

## Description

Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

School of Health Sciences

Division of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work

# MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice (Paediatrics)

## Student Handbook 2025-26

## Introduction to the Programme

### Programme Director's welcome

**Programme Director** | Helen Hardy | 0161-306-7615 | Room 5.341 Jean McFarlane Building | [helen.hardy@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:helen.hardy@manchester.ac.uk)

The MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice (paediatrics) programme is aimed at those working in advanced clinical practice roles. It offers healthcare practitioners, from a range of backgrounds working with children and young people, an advanced level of integrated clinical knowledge and cutting-edge skill development to help you excel as an advanced clinical practitioner and clinical leader in your field.

This highly structured academic programme runs in parallel with a work-based programme of learning, hence employer support is essential, as you develop advanced clinical skills to apply to your specific area of practice. The aim is to promoting safe, effective, accessible and high-quality patient care.

You will develop knowledge and skills required to autonomously manage complexities in individual patient care as well as lead and support the transformation of healthcare services through research informed practice and leadership. The programme provides multi-professional relevant postgraduate study to promote the development of practitioners recognized as expert Advanced Clinical Practitioners (ACPs) in paediatric settings. Students will be expected to:

Advance clinical practice and service delivery, through enhancement of critical thinking and synthesis of a range of sources of evidence relevant to clinical practice, to inform decision making at an individual, team and/or organizational level

Further develop skills to work individually and collaboratively to meet the learning and development needs of practitioners across a range of professions

Meet the changing needs of children and young people, and the people who care for them, by critically evaluating current practice

Facilitate the development of an in-depth, critical understanding of relevant research and strategies to promote the uptake of research findings into routine healthcare in clinical contexts.

Further develop advanced clinical and leadership skills to lead the implementation of new accessible approaches to direct clinical care and models of service design

To share ideas, experiences and strategies for innovation in advanced clinical practice with key stakeholders, including other health care professionals and those who use the services they provide

The programme aims to equip students with a range of transferable skills in critical reasoning and reflection, collaborative team working, communication, use of IT/health informatics, innovation in the application of knowledge to practice and logical/systematic approaches to solving problems and making decisions.

Students will continually develop practice in response to changing population health need, engaging in horizon scanning for future developments (eg; impacts of genomics, new treatments and changing social challenges).

An Introduction to PGT Degree Regulations for Students is available at: [Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

#### **Note.**

Funding for the MSc is via NHS England contract.

### **Changes in personal and/or contact details**

MSc ACP students and their Trust ACP Leads are required to notify NHS England of a change in circumstance (e.g., change in employer, interruption from the programme, maternity leave) via a change in circumstances form available at [Change in Circumstances Form - North West Advancing Practice Faculty \(office.com\)](#)

### **Withdrawal Procedures**

If you are considering withdrawing from the programme, you are strongly advised to speak to the programme director immediately as they may be able to present an alternative perspective on your situation and will certainly be able to offer advice on how to proceed. It may be the case that you chose to interrupt your studies rather than fully withdraw.

If, for whatever reason, you have firmly decided to withdraw from the programme, inform your Programme Director as soon as possible verbally and in writing (e-mail is sufficient). It is obviously important that you keep the Division fully informed of your intentions or actions and the University is

obliged to inform the appropriate Trusts of your decision depending on your funding stream. You will be requested to return library books and your student ID badge.

## **Charges for extensions to length of programme**

Students who go beyond the standard programme length and for whom we stop getting funding will be charged extension tuition fees. Additional fees will be charged based on the proportion of the Bench Mark Price (as set by SHA) effective at the date when the extension is required. The full policy and details of fees will be posted on the Student Community area on Canva during Semester one.

## **Programme Schedule: Key dates**

The majority of course units are delivered within the two semesters of September to December and January/February to May. The exceptions are course units such as ‘Multi-Professional Support for Learning and Assessment in Practice’ where more regular provision is required. For information on start dates for specific course units please contact The Continuing Professional Development Admissions Office, Room G.314, Jean McFarlane Building (formerly Block 3, University Place). Telephone numbers 0161 306 7746/7604/7605 or email [conted.nursing@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:conted.nursing@manchester.ac.uk).

The majority of course units are delivered one day per week with six hours contact per day. For 15 credit course units this represents 7 days contact time, and this is doubled for a 30 credit course unit.

### **Programme Director**

The role of the Programme Director is to ensure the smooth running of the programme. This includes chairing the Programme Committee, overseeing the student evaluation process, considering changes to the programme and ensuring adherence to the university’s guidelines for academic practice.

Your Programme Director will be pleased to meet with you at any time during your period of study, or to take suggestions or comments on any aspect of the programme through the contact details below:

**Helen Hardy, Programme Director**

mail: [helen.hardy@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:helen.hardy@manchester.ac.uk)

## **Unit Leaders**

As students undertaking the MSc will undertake a variety of course units, individual course unit leaders will provide academic and personal support for whichever course units are undertaken. Either group or individual meetings will be arranged and/or timetabled for each course unit. The purpose of these meetings is:

- To enable students to access support in relation to academic, clinical and personal difficulties. Many mature students experience some difficulties at some point during their programme. These may be in relation to learning opportunities or unexpected difficult personal circumstances. The unit leader should be able to help students plan a way of dealing with these problems or help to minimise the effects they have on learning.

- To enable the personal teacher to monitor progress, give constructive feedback and identify if further help or support is needed.
- To enable students to demonstrate ongoing progress, so that if at some point students are not meeting the programme requirements, the unit leader is able to supply evidence of the motivation and effort they have applied to individual course units.

## **Personal and Academic Development Plans (PADPs)**

All students will be supported by the respective Unit Lead and the Programme Director for the duration of their programme of study. With the Programme Director, tutors can also guide students to a wide range of other sources of assistance or support. The role of the academic advisor is undertaken by the Programme Director and a small selection of CPD academic staff. The academic advisor role is to assist students in enhancing their academic and learning skills. Contact with the unit lead is weekly during the study day sessions and post study days, the unit lead remains the point of contact for academic support for the duration of the unit. Academic tutorials may be conducted in small groups in order to enable students to benefit from shared reflection and learning. Academic support may also be offered on an individual basis and tailored to the student's individual learning needs. Additional individual personal tutorials can be arranged at the request of students with unit leads and Programme Director to deal with pastoral and progress issues.

## **Practice Learning Mentor**

Students will be required to identify a mentor in the clinical area. The mentor is a clinical member of staff who has undertaken an identified mentor preparation programme and is normally experienced within the clinical specialty. A mentor should be identified at the beginning of each course unit where assessment of clinical practice is a component.

In the MSc, the mentor's role is:

- To help identify student's needs in the initial interview
- To discuss and advise about available learning opportunities to meet the learning outcomes for the course unit
- To be a source of support during completion of the course unit
- To give formal feedback about progress in meeting the learning outcomes via the intermediate and final placement interviews.

Details of the Programme

## **Overall Programme Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes**

The programme aims to instil an advanced level of integrated clinical knowledge and cutting edge skill development to help you excel as an advanced practitioner and clinical leader in your field. To this end, the highly structured academic programme will run in parallel with a work-based programme of learning. The programme is embedded / applied to practice through partnership between you, the student, and we the educators. The aims also provide for the specific characteristics of adult students who are also employees, through a part time flexible arrangement of study.

## **AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME**

The programme aims to:

### **INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME**

#### **A. Knowledge and understanding**

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

A1 Engage in critical debate on the concept of advanced clinical practice, its scope and boundaries within contemporary healthcare settings as well as the national policies/ local procedures which frame the role.

A2 Systematically and critically examine the evidence base relating to the area of clinical practice

A3 Demonstrate a thorough and critical understanding of the different approaches to leadership, management and change management and their application to their own advanced practice setting

A4 Develop an in-depth and critical understanding of a number of research methods and the optimal strategies to promote the uptake of research findings into routine practice settings

A5 demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of pathophysiology, the causes, signs, symptoms and impact of physical and mental health conditions within the sphere of practice

A6 Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of pharmacotherapeutics relevant to your sphere of practice and the local/national policies, regulatory framework and guidelines that inform their use in practice

A7 Critically evaluate the rationale and optimal methods of engaging Children and Young people and their families in the co-production of healthcare services

A8 Formulate the contemporary issues and challenges inherent in the management of clinical practice including strategies to ensure equitable access to healthcare services for Children and Young People

#### **B. Intellectual skills**

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

B1 Critically evaluate the limitations of extant knowledge, evidence, policy and practice within the relevant setting reflecting the diverse / changing needs of children and young people and the people who care for them

- B2 Formulate and resolve complex clinical problems through critical reasoning and synthesis of information from a range of sources
- B3 Engage critically with the theoretical frameworks/models underpinning advanced clinical practice
- B4 Critically appraise contemporary approaches to Children and Young people and their families involvement in service design, delivery and audit and patient and public engagement in the dissemination of research findings
- B5 Synthesise information from a range of sources to inform decisions at patient, team and service level

## **C. Practical skills**

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Practice competently extant and newly developed advanced clinical skills in the relevant practice setting by a critical understanding of recognized theory and contemporary evidence
- C2 Act in a leadership capacity within an advanced practice setting
- C3 Assess and manage risk in relation to an individual's holistic health and well-being
- C4 Disseminate findings of relevant research to colleagues, patients and their families
- C5 Work with Children and Young people and their families in the co- production of healthcare services

## **D. Transferable skills & personal qualities**

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

D1 Use skills in systematic and creative approaches to solving problems and making decisions in relation to issues in advanced clinical practice and service delivery

D2 Demonstrate leadership and communication skills which enable them to work across professional, organisational and system boundaries.

D3 Use information technology/health informatics proficiently

## Programme Structure

This is a Faculty-wide academic structure for continuing professional development (workforce transformation) which:

- Offers flexibility, choice and high quality postgraduate education in advanced specialist practice that will reflect the apprenticeship standard for Advanced Clinical Practice, and is able to respond to individual and employer need locally, nationally and internationally
- Shares teaching and research expertise across the Faculty through inter-disciplinary provision and promotes a range of opportunities for inter-professional learning and
- Going forward will expand to offer pathways in a range of healthcare specialties

The programme offers aspiring healthcare professionals from a range of settings an opportunity to engage in postgraduate education in order to enhance their practice through the development of advanced practice skills and the acquisition and critical appraisal of their knowledge and clinical/leadership skills. The programme reflects professional, UK-wide government and international benchmarks for advanced clinical practice for the health care work-force to equip students with the knowledge and clinical/leadership skills required for advanced clinical practice.

Students can elect to study course units as stand-alone or build up units of study towards the awards of PgCert, PgDip or MSc. Face-to-face, online and blended models of teaching and learning are included within the whole programme.

Completed unit specifications for all course units are included (appendix 4). The programme comprises is made up of compulsory units which draw on some existing communication, management/leadership and online research units and other existing PGT CPD units in relevant specialties.

This will contribute to the viability of the Advanced Clinical Practice MSc, the effective use of resources and enhance the opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning.

***The Programme exit awards do not imply eligibility for recognition where fulfilment of the advancing practice capabilities have not been demonstrated.***

**Programme Examples** – please note these are examples and, as noted above, students will meet with the Programme Director to plan out an individual pathway through the programme.

**Programme: PG Certificate in Advanced Clinical Practice (Paediatrics) – Year 1**

**Number of credits required: 15 + 30 + 15 = 60 credits**

|                                                              |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Leadership in Professional Practice                          | 15 Credits |
| Advanced Paediatric Diagnostic Skills A – theory based       | 30 credits |
| Advanced Paediatric Diagnostic Skills B- work based learning | 15 credits |

**Programme: PG Diploma in Advanced Clinical Practice (Paediatrics) – Year 2**

**Year 1 credits as above 60 (PGCert ACP) + 4 x 15 credits = 120 credits**

|                                                 |            |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Effective Strategies for Advanced Communication | 15 credits |
| Research Design                                 | 15 credits |
| Independent Prescribing                         | 30 credits |

**Programme: MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice (Paediatrics) – Year 3**

**Year 1 and Year 2 credits as above 120 (PGDip ACP) + 60 credits 180 credits**

|              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| Dissertation | 60 credits |
|--------------|------------|

<https://www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/study/cpd/>

The programme is delivered within the university two semesters of September and Jan/February start dates. Preparation for Mentorship and Independent Study course units start at more frequent intervals throughout the academic year. The majority of individual course units are offered once per year.

The strategy for learning and teaching is to utilise a variety of methods suited to adult learners. Flexibility ensures that methods match the group profile. The experience which you, the student, bring to the course unit and shares, is recognised as an excellent resource, and highly valued in student evaluations. Teaching methods also seek to give mature students transferable skills, which you are very likely to use outside the programme, and to develop the independent learning which is essential to lifelong learning. The learning and teaching strategy utilised within the programme have been chosen to reflect the learning and teaching strategy of the Faculty and Division.

## **PROGRAMME REGULATIONS**

As a registered student of The University of Manchester, you agree to comply with the rules and regulations under which the University and its students must operate. The principles underpinning these

are set out in the University's Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations, which are listed in the Founding Documents available at: <http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate-degree-regulations/>

Specific regulations regarding your programme of study are set down in the programme information section of this handbook. The main elements of the rules and regulations of which you should be aware are summarised in the A-Z of Services.

## Specific Programme Regulations

### Entry Requirements

A health/social care professional qualification relevant to the programme or current registration with relevant professional statutory or equivalent regulatory body

- AND A relevant honours first degree (2.2 or above or equivalent) from an approved higher education institution
- OR Evidence of previous study, research or professional experience which the University accepts as qualifying the applicant for entry\*
- AND Home/UK applicants must be employed in current clinical practice experience at the point of application and should continue to practice throughout the duration of their studies.
- AND the written support from their employer to attend and complete any practice based components
- AND for applicants whose first language is not English, an IELTS score of 5 with no less than 6.0 on any one component or equivalent\*\*

These requirements are in line with University regulations and are comparable with others set out for similar programmes within the Faculty where the target audience is from nursing and allied health backgrounds.

*\*UK applicants who do not hold a first degree (or equivalent qualification) may be admitted on the basis of a health/social work professional qualification. They must demonstrate the ability to study at postgraduate level. A standardised procedure for assessing this ability via the submission of a portfolio will be implemented where students are required to submit a portfolio of evidence of equivalence to the achievement of QAA FHEQ level 6 outcomes. This portfolio route is already successfully used in other PGT programmes in the Faculty. The portfolio will be reviewed by staff from the programme team. Such evidence may include a documented track record of innovative practice, leadership, service development, research projects and publications which are clearly underpinned by the academic skills required at level 6.*

*\*\* TOEFL 600 paper based >= 600 with a minimum score on Test of Written English of 6.0 TOEFL 250 computer based >= 250 and Test of Written English 6.0 GCSE English Grade C*

### The Use of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APEL)

The University regulations allow students to receive an award of credits towards a programme on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred at some point in the past and is appropriate to the

programme both in content and currency. The award of credits can be based on learning for which certification has been awarded by an educational institution or another education/training provider e.g. a relevant credit rated unit completed elsewhere or uncertificated learning gained from experience (APEL).

All APL applications must be approved in line with the University's overall policy on the award of APL. The maximum number of credits allowable for APL (subject to any programme requirements) is:

MSc                      60 credits (APL credits will not count towards the dissertation.)

PgDip                30 credits

PgCert                15 credits

Students wishing to be considered for APL should contact the programme director.

[intense\_snippet snippet\_id=6926 snippet\_title=SHS Interruptions from the Programme]

### **Maternity Leave**

Maternity leave is arranged through the student's employer and the programme director will assist in planning course completion around the students mat leave dates.

### **Clinical Skills Laboratory Student Conduct**

The following regulations must be followed by students when using the Clinical Skills laboratories:

- Shoulder length hair must be neatly tied back and preferably off the collar.
- No rings with stones, bracelets or wrists watches to be worn.
- Wear suitable non-restrictive clothing (sleeves above the elbow; no coats or scarves).
- Wear appropriate footwear (closed toes and heels, secure on foot, flat or broad low heel).
- Students who turn up late to a skills session may be refused entry at the discretion of the facilitator / lecturer (the student may have missed important health and safety instructions at the start of the session).
- On entering the laboratory bags, coats scarves and hats are to be placed in the area designated by the facilitator / lecturer.
- Mobile telephones must be switched off.
- No food or beverages to be consumed in the laboratory, including chewing gum.
- Immediately report breakages or faulty equipment to the facilitator / lecturer.
- Immediately report accidents or other adverse incidents to the facilitator / lecturer and complete the appropriate incident reporting form.

### **Behaviour and Professional Conduct/Patient Safety**

- When this is relevant to their care, patients are informed of the status of registered practitioners as learners on the programme.
- Patients are enabled to give their informed consent for their engagement with practitioners as learners.

## Attendance guidelines

We are very aware of and experienced in delivering a part time programme of education to adult students who are also engaged in clinical practice. Course units are therefore arranged to take this into consideration, so far as is possible. Course units are not usually delivered over the main holiday periods at Christmas, Easter and the main summer holiday period, and many course units will make an effort to accommodate Division half terms (this is slightly more problematic as different Local Education Authorities have different half term dates).

It is expected that all students will attend **all taught sessions**; however, you are **required to attend at least 80%** of taught sessions for each programme unit. This regulation applies equally to course units that are delivered on-line. For e-learning/on-line course units the measure will be whether or not you accessed and participated in the course unit within the seven days it was delivered. If, due to illness or other circumstances, you are unable to attend you need to inform the programme secretary. Registers will be taken in order to monitor attendance.

## Credits and Student Effort

In order to ensure parity and equity throughout the programme, course unit specifications are standardised for the MSc degree. From the first day of attendance to the handing in of course work, the length of time is normally 15 weeks for a 15-credit unit and 20 weeks for 30 credits (with the exception of the dissertation unit). For each 15 credit unit there is a standard 200 hours of student effort and this is 400 hours for 30 credits. Student effort consists of contact time, which is normally 42 hours for a 15 credit unit and 84 hours for a 30 credit unit, directed, and self-directed study.

### An example of student effort for a 15 credit unit:

|                     |                                                                               |          |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Contact time        | Lectures, tutorials, seminars, group discussion, PBL                          | 40 hours |
|                     | Personal tutorial time                                                        | 2 hours  |
| Directed study      | Completion of practical and/or theoretical assessment                         | 79 hours |
| Self-directed study | Reading and other scholarly activity chosen to achieve the learning outcomes. | 79 hours |

## Currency of Credits

There is no limit to the number of stand-alone units a student can do before registering for the MSc programme.

Stand-alone units undertaken in the CPD portfolio will be counted towards the MSc programme, provided they were commenced within three years from the date of registration with the degree programme and provided a mark of 50% or above was awarded. Units commenced outside the three

year time frame will not be counted towards the MSc.

A student who fails a stand-alone unit below the pass mark (i.e. 50%) would have to wait until three years had elapsed from the date of commencing that unit before they could register for the MSc programme. They would be entitled to continue with other stand-alone units during that period.

## Completion of Course Units

Normally each unit must be completed and ratified as passed within two years of the commencement of the course unit.

All course units must be passed in order to obtain the award. No compensation is permitted; this has been approved as an exemption to the University's PGT degree regulations.

## ASSESSMENT

### Range of Assessments

A range of assessments are utilised within the programme in order to assess students' knowledge, understanding, and developing intellectual, practical and key transferable skills. This includes examinations, both seen and unseen that require the student to demonstrate their knowledge of underpinning subjects and apply this knowledge under controlled conditions. Individual and group seminars utilised enable students' knowledge and skills to be assessed through verbal presentations to academic and clinical staff and fellow students. The ability to communicate information and understanding using this format is an essential skill that will be required throughout students' nursing careers. Group work also allow for assessment of students' abilities to work together as a team.

Programmes use a variety of assessment methods. In this programme some examples of the methods used include:

- Written Assignments
- Seminar Presentations
- Written Examinations
- Poster Presentations
- Audio/Visual Recorded assessment
- Assessment in Practice through Practice Assessment Documents (PADs) and OSCEs

### An example of standardised assessment

#### Theoretical assessment

| Unit creditRating | Notional Assignment Length/Student Effort                      |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 15                | 150 hours of student effort3,500 words +/- 10%<br>date week 15 |

30 credits

300 hours of student effort  
7,000 +/- 10%  
Hand in week 20

### **Equivalent assessment**

One hour examination

1,750  $\pm$  10% words

Two hour examination

3,500  $\pm$  10% words

Management of the Assessment Process

## **University and Professional Requirements for Progression**

In order to Progress to the dissertation course unit of your MSc programme you must have completed and passed 120 Credits at Level 7 (FHEQ 7).

All course units must be passed in order to obtain the award. No compensation is permitted; this has been approved as an exemption to the University's PGT degree regulations.

### **Criteria for Success**

See Course Unit Guide.

### **Failure to Achieve in Clinical Practice**

You are expected to achieve all the standards or competencies and practice skills specified for each unit. Failure to achieve one of the outcomes specified will constitute a fail grade being awarded.

If you are not making satisfactory progress at any time you should be informed. These events must be documented within an intermediate report and your personal teacher contacted.

### **Practice Assessment**

**Like academic assessments, all practice assessments need to be passed in order for an award to be conferred.**

- Assessment documentation is your personal and professional responsibility and should not be given to clinical staff for safe keeping or to take away and complete. You will be fully responsible for document loss.
- You will need to secure a mentor prior to commencing the unit. A mentor will have responsibility to assess you in practice making both verbal and written comment. Each mentor should have a copy of the Programme Specific guidelines/mentors handbook. This can be obtained from your Course Unit Leader if required.
- Another appropriately qualified member of staff, working in that clinical placement, may carry out the function of the associate mentor for individual aspects of practice but the mentor will have overall responsibility for assessment. Placement Mentor Alone Determines a Pass / Fail.
- The mentor will give verbal and written comments on your progress in achieving the desired outcomes and practice skills. This will be assessed continuously as you move through the units and specifically both midway and at the end of the unit. The mentor signs the standards document to verify success in the practical aspects of the unit.

- The Course Unit Leader should be contacted if you encounter difficulty in being able to organise these meetings.
- Both mentor and student need to be familiar with the documentation before any entries are made. Should there be any problems associated with the understanding of this documentation the Course Unit Leader should be contacted.
- Completed practice assessment documents should be returned by the specified date to the receiving office.
- There is a word limit set for the evidence and reflection recorded within the Practice Assessment Document. The required word limit will be indicated on the document guidelines.

*For any student who has cited throughout their summative assessment submission but failed to provide a reference list, the assessment will be marked, following which a 10% reduction will be applied by the marker. A comment will be provided in the feedback noting the absence of a reference list. This change does not replace or impact the policy pertaining to academic malpractice.*

**(xii) It is important to ensure that the practical assessment document is adequately completed. The Verification Sheet must be signed and dated by your mentor and by you. Only original signatures (no photocopies) will be accepted. If you are experiencing any difficulty in completing the practice assessment document you are strongly advised to talk to your Course Unit Leader or to contact the Examinations Office rather than submit the document incomplete or incorrectly recorded.**