). Using a person and family-centred care approach through the use of family based scenarios, you'll be supported to begin to explore the context of health, ill health and disability, and health care needs across the lifespan. Recognising the diversity of the patient population we'll support you to understand the need for ethical, legal and professional values to ensure equality within health care delivery. The scenarios will include healthcare related to adult, child, mental health and learning disability patients.

You'll gain an understanding of bioscience and physiology, alongside a range of physical health care needs that often co-exist with other health care issues. You'll build an awareness of the nursing care of patients with mental illness, obesity, asthma, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and cardiovascular disease. All of this will be underpinned by an introduction to professionalism and the key tenets of nursing.

Essential nursing skills and practice 1 (30 credits)

You will apply your new knowledge from the first module in your usual work setting, developing a range of knowledge and skills that will include accountability, professionalism, assessment and care planning, providing and evaluating care and improving safety and quality of care. We'll prepare you in our simulated skills labs for skills such as taking and recording vital signs, personal care, basic life support and introduction to safe drug administration.

You'll be exposed to real life situations and begin to develop communication and relationship skills, as well as a range of physical skills, as set out in the NMC (2018) Standards of Proficiency for Pre-registration Nurses.

Exploring and promoting health and wellbeing (30 credits)

Promoting health and preventing ill health is a key role in nursing. You'll explore the importance of epidemiology and the impact of environmental factors that affect our health. You'll discuss current and topical public health programmes and health promotion frameworks. An understanding of local services will help you to appreciate the promotion of health and prevention of ill health amongst your local population.

You'll have the opportunity to consider your own health and your place as a healthy role model in supporting the health education of patients.

Building on the learning of previous bioscience topics, you'll explore a further range of bioscience systems and consider the prevention, biopsychosocial impact and care of some common conditions such as breast cancer, teenage pregnancy, Down's syndrome and depression.

You'll gain an understanding of the role of the accountable professional, safeguarding, and responsibilities around duty of candour, patient advocacy and autonomy.

Medicines Calculations for Safe Practice 1 (0 credits)

Patient safety is at the heart of nursing and it is a requirement of the professional regulator (the Nursing and Midwifery Council) that by the point of entry to register, nurses must demonstrate competency in numeracy skills in the safe administration of drugs (NMC, 2018). This includes being competent in basic medicines calculations relating to: tablets and capsules, liquid medicines and injections.

Safe Medicate is an online learning and assessment package focusing on medicines calculations. You'll be given login information for this software at the beginning of the course and can have unlimited access to this e-learning platform, practice questions, and formative assessments.

A professional requirement of the course is that you become proficient in medicine calculations. Each year, you'll undertake an online medicine calculations module which offers the opportunity for unlimited practice related to a variety of medicine calculations. You'll be required to undertake a minimum of 6 formative assessments prior to the summative assessment. When you take your exam, you'll be required to get a pass mark of 80%.

Essential nursing skills and practice 2 (30 credits)

You'll further develop your skills in practice and your understanding of accountability, professionalism, assessment and care planning, providing and evaluating care and improving safety and quality of care. We'll support you to consolidate the learning that took place in the prior theory module. We'll prepare you in our simulated skills labs for skills such as pain assessment, injections, physical and mental health first aid.

You'll be exposed to real life situations and continue to develop communication and relationship skills, as well as a range of physical skills, as set out in the NMC (2018) Standards of Proficiency for Pre-registration Nurses.

Work-Based Learning for Healthcare Assistant Practitioners (60 credits) – *subject to approval*

This module incorporates specific Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour as set out in the apprenticeship standard:

Behaviours:

Demonstrate courage to challenge areas of concern and work to best practice

Knowledge:

The importance of the strategic environment in health and social care and the implications for the individual

Skills:

- Manage own work and case load and implement programmes of care in line with current evidence, taking action relative to an individual's health and care needs
- Allocates work to and supports the development of others and may supervise, teach, mentor and assess other staff as required
- Maintains and further develops own skills and knowledge, and that of others, through recognised Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities enabling flexibility in practice and responsiveness to changing service needs
- Health and safety: Promotes and maintains a safe and healthy working environment

In the final two modules of the course, you will follow one of three specialist branches that will prepare you for a Registered Nurse programme in the future in either **Adult, Child** or **Mental Health Nursing**.

NB You must be working in a healthcare setting relating to your chosen field.

Adult branch:

Holistic care for people with long term conditions (30 credits)

Understanding the biopsychosocial aspects of a long term condition from a patient perspective including the impact on the carer and family is essential. You'll learn about a range of long term conditions and the associated qualitative research including; heart failure, coronary heart disease, cancer and alcohol related diseases. You'll consider the NHS plan (2019) and Public Health Outcome Framework (2019) in the context of integrated care that clients receive in preventing ill health and promoting physical and mental wellbeing.

You'll study the complexities of living with a long term condition in a variety of care settings. We'll support you to develop an in- depth understanding of the biopsychosocial issues that affect people living with a long term condition. You'll explore the legal and ethical challenges that people and their families face. Focusing on a person centred holistic approach to assessment and care planning you'll learn to address these challenges.

You'll examine the concept of empowerment and the factors (psychological, physiological, social-economic and genomic) influencing a person's health choices and readiness for change. Decision making in end of life care through the use of advance care planning is central nursing care and we'll prepare you to understand the legal and ethical implications alongside government policy.

Developing adult nursing practice 1 (30 credits)

In this practice module you'll consolidate your learning in a skills lab and practice environment.

By now you'll have cared for many patients and have an understanding of some of the physical and communication skills that can improve the patient experience. In the skills lab you'll have the opportunity to practise passing feeding tubes, managing catheters, removing sutures,

wound care, oxygen therapy and the symptom management in end of life care.

You'll advance your communication skills through techniques such as motivational interviewing and de-escalation strategies. End of life care is a theme within this module and you'll learn skills to support you in distressing situations such as breaking bad news.

You'll be supported to practise with increased confidence as you progress through your placement and will continue to have the opportunity to work alongside health care teams and Practice Supervisors who will support you in developing new knowledge and skills. You'll continue to practise and develop your communication and relationship skills, as well as a range of physical skills.

You'll meet patients with a wide range of health care needs and have the opportunity to continue to practise and enhance your skills around accountability, professionalism, assessment and care planning, providing and evaluating care, leading and managing nursing care, working in teams and improving safety and quality of care.

Child branch:

Holistic care for the developing child and young person with health care needs

Building on the experience gained across the first year of the course you'll explore a wide range of health care issues experienced by the child, young person and their family/ carer. Emphasising the importance of assessment, communication and partnership working will develop your skills, knowledge and attitude required to meet their care needs. Children's nurses are effective when they give care to children that demonstrates respect for their rights and considers the needs of the whole family.

You'll explore the developmental, emotional, physical, social, cultural and spiritual needs of children and young people in order to deliver holistic family and child centred care. Factors that impact on physical and mental health and wellbeing will be central to your learning. You'll evaluate the role of the children's nurse, focussing on the implications for children and young people living in contemporary society. You'll consider the role of the children's nurse in promoting

health in the context of local, national and international policies which influence strategies and initiatives.

Developing children's nursing practice 1

In this practice module you'll consolidate your learning in a skills lab and then back in your usual working environment.

By now you'll have cared for many children and young adults and have an understanding of some of the physical and communication skills that can improve their experience. In the skills lab you'll have the opportunity to practise passing feeding tubes, managing catheters, removing sutures, wound care, oxygen therapy and basic life support of the new born child.

You'll advance your communication skills through techniques such as motivational interviewing and de-escalation strategies. You'll work with children with sensory impairments, learning difficulties and mental health issues and will explore suitable communication strategies. You'll be supported to practise with increased confidence as you progress through your placement and will continue to have the opportunity to work alongside health care teams and Practice Supervisors who will support you in developing new knowledge and skills. You'll continue to practise and develop your communication and relationship skills, as well as a range of physical skills.

You'll meet patients with a wide range of health care needs and have the opportunity to continue to practise and enhance your skills around accountability, professionalism, assessment and care planning, providing and evaluating care, leading and managing nursing care, working in teams and improving safety and quality of care.

Mental Health Branch:

Exploring the values, theories and evidence underpinning mental health assessment and practice

You'll explore the nature of mental illness and the values that underpin mental health nursing practice within a biopsychosocial, cultural and historical context. You'll consider the issues that may be essential to service users' lives, particularly with regard to mental health and wellbeing. You'll learn the ethical theories, legal principles and values that are relevant for professional practice in mental health.

Evidence-based assessment and care planning strategies to meet the holistic needs of service users and carers are central to this module. You'll challenge your pre-existing values, beliefs and opinions. You'll develop core principles that support a philosophy of recovery led and service user focused care across the life course.

You'll learn to champion mental health service users through advocacy and empowerment and discuss ethical issues surrounding constraint and seclusion. You'll study psycho-pathology and understand the symptoms of mental health disorders and comorbidity across the life-course. Access to services – including LGBTQ and other minority groups will be explored. You'll examine legislation and policy relating to mental health care that will help you to safeguard yourself and service users.

Developing Mental Health Nursing Practice 1

In this practice module you'll consolidate your learning in a skills lab and then in your usual work environment.

By now you'll have cared for many patients and have an understanding of some of the physical and communication skills that can improve the mental health service user experience. You'll advance your communication skills through techniques such as motivational interviewing, solution focused therapy, de-escalation strategies and positive reinforcement strategies. In the skills lab you'll have the opportunity to practise physical skills such as passing feeding tubes, managing catheters, removing sutures, wound care, oxygen therapy and the symptom management in end of life care.

You'll be supported to practise with increased confidence as you progress through the module and will continue to practise and develop your communication and relationship skills, as well as a range of physical skills.

Medicines Calculations for Safe Practice 2 (0 credits)

When you take your exam in your second year, you'll be required to get a pass mark of 90%.

12. How is the course assessed?

Assessment will be through a range of strategies and will include essays, online presentations, multiple choice tests, case studies, portfolios and practice assessment.

Your practice assessment document (PAD) will be managed online through a tool called **MyProgress**; this will be introduced to you in advance of the first practice module: **Essential nursing skills and practice 1**.

Please note that deadlines for submission of assignments are strictly enforced at the University.

In addition to the on-programme assessments for each module, the **End Point Assessment (EPA)** completes the apprenticeship. This takes place during the final three months of the Foundation Degree and comprises the following components:

- a) A multiple choice and short answer test
- b) An observation of practice undertaken in the workplace
- c) A reflective journal completed by the apprentice
- d) An interview

These elements are carried out by independent assessors who will be identified from the register of assessors (RoAAO). Time will be allocated to guide you in the process.

a) A multiple choice and short answer test

b) An observation of practice undertaken in your workplace

c) A reflective journal completed by the apprentice

This is completed in the three months leading up to your EPA. You will reflect on the development of the following components from the apprenticeship standard:

- 1. Case Management
- 2. Supervision and Teaching

d) An interview (professional discussion)

13. Career options

Upon completion of the FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Nursing), and subject to your employer agreeing to support you, you will have the option to transfer to the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship at Level 6. This will give you a seamless transition into the specialist fields of Adult, Mental Health and Child nursing and onto NMC Registration in a straightforward “step on, step off” structure. The diagram in [Section 9](#) illustrates how this works.

14. What are the entry requirements?

In addition to the personal specifications that have been set out by your employer, these are the **entry requirements** for the FdSc course. You must provide evidence of these **on submission of your application**:

Essential Requirements:

- Employment in a suitable healthcare role/environment on a permanent contract, ideally exceeding 30 hours per week
- Employer support to undertake this course
- Confirmed eligibility to be funded as an Apprentice as set out within the ESFA's Funding Rules
- Evidence of level 3 study in a related subject e.g. A Levels, BTEC in Health and Social Care*
- Level 2 separately certificated qualifications in Maths and English e.g. GCSEs at Grade C/4 or above, Functional Skills or Key Skills**
- A completed Initial Needs Analysis Form

* Applicants without a Level 3 qualification but with at least six months relevant experience will be considered on an individual basis for accreditation of prior learning (APL)/prior experiential learning (APEL).

** Applicants currently working towards a Level 2 qualification in either English or Maths may apply on the basis that they have gained the qualification prior to the start of the course.

You must supply these before you can be registered on the course:

- An Enhanced DBS for the Adult and Child Workforce, signed up to the online update service (ARU will fund new applications if you cannot provide this)
- Occupational Health clearance from your employer
- Line Manager confirmation of support

Please note: you will need to have the National Care Certificate (Health) to undertake the End Point Assessment. You will be able to complete this during your Foundation Degree programme to enable you to take the EPA.

15. What are the Funding Rules?

All apprenticeships are governed by the ESFA's funding rules, and the apprenticeship contracts you will sign before registering on the course incorporate these.

Your employer is required to protect a minimum of 20% 'Off-the-job' learning. This will be incorporated into theory and practice learning.

You will be required to track your learning hours and activities throughout the course so we can monitor that your off the job learning hours are being protected. You will be shown how to do this using MyShowcase through our LMS.

We report to your employer on your engagement and progress on a monthly basis, which we review and discuss in Tripartite meetings during the course. You will track your progress against the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours detailed in the standard using MyShowcase.

We also report and evidence your engagement and progress to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on a monthly basis to show we are complying with the Funding Rules to continue to access the levy.

16. What other skills are needed?

Working for a Foundation Degree is a big commitment, so you will also need to be motivated, well organised and have self-belief, determination and a willingness to learn. You'll need to have access to a web-enabled PC, and be able to use the Internet, Microsoft Office (especially Word and Powerpoint) with confidence.

17. What books will I need?

As part of the course you will be expected to read extracts from a variety of sources such as books, journal articles, reports etc. Most of these will be freely available online through Anglia Ruskin University Library, although in some instances you may prefer to purchase a key course textbook. All learning resources are available in electronic format.

You will be advised of any recommended books well in advance and tutors will point you towards relevant sources of information throughout the course.

18. How will the students support each other through the course?

We believe success on the course is enhanced through bringing the students together to create a supportive community of learners. The structure of the course has been designed to encourage active participation and mutual support in order to build a community of learners to maximise the learning opportunities across the group.

Discussion boards and online forums encourage you to exchange any ideas or issues you face with other you, enabling you to draw on others experiences in a variety of backgrounds. There are a variety of ways you can engage with others from text-based tool to audio or video. This can be either instantly with real time messaging systems or time delayed through email and discussion forums.

19. What support will I get from the university?

While you will need to take full responsibility for your own studies, you will have plenty of support to guide you in your success, including one to one online academic tutor support within each module, Distance Learning Facilitators, and Student Advisers.

Student services offers you help with academic advice and support, personal support, and improving your study skills as well as interview techniques and advice to help with promotion opportunities.

Study Skills Plus sessions offer one to one appointments and online resources such as:

- Academic Writing
- Maths and Numeracy
- Organisational Skills
- Critical Thinking
- IT Skills
- Presentation Skills
- Resourcing

Furthermore, you can access additional drug numeracy support through online tutorials including various online tutorials and a free app compatible with both Apple and android phones and tablets.

Academic staff support you in practice placement and are linked to the employer. You will be supported by:

- **Course Leads:** Individual to each course and responsible for managing the course, ensuring learning outcomes and QA processes are met during the delivery, and monitoring student development
- **Director of Practice:** who leads on quality and governance of practice learning environment
- **Education Champion:** supports effective communication between the employer and ARU and ensures that any student issues are resolved promptly.
- **Clinical Educators:** supports health care you in practice
- **Link Teams members:** academic tutors who support learners in practice.

20. What are the fees?

The fees are covered by your employer and the Government. You will not be required to pay anything yourself or take out a tuition fee loan. You are however responsible for travel to and from the campus and other learning venues.

21. How do I apply?

Your employer will provide you with a link to start your application, and we will guide you through the process on the contact details below.

22. Who do I contact with any questions?

Please contact Jo Brown, Degrees at Work, Anglia Ruskin University on 01223 698423 or 07545 204 360, or email jo.brown@aru.ac.uk