



Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine, and Social Care
FdSc Nursing Associate

Nursing Associate Higher Apprenticeship

Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Is this Apprenticeship for me?	3
3. Why Anglia Ruskin University?	3
4. How will I benefit from the course?	4
5. How is the course taught?	5
6. Will I have to attend the University's campus?	6
7. When does the course start?	6
8. What will I learn?	6
9. Course Structure	7
10. What will I study?	8
11. How is the course assessed?	10
12. End Point Assessment (EPA)	10
13. What are my career options?	11
14. What are the entry requirements?	12
15. What other skills are needed?	13
16. What books will I need?	13
17. How will the students support each other through the course?	13
18. What support will I get from the university?	14
19. How will I develop skills in practice?	15
20. How am I supported in practice?	16
21. What are the fees?	17
22. What are the Funding Rules?	17
23. How do I apply?	18
24. Who can answer any questions?	18

I. Introduction

We have produced this Handbook to give you more information about the **FdSc Nursing Associate Higher Apprenticeship**.

ARU's Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine, and Social Care (FHEMS) works with a range of NHS and PVI healthcare partners in the East of England to develop learning solutions that meet the short and longer-term demands for skills within the UK Healthcare sector.

NHS England launched the Nursing Associate role in 2017 to support Registered Nurses in primary, secondary, community and social care. They work across a range of settings across all fields of Nursing to help to plan, coordinate and deliver care, working to the nationally- recognised Nursing and Midwifery Council's (NMC) standards of proficiency, with their own professional register.

Our course follows both the NMC's (2018) Proficiency Standards for Nursing Associates, and the Higher Apprenticeship Standard at Level 5. It supports the widening access to higher education for new and existing bands 1-4 health care workers, to enable the development of knowledge and skills, and careers, through flexible and practical work based learning.

Successful completion of the course will also enable you to register with the NMC as a Nursing Associate. With employer support, you might also choose to 'top up' with the BSc (Hons) Nursing to become an NMC-Registered Nurse in Adult, Child or Mental Health, with Accredited Prior Learning (APL).

The following information outlines what the FdSc Nursing Associate course entails, and how you will benefit from it. I hope you find it useful.

Jo Brown
Degrees at Work, Anglia Ruskin University

2. Is this Apprenticeship for me?

A Nursing Associate is a new Band 4 role, developed in England, to work in Health and Social Care. You will work with Registered Nurses to complement the existing team in primary, secondary, community and social care, helping to plan, coordinate and deliver care. You will be expected to be a team player who actively contributes to holistic care, and deals with the non-routine and unpredictable nature of the workload, working to NMC Standards of Proficiency.

You will undertake a 23-month course that integrates a work-based programme of learning with theory. The **FdSc Nursing Associate Higher Apprenticeship** blends learning with employment, so you will apply the skills you learn immediately to your work. 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, this course is for you.

3. Why Anglia Ruskin University?

Anglia Ruskin University is based in Cambridge, Chelmsford and Peterborough, 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.

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?

This course will enable you to:

1. Develop an understanding of the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes and attributes required of a Nursing Associate when delivering safe and effective person-centred nursing care.
2. Act with integrity and adhere to NHS and professional values and, within the parameters of practice, competently undertake fundamental health care skills with knowledge and understanding of evidence-based theory.
3. Engage with the concepts of reflective practice to enhance personal development and inform the delivery of safe and effective person-centred nursing care.
4. Develop skills and attributes required for inter-professional team working, maintaining professional relationships, and a collaborative and integrated approach to care; recognising service users as partners in their care.
5. Become a confident, compassionate, competent and responsive practitioner with knowledge, skills and behaviours required to deliver safe, high quality, person-centred nursing care across a range of health and social care settings.
6. Practice independently and, within parameters of practice, show evidence of leadership, decision making, responsibility, motivation, capacity to adapt to change, and supporting learning in practice.
7. Develop the ability to apply research findings in practice, to support the delivery of safe and evidence-based care underpinned by contemporary health and social care policies, guidelines and legislation (international, national and local).
8. Understand the service user experience and seek to improve this through contribution to innovation in health care practice.
9. Demonstrate practice that reflects the diversity of belief systems and cultural expectations of individuals accessing health services, and challenge oppressive behaviour and practice.

5. How is the course taught?

We deliver the course over 23 months in a flexible blend of face-to-face theory classes, directed learning activities and practice placements. This supports the development of a strong Community of Practice and role identity, an essential element in the development and implementation of a new professional role.

To achieve the requirements of the curriculum framework, you will spend over 50% of the course learning in a variety of practice settings, some of which will be supernumerary. In each of these settings, a Registered Nurse will provide supervision. You will be assessed in practice in a range of settings that evidence breadth and depth of experience to meet NMC requirements. Protected Practice learning time (PPLT) will also take place in your current employer setting. See [Section 20](#) for more details.

Our online learning management system (LMS) – Canvas – 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. We offer a range of guest lecturers who contribute to your learning including registered practitioners from health care settings.

Service users provide insight into their personal views of their recent health care experience; this equips you to develop a pledge to make a difference to the service user experience.

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

Yes. A block plan will be issued to you before you commence the course to help you plan ahead with personal commitments, but you will find that, in general, you will be developing your skills and knowledge either in theory on campus, or in practice. These are mandatory requirements.

As a student of Anglia Ruskin University, you are entitled to use the University's facilities for the duration of your course on any of our campuses, such as the Library, Counselling Service, Students' Union, IT Services and Careers Service, and you'll be able to use the campus gym facilities when on site.

In Peterborough, this course is delivered from Guild House (Oundle Road site), but the opening of the new ARU-Peterborough site in September 2022 may relocate delivery. Apprentices and employers will be updated accordingly.

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

7. When does the course start?

The course commences in September and January each year.

8. What will I learn?

We designed our course to meet the six platforms and two skills annexes in the [NMC Standards of Proficiency for Nursing Associates](#).

We have aligned the learning outcomes to these, which also include the **Knowledge, Skills** and **Behaviours** you must demonstrate on completion of your course as set out in the [Apprenticeship Standard](#).

It is important you review both these standards before you begin your course, as these will play an integral role in your learning journey.

9. Course Structure

Part 1 Modules		
Module 1 Fundamentals of care for patient safety 30 credits (theory)	Module 3 Promoting person-centred health (physical and mental) and wellbeing 30 credits (theory)	Module 4 Practising the fundamentals of care for patient safety 2 30 credits (practice)
Module 2 Practising the fundamentals of care for patient safety 1 30 credits (practice)	Medicine calculations for safe practice 1 0 credit (theory)	
Part 2 Modules		
Module 5 Supporting learning for high quality care 30 credits (theory)	Module 7 Monitoring and improving quality of care 30 credits (theory)	Module 8 Delivering safe and effective person-centred care 2 30 credits (practice)
Module 6 Delivering safe and effective person-centred care 1 30 credits (practice)	Medicine calculations for safe practice 3 0 credit (theory)	

10. What will I study?

Each 30-credit theory module is followed by a related 30-credit practice module, which provide you with the opportunities to develop and practice your clinical skills in order to meet the NMC Standards of Proficiency for nursing associates (2018). You will develop the ability to apply knowledge and skills learned, in a real-world clinical setting, working with a variety of service users, their families and carers. Simulation in the University skills laboratory supports practice in a safe environment.

Part One (Level 4):

Theory Module: Fundamentals of Care for Patient Safety All Nursing Associate students need to become skilled in fundamental care and have understanding of physical and mental health care needs. This module will introduce you to these skills and to your responsibilities in maintaining patient safety, safeguarding vulnerable people, and the underpinning key drivers and professional values.

Practice Module: Practising Fundamentals of Care for Patient Safety 1

Theory Module: Supporting Person-Centred Health (physical and mental) and wellbeing

Building on your knowledge of bioscience and clinical skills to enhance delivery of safe and fundamental care, you will develop an understanding of the professional values and attributes expected of a Nursing Associate in the delivery of person-centred care, as well as your communication skills.

Practice Module: Practising Fundamentals of Care for Patient Safety 2

Medicine Calculations for Safe Practice 1

You will develop your competence in basic medicines calculations relating to tablets and capsules, liquid medicines, and injections.

This completes Level 4 of your course.

Part Two (Level 5):

Theory Module: Supporting learning for high quality care

Building on the knowledge and understanding gained in the first year of the course, you will act as a coach and supporter for junior colleagues in order to provide high quality person-centred care to service users with increasing co-morbidities, including end of life care. Through promoting shared and peer learning, you will begin to acquire leadership skills while simultaneously engaging in a culture that is focused upon learning, support and transparency. Your reflection on your own coaching experience (both as coach and being coached) and its impact on care will then form the assessment for the module.

Practice Module: Delivering Safe and Effective Person-Centred Care 1

Theory Module: Monitoring and Improving Quality of Care The transition from student to qualified Nursing Associate involves adjusting to a new and challenging role, accepting additional and different responsibilities, being aware of issues of accountability, and further developing the skills required of a Nursing Associate. The purpose of this module is to consolidate your knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to demonstrate competence in holistic, person-centred care within the parameters of practice. You will have the opportunity to develop your knowledge and understanding of the pathophysiology, legal and ethical issues, and challenges faced by those affected by common physical and mental health conditions.

Practice Module: Delivering Safe and Effective Person-Centred Care 2

Medicine Calculations for Safe Practice 3

You will develop your competence in basic medicines calculations relating to tablets and capsules, liquid medicines, and injections.

A successful pass for each of these modules completes your Foundation Degree course.

II. How is the course assessed?

We use formative and summative assessment strategies in both theory and practice learning to provide you with opportunities to demonstrate your acquisition of practical skills and underpinning knowledge. Your development of a range of transferable skills critical to effective health care such as teamwork, communication (written and verbal), decision-making, leadership, facilitation and problem solving skills, are encouraged.

Assessments vary throughout the programme, and include QMP multi-choice testing, written assignments, presentations, and an ePortfolio. We also test medicine calculations online.

Assessment strategies, in accordance with the England Practice Assessment Document (PAD) for Nursing Associates, include:

- Assessment of a wide range of practice competencies, mapped to the NMC Standards of Proficiency for Nursing Associates
- Assessment of professional values
- Service user assessment in the practice setting
- Reflections on episodes of care
- Assessment of medicines management

This is completed using an e-practice assessment document (accessible off-line via the student tablet or on-line via a computer). There are dedicated staff within the University to support the use of this e-PAD, who would be happy to come into your practice area to help with this. This one of the components that form the gateway to your Apprenticeship EPA.

I2. End Point Assessment (EPA)

As soon as you have completed certain criteria that meet the EPA Gateway for this Apprenticeship Standard, you will complete your Higher Apprenticeship with an End Point Assessment. These are:

- Confirmation from your employer that you are demonstrating the

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours set out in the Apprenticeship Standard;

- Completion of a Foundation Degree approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (this means completion of the final module);
- Completion of your Practice Assessment Document (PAD), which confirms you have met the required practice hours, and is used as a source of evidence for the professional discussions;
- Evidence of English and Mathematics at Level 2 (entry requirements).

The EPA for this Apprenticeship is a successful pass in two professional discussions. Each will test your knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) against the specific domains taken from the NMC Professional Standards for registered nursing associates. These are:

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

Throughout the course, you will be working towards the occupational competencies detailed in the Apprenticeship Standard, and we will prepare you for the professional discussions.

NB The EPA is under review with the Institute of Apprenticeships with a view to integrating the assessments within the programme, but the timeline to achieve this has not yet been confirmed.

13. What are my career options?

Upon completion of the FdSc Nursing Associate, you will be able to register with the NMC on the Nursing Associate register. You also have the option to transfer to the second half of a Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship via Accredited Prior Learning (APL), on the proviso that your employer has confirmed their support.

14. What are the entry requirements?

In addition to the personal specifications for the apprenticeship role that have been set out by your employer, these are the **entry requirements**. If you have any questions about these entry requirements, please speak to your employer first. Applications are made online, demonstrating digital literacy skills.

You are required to provide evidence of these requirements on submission of application:

- Employment in a Nursing Associate Apprenticeship role, contracted for at least than 30 hours per week (job offer letters are acceptable evidence)
- Employer support to undertake this course
- Eligibility for apprenticeship funding
- GCSE Maths and English at Grade C/4 (or equivalent certificated Level 2)
- Evidence of good health and character through an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service check and occupational health clearance
- A professional reference
- FE Level 3 (A Level or equivalent) is preferred; relevant experience in a healthcare setting will be considered as an alternative on a case-by-case basis.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to demonstrate proficiency in the English language before they are admitted to Anglia Ruskin University, in accordance with NMC requirements.

You will be required to attend an interview, where you will be expected to demonstrate:

- The appropriate values for health care and ability to study
- Insight into the Nursing Associate role • Proficiency in English language

15. What other skills are needed?

Working for a Level 5 qualification 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, with high-speed broadband, and be able to use the Internet, Microsoft Office (especially Word and Powerpoint) with confidence.

16. 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.

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

We believe success on the course will be 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 and enable you to maximise the learning opportunities across the group.

While you will meet you and colleagues during face to face sessions on campus, you will keep in touch not only with tutors but other you studying the same modules as you.

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.

18. 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 academic tutor support within each module, personal tutors, 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 most smartphones 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.

19. How will I develop skills in practice?

Your course is roughly 50% theory and 50% practice hours:

Apprenticeship	Theory hours	Practice hours	Total hours
Part 1	615	600	1215
Part 2	630	600	1230
Totals	1245	1200	2445

While you are in practice, you will have clearly identified protected practice learning time (PPLT). Anglia Ruskin University have agreed a definition of PPLT with all employers and stakeholders across Cambridgeshire and Essex. Your employer has agreed to encourage and facilitate a learning environment at all times that supports you to access the learning opportunities required to achieve and consolidate your learning.

In your own place of work, PPLT would be a full shift where you are counted in the staff numbers. On these PPLT shifts, you will have a clearly identified Practice Supervisor/Practice Assessor, with whom you will identify an appropriate learning goal. The Practice Supervisor/Practice Assessor will facilitate opportunities for you to achieve that goal, and will provide feedback prior to the end of the shift.

On non-PPLT shifts, you will still be identifiable as a learner (either through uniform or ID badges in areas where uniform is not worn), but you will not have a named Practice Supervisor/Practice Assessor for the shift. You will spend the time within the workforce, practising and consolidating your skills.

In external placements, you will be supernumerary at all times, and all shifts will have an identified Practice Supervisor/Practice Assessor to facilitate your learning. When rostering for your own place of work, your external placement rosters will take priority.

If your employer/line manager can facilitate any additional supernumerary PPLT shifts, we would see this as a value-added learning experience.

20. How am I supported in practice?

A full team will be ensuring you are getting as many opportunities to develop your skills and competencies:

- Education Champions
- Link team visits in practice
- Academic assessor
- Student uniform
- Trust Practice Educators
- Dedicated member of academic staff to support students, supervisors and assessors in the use of electronic practice assessment
- E-assessment enables ongoing monitoring and governance

We use the online England Practice Assessment Document, which includes:

Orientation and learning contract

- Assessment of professional values
- Service user feedback
- Record of inter-professional working
- Assessment of proficiencies (minimum of 15 in placement 1, completion of all in placement 2)
- Episodes of care
- Medicines management assessment

In addition, our Nursing Associate Partnership offers additional 1:1 support from **Practice Education Facilitators** (PEFs) who will visit you in practice.

21. 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.

22. 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 is built into theory and practice days.

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.

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.

23. 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.

24. Who can answer any questions?

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