Advanced Clinical Practitioner
Master’s Apprenticeship
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Introduction to the University

Manchester Metropolitan University is one of the most popular universities in the UK, educating over 38,000 students. The University takes its responsibility for creating work-ready graduates very seriously and maintains close industry and business links.

This embedded philosophy has enabled the University to take an industry-leading role in Degree Apprenticeship creation and delivery, working with employers across the North West and nationally.

The Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Care includes nursing, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work, psychology and social care.

Based in the state-of-the-art Brooks Building, on Manchester Metropolitan University’s award-winning development, students have access to specialist facilities across all areas of health.

Our faculty has a thriving, collaborative academic community with innovative, vibrant programmes that reflect new and emerging research ideologies.
What is the Advanced Clinical Practitioner Master's Degree Apprenticeship?
Advanced Clinical Practice embodies the ability to manage clinical care in partnership with individuals, families and carers. It includes the analysis and synthesis of complex problems across a range of settings, enabling innovative solutions to enhance people’s experience and improve outcomes (HEE Advanced Clinical Practice Multi-Professional Framework – 2017).

This innovative programme has been developed in collaboration with regional healthcare providers and experts in advanced clinical practice. Clinicians who enrol on the programme will undertake university and practice-based learning to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of an Advanced Clinical Practitioner.

The Advanced Clinical Practitioner Master’s Degree Apprenticeship is delivered via two routes. A two-year route with attendance at university two days a week and a three-year route with attendance at university one day per week.

Key Facts

**Apprenticeship Standard** | Advanced Clinical Practitioner

**Programme Duration** | 24 or 36 months

**Degree Award** | MSc Advanced Clinical Practice

**Funding** | The programme funding band is £12,000 for the full programme, whether studied over two or three years. The full cost of this apprenticeship programme can be funded from employers’ apprenticeship levy contributions. Applicants to the two-year apprenticeship that have previously completed clinically-focused units, such as Non-Medical Prescribing can apply to use this credit towards their Master’s and the programme fee will be reduced accordingly. Employers will be able to apply for Health Education England training grants to help develop Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentices.
The programme has been designed to ensure the educational requirements of the future advanced practice workforce are met. The curriculum is delivered in line with the Multi-Professional Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice (HEE, 2017).

This clinically-based programme has a strong emphasis on research methodology and quality improvement. Apprentices will research, develop, implement and evaluate a quality improvement project within their scope of practice. This will benefit the delivery and redesign of existing and new services.

The apprenticeship equips advanced practitioner graduates with the necessary skills, behaviours and expertise to realise their future career aspirations. The flexible nature of the apprenticeship also allows the employer to tailor the programme to meet their individual service needs. The programme is funded via an organisation’s apprenticeship levy commitments.

**The Apprentice Support in Practice**

Support ‘in practice’ is integral to the successful completion of the Advanced Clinical Practitioner Master’s Degree Apprenticeship. Apprentices will have a designated mentor to support their work-based learning.

In addition, an employer liaison tutor will be assigned to support the apprentice to align their university and work-based learning.
Programme Structure

The Advanced Clinical Practitioner Master’s Degree Apprenticeship is a modular programme that requires apprentices to participate in off-the-job learning, and skills and behaviours development. Apprentices will also complete structured work-based learning, supported by their mentor in practice, to further develop their advanced clinical practice skills. A bespoke online portfolio, for apprentices to collate evidence of their ongoing competence, supports the programme.

The apprenticeship consists of core and flexible units designed to meet the four pillars of advanced practice: clinical practice, clinical leadership, education and research.

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## Unit Overviews

### Core

**Clinical Examination and Decision Making**

The aim of this unit is to equip Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentices to be able to use a range of approaches to safely assess all body systems, take a comprehensive history and arrive at a clinically reasoned differential diagnosis. Included in this unit is the ability to critically analyse the information gained and produce a robust management plan at an advanced clinical level, taking into account local, national policies and the available evidence-base.

**Education in Advanced Practice**

This unit will allow Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentices to critically review their own professional development and their contribution to the education of others. The unit will specifically focus on motivational and educational theories that underpin healthcare development and advanced practice.

**Leadership for Integrated Care**

Leadership is of critical importance to advanced clinical practice in the context of integrated health and social care. In this unit, apprentices will have the opportunity to interrogate the complexities of leadership and team working in contemporary health and social care settings. They will explore the evidence that informs effective leadership in the integrated and/or interdisciplinary care context. They will critically reflect upon the intricate interpersonal and inter-professional relationships demanded by integrated care. Alongside this, apprentices will explore the values that underpin successful leadership and excellence in service delivery.

**Research Methodology for Quality Improvement**

This unit introduces the apprentice to the concept of quality improvement applied within the contexts of clinical practice and healthcare delivery. It will prepare the apprentice to design and undertake sound quality improvement projects within their own area(s) of clinical practice.

**Research for Quality Improvement Practice Project**

This unit will enable the apprentice to apply and integrate relevant knowledge, understanding, and skills developed within the Research Methodology for Quality Improvement unit. This is achieved through the production of a scholarly piece of work related to quality improvement within their own area of clinical practice.

### Flexible Clinical Options (Choice of Two)

#### Radiology in MSK

The aim of this unit is to prepare Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentices working in an MSK role to work effectively within a multidisciplinary team and develop an understanding of the use and limitations of the range of imaging techniques utilised in the assessment of MSK presentations.

#### Non-Medical Prescribing

To prepare suitably qualified nurses and AHPs to become safe and competent independent/supplementary prescribers (for NMC registrants and HCPC registered physiotherapists, therapeutic radiographers, podiatrists and paramedics) or supplementary prescribers (HCPC registered dieticians and diagnostic radiographers).

#### Advanced Care of the Mental Health Patient

This unit covers the Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentices’ care of individuals, living with mental health issues across a variety of health settings. This is of critical importance to advanced clinical practice given the developing context of integrated health and social care working environments.

#### Advanced Care of the Frail and Older Patient

To suitably prepare the Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentice to recognise frail patients, assess, clinically reason and manage them appropriately and collaboratively across primary and secondary care. This is of critical importance to advanced clinical practice given the developing context of integrated health and social care working environments.

#### Advanced Treatment and Diagnostics of the Acutely Ill Patient

The aim of this unit is to equip the Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentice with the necessary skills and knowledge to request and interpret diagnostic tests in order to effectively plan and manage complex and unpredictable episodes of care.
ADVANCED PRACTICE INDEPENDENT STUDY 1 AND 2

These units provide the Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentice with an opportunity to develop their advanced practice knowledge base in a chosen, relevant area of advanced clinical practice. This includes reference to the four pillars of advanced practice, essential to advanced clinical practice.

ADVANCED MUSCULOSKELETAL PRACTICE

The content of this unit is essential for those Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentices working in or entering a first contact role or primary care. This unit covers ordering and interpreting imaging, rheumatology and blood tests, red flags, pain pharmacology and advanced musculoskeletal reasoning.

INJECTION THERAPY

This unit is essential for those Advanced Clinical Practitioner apprentices working in, or entering, a first contact role or primary care; to develop cognitive and psychomotor skills essential to the advancement of the clinician specialising in injection treatments for musculoskeletal lesions.

END POINT ASSESSMENT

The End Point Assessment (EPA) forms the final part of the integrated degree apprenticeship for the Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) at level 7. The EPA dictates the learning outcomes, assessment strategy and marking criteria and must be followed by the University.
Programme Delivery

To allow you to the flexibility to choose a study route that is most appropriate for your organisation and individuals, we offer both a two-year and three-year delivery model.

Two-Year Delivery Model | Attendance two days per week

The two-year route is suited to learners:

- Who are better working at a faster pace and may have studied previously at postgraduate level.
- Who may be able to gain credit for previously completed clinically-focused units, such as Non-Medical Prescribing.
- Who are employees of larger organisations/teams with the opportunity to release staff for two days per week.

Three-Year Delivery Model | Attendance one day per week

The three-year route is suited to learners:

- Who are better working at a steadier pace, who may not have previously studied at a post-graduate level.
- Who are employees in an organisation/team where releasing staff for more than one day per week may be challenging.
After completing my degree at Manchester Metropolitan University, I had wanted to embark on a Master’s Programme in Advanced Clinical Practice to complement my role as a Community Specialist Paramedic.

I was quite daunted by the amount of work on top of working full-time and having a family. Starting the 3-year apprenticeship has made it possible for me to undertake the programme in a more supportive way.

I am supported both as a Master’s student and an apprentice, allowing me to have protected time at work to both learn and study. The course has elements of academic and practical application and emphasises putting learning into practice. You are also supported in the workplace with a programme tutor and a mentor, enabling you to discuss any issues and action plan work required for the programme.

The university also offer other opportunities to learn, with extra classes that you can attend on academic writing and critical thinking. I would encourage anyone who is looking to improve their patient care, their knowledge and understanding of body systems and diseases, as well as research, education and leadership skills to consider this programme.”
“Returning to Manchester Met on the ACP apprenticeship course, with the support of my employers, has provided me with unprecedented opportunity for growth and development within my clinical career. I am gaining advanced knowledge, experience and awareness of how multiple healthcare professionals’ work within their own fields.

By reflecting this within our own departments we can enhance health care provision and patient experience as advanced clinical practitioners. I aim to seek further opportunities to support and progress advanced practice within our service and see a future with developing physiotherapy provision with emerging technological advances.”

James McDonald, Physiotherapist at North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS

“I am gaining advanced knowledge, experience and awareness of how multiple healthcare professionals’ work within their own fields.”
Debbie Hancock, Practice Nurse at Cheadle Medical Practice

“I am hoping that the course will give me the tools to make positive changes within the workplace.”

“I first heard about the Advanced Clinical Practitioner Master’s Apprenticeship whilst studying towards a non-medical prescribing qualification. I looked into what it entailed and had considered it at other universities before but what appealed to me was that it was over three years rather than the traditional two years as it is a very full on intense programme.

I approached my employer and they were supportive of me and my development and with the apprenticeship route it was easy to fund the course. On completion of the course I will have gained a formal master’s degree qualification and been able to continue to work with my current employer whilst developing my role along the way.

As a mature student, it can feel a lot like being thrown in at the deep end with studying, revision and academic writing as well as juggling work and a family/home life. To do this you have to be very organised and have the support from your work colleagues and family. The structure of the course means that I can evolve my current role of Practice Nurse to that of an Advanced Clinical Practitioner over the three years and as it’s a multi-disciplinary course I am hoping to gain new skills outside my current remit which I can transfer into my own practice. I am hoping that the course will give me the tools to make positive changes within the workplace.”
 Programme Essentials

Entry Requirements

Applicants must be registered with a statutory or regulatory body - HCPC, NMC or GPhC - and meet the essential criteria for Trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner as specified by their employer.

It is a condition of apprenticeship funding, at all levels, that applicants are able to evidence GCSE English and Maths passes equivalent to Grade A*-C or commit to completing Functional Skills Level 2. This can be arranged if required and must be completed prior to End Point assessment.

Work Place Considerations

Employers need to reflect on whether the work place infrastructure is sufficient to fully support the apprentice in working as a trainee advanced clinical practitioner. Consideration also needs to be given as to whether the apprentice will be working in a new or emerging role within the workplace.

Apprentices will need to be supported in the workplace by a suitably qualified mentor who is able to assess clinical competency in practice and support the apprentice to develop as a competent advanced clinical practitioner.

Off-the-Job Training

Apprenticeship funding rules include a requirement that apprentices should spend at least 20 per cent of their usual working time on developing relevant skills, knowledge and behaviours.

In practice, this rule means that apprentices must undertake university tuition, online learning and assessments in combination with a range of other eligible activities undertaken in the workplace.

These can include, but are not limited to:

• Developing evidence, undertaking reflective practice and gathering peer feedback towards the achievement of the skills and behaviours included in the Advanced Clinical Practitioner Degree Apprenticeship Standard.

• Shadowing or mentoring of colleagues in their organisation or another organisation.

• Formal or informal training relevant to the apprenticeship.

Employment Conditions

Please note that in order to meet the eligibility criteria for apprenticeship funding, candidates must:

• Have a contract of employment that covers the full duration of the apprenticeship

• Be working a minimum of 30 hours per week for their main employer

• Be a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area (EEA), or have the right of abode in the UK and have been ordinarily resident in the EEA for at least the previous three years.

• Have the agreement of their employer to abide by the requirements of allowing apprentices 20 per cent of their normal working hours to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship standard.
University Apprentice Support

In order to create an environment where apprentices are able to achieve successful outcomes, both academically and within their organisations, the University has established extensive systems of support.

This not only includes the apprentice learner, but is also for organisations and the line managers and mentors who will be guiding an apprentice’s development.

This includes support for functional skills, access to university support services including disability services, well-being and counselling, access to a 24-hour library, IT services and university sports facilities.

An Employment Liaison Tutor from the university will assist with study skills, advice on university regulations and provide pastoral support. Regular scheduled meetings will ensure that the apprentices are progressing in their advanced practice journey.
Get in touch

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