

MSc Specialist Practice Cancer Pathway 25/26

Description

Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health School of Health Sciences Division of
Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work

MSc Specialist Practice Cancer Pathway

Continuing Professional Development

Student Handbook 2025-2026

Version: July 2025

MSc / PgD / PgC Specialist Practice, Cancer pathway *The contents of this handbook may be subject to change throughout the academic year. Please check Canvas for any updates.*

Division Contact Details

Division of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work
University of Manchester
Jean McFarlane Building
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Division Website ?? [Click Here](#)

Programme Staff

Programme Director | Simon Burrow | Room 6.305, Jean McFarlane Building |
simon.burrow@manchester.ac.uk

Admissions Administration | Room G.314, Jean McFarlane Building |
cpd.nursing@manchester.ac.uk

Programme Support Office | Room G.304, Jean McFarlane Building |
shs.programmes@manchester.ac.uk

Introduction to the Programme



Director's welcome

Welcome to the MSc Specialist Practice Cancer. The duration of the Programme

can be undertaken over 1 year full time or between 2-5 years part time commencing at the start date of the first course unit following your registration onto the Programme, concluding at the Exam Board ratifying the Research Dissertation results. We hope you find this handbook helpful to you as you progress through your study, and would strongly advise that you become familiar with the contents of the handbook, but you may also seek advice or clarification from the programme team at any time. The underpinning philosophy of the MSc Specialist Practice is theory embedded in practice. Specialist pathways exist within the programme which offer a selection of course units designed to enhance your clinical specialist knowledge and skills. The programme design also allows students to undertake individual course units for reasons of continual professional development, without registration for the award of a degree. The MSc programme is 180 academic credits with exit points at Post Graduate Certificate (60 Credits) and Post Graduate Diploma (120 Credits). Stand alone level 7 units undertaken from the CPD portfolio may be counted towards the MSc Specialist Practice Cancer programme provided that: these will normally have been commenced within three years from the date of registration on the MSc Programme and they must have been awarded a mark of 50% or above.

Students may, in exceptional circumstances, as judged by the exam board and based on evidence, be permitted to have an additional exceptional interruption period of up to a maximum of 12 months.

There is no limit to the maximum number of stand-alone modules a student can complete before registering for the MSc A.P.L. Programme however please note that this may affect funding options regarding applying for a student loan.

Simon Burrow
Programme Director MSc Specialist Practice Cancer

An Introduction to PGT Degree Regulations for Students is available at: [Regulations](#) | [Academic-related regulations](#) | [Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#) | [The University of Manchester](#)

Programme Director Role and Support

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:

Simon Burrow, Programme Director | Room 6.305, Jean McFarlane Building | Simon.burrow@manchester.ac.uk

Programme Support Office location & postal address

The Programme Support Office is located in Room G.304 on the ground floor of the Jean McFarlane Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL | shs.programmes@manchester.ac.uk

Unit Leaders Role and Support

Each unit has a designated leader who is responsible for managing the teaching and assessment process for a specific unit. This individual is also there to guide you regarding all issues relating to the specific unit.

Academic Advisors

Each student is assigned an Academic Advisor at the beginning of their degree. This will be a member of the academic staff in your department who can offer support and advice on academic and pastoral matters, and are key to the School's student support structure.

You will meet with your Academic Advisor during Welcome Week, and will then have one-to-one meetings throughout the semester to discuss academic progress, steps taken towards career planning, and professional and personal development.

You can also seek advice from other quarters, for example, the Student Union Welfare Section, or the Student Health Care and Counselling Service.

Overall Programme Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes

The aim of the programme is to offer students an inter-professional opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills relevant to different practice settings and health/social care domains.

Successful completion of the programme will equip students to undertake high level strategic and leadership roles in a range of specialities.

The educational aims detailed below are those for the MSc, PgD and PgCert in Specialist Practice. The detail re: the design and delivery of the first pathway of the programme relate to the cancer pathway. The inter-profession pathway is the result of a collaboration between the Faculty of biology, medicine

and health and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust. This collaboration gives strength and validation to the central tenet of the pathway, namely the integration of theory and practice.

Aims of the Programme

- Provide a flexible, multi-professional programme of clinically relevant postgraduate study to promote the development of practitioners recognised as expert, specialist practitioners in their own practice setting
- Advance specialist 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 patients/service users 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
- Facilitate practitioners 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
- 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.

Intended Learning Outcomes of the Programme

Knowledge and understanding

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

1. Synthesise the theoretical and philosophical perspectives underpinning the range of knowledge relevant to their own practice setting
2. Systematically and critically examine the evidence base relating to the area of clinical practice
3. 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
4. Critically evaluate the rationale and optimal methods of engaging patients/service users and their families in the co-production of healthcare services
5. 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
6. Critically engage with the principles and respective processes for ethics, clinical governance and other legal and policy frameworks relevant to the specific practice setting

7. Formulate the contemporary issues and challenges inherent in the management of clinical practice including strategies to ensure equitable access to healthcare services for all members of the general population
8. Demonstrate a critical synthesis of theoretical knowledge/evidence and their own clinical practice and that of their peers

Intellectual skills

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

1. Critically evaluate the limitations of extant knowledge, evidence, policy and practice within the relevant practice setting
2. Formulate and resolve complex clinical problems through critical reasoning and synthesis of information from a range of sources
3. Critically evaluate leadership strategies designed to drive service improvements/quality
4. Engage critically with the theoretical frameworks/models underpinning advanced clinical practice
5. Critically appraise contemporary approaches to patient and public involvement in service design, delivery and audit and patient and public engagement in the dissemination of research findings
6. Complete and report upon a project, demonstrating an in-depth knowledge of appropriate methods and a critical engagement with an aspect of advanced clinical practice

Practical skills

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

1. Practice competently extant and newly developed advanced clinical skills in the relevant practice setting, informed by a critical understanding of recognized theory and contemporary evidence
2. Facilitate, manage and assess changes in practice to drive improvements in clinical practice and health/social care outcomes
3. Contribute to meeting the learning and educational needs of other practitioners and those who use healthcare services
4. Work with patients/service users and their families in the co-production of healthcare services
5. Search, retrieve and appraise different sources of evidence to illuminate complex clinical practice issues
6. Under supervision, complete a project using an appropriate design and methods in line with good practice principles and guidance (MSc only)

Transferable skills & personal qualities

Having successfully completed the programme students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate innovation in the application of knowledge to advanced clinical practice
2. Use skills in systematic and creative approaches to solving problems and making decisions in relation to complex issues in advanced clinical practice and service delivery
3. Demonstrate effective and collaborative leadership and team working.
4. Effectively utilise technology, develop digital competence and IT skills.

- # Programme Structure

Number of credits required: 30 compulsory (C) + 90 optional (O) = 120 credits

Advanced Evidence Based Practice	30 credits (C)
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Choice from a range of PGT units (appendix 4)	90 credits (O)
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Programme **MSc in Specialist Practice (cancer pathway)**

Number of credits required: 90 compulsory (C) + 90 optional (O) = 180 credits

Advanced Evidence Based Practice	30 credits (C)
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Choice from a range of PGT units (appendix 4)	90 credits (O)
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Dissertation	60 credits (C)
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Individual student specialist practice pathways will be planned in partnership between the student and programme director/pathway lead.

Programme and Course Unit Evaluation

Programmes are continually developed to meet the needs of Students, Public Services and government. All programmes undergo an annual review, where information from a range of sources are reflected upon to enhance the quality of the programme. All staff develop the programme through their specialisms and research undertaken.

In addition to this, External Examiners are appointed to the programme, who are colleagues delivering similar programmes in other institutions throughout the UK. They not only make recommendations but assist in ensuring that the programme is delivered to a similar standard as programmes in other Universities.

Students contribute to this process through completing programme related questionnaires, discussing matters with the External Examiner and through passing comments to your student representative which are then discussed at the Programme Committee Meeting, Quality Enhancement Days and the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC).

Other sources outside the University that influence the development of programmes are practitioners within NHS Trusts, government departments, the private health sector and external agencies such as the Quality Assurance Agency, Nursing Midwifery Council and General Social Care Council.

The Division operates a system of student evaluation of units, placements and programmes. You will be asked to complete questionnaires and will be invited to participate in other evaluation exercises, such as group discussions. The results of evaluations are reviewed by the Unit Leaders, the

Programme Director, the Programme Committee and the Head of Division. All evaluations are reviewed together at the Quality Assurance Day. Any proposals for changes to the programme arising from the evaluations are considered by the Programme Committee. Student evaluations are an important part of the Division's quality assurance and enhancement processes. Please complete and return questionnaires.

Unit Leaders will always welcome any additional comments that you may wish to make informally.

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 Preparation for Mentorship where more regular provision is required.

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.

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 cpd.nursing@manchester.ac.uk.

Specific Programme Regulations

Entry Requirements

In order to fulfil the entry criteria, students must normally have: A health/social work 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 should usually have current clinical practice experience at the point of applications and those studying part-time should continue to practice throughout the duration of their studies. International applicants should usually have current clinical practice at the point of application and up to the commencement of the programme.
- **AND** for part time students completing units with practical components, 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 6.5 with no less than 6.0 on any one component or equivalent**

*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 TOFEL 250 computer based &?? 250 and Test of Written English 6.0 GCSE English Grade C. 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.

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 (APCL) 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:

- For MSc 60 credits. (APL credits will not count towards the dissertation.)
- For PgDip 30 credits
- For PgCert 15 credits.

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

Sharing Information

The University may share appropriate information relating to your health and/or conduct with external organisations such as your professional employer(s) (for example, relevant NHS Trust Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), placement and training providers and/or regulator (such as [Note &?? ideally this should be tailored for each programme handbook, with the name of the relevant regulator included]). This may occur where concerns in relation to your health and/or conduct arise and the University considers it necessary for them to be disclosed to one or more of the above organisations.

The University's Privacy Notice for Registered Students (which is accessible via this link: <http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/data-collection-notice/>) includes further information about how the University may use and process your personal data, including the legal basis and conditions which may be relevant to such processing (see section 6 of the Privacy Notice).

The University will only disclose special category data (such as data relating to your health) to a third party organisation where one of the additional conditions are satisfied (see section 9 of the Privacy Notice), including where processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest.

Sharing of information between the University and Employers

Students who are seconded to the University from their employer for a Programme of study should note the following: The University reserves the right to share information about student progress and attendance with seconding employers.

- The University will respond to reasonable requests by employers for such information and may on occasion seek information from employers.
- Agreement to the sharing of such information for seconded students is a pre-requisite for entry and continuation on programmes of study.
- Students who wish to be excluded from this agreement should formally notify the Programme Director in writing, who will relay this information to the seconding employer.

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 wrist 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.

Confidentiality

By the nature of practice, students will be exposed to confidential information about patients/clients and others. Breaching confidentiality may only be appropriate in exceptional circumstances. Inappropriate breaching of confidentiality is a betrayal of trust, a serious matter and as such may lead to disciplinary action by the employer or university. You are reminded that information you are exposed to, may fall into two categories:

- i) that for use within the Public Domain which is open and accessible, and
- ii) that which falls within the Private Domain and is confidential.

There is also information that is deemed to be in the public's interest but not necessarily readily available. Care should be taken to ensure that these aspects of information/confidentiality are properly addressed within student work. If you are unclear on this subject, you should seek clarification from your Course Unit Leader.

You must not give information to the Press regarding events which take place in the Division of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work or any of the placement areas. Any enquiries from the Press must be directed to the Head of Division or the Senior Officer (if in a clinical placement). If you are requested to make a statement, help and advice should be sought from your personal tutor.

Although you are free to publish your own work, you are strongly advised to seek tutorial guidance first, since any work submitted for examination/assessment purposes remains the copyright of the Division.

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 Personal tutorial time	40 hours 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 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 compensatable mark (i.e. 39%) 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.

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.

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. 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.

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.

External Examiners

External Examiners are individuals from another institution or organisation who monitor the assessment processes of the University to ensure fairness and academic standards. They ensure that assessment and examination procedures have been fairly and properly implemented and that decisions have been made after appropriate deliberation. They also ensure that standards of awards and levels of student performance are at least comparable with those in equivalent higher education institution External Examiners

Reports

External Examiners's reports relating to this programme will be shared with student representatives at the Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC)/programme committee/other appropriate forum (specify), where details of any actions carried out by the programme team/Division in response to the External Examiners's comments will be discussed. Students should contact their student representatives if they require any further information about External Examiners's reports or the process for considering them.

The External Examiner for elective cancer units on this programme is:

Name: **Dr Clare McVeigh**

Name of Institution: **Queen's University Belfast**

Position at current Institution: **Senior Lecturer/ Academic Lead for Practice**

Please note that it is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners under any circumstances, in particular with regards to a student's individual performance in assessments. Other appropriate mechanisms are available for students, including the University's appeals or complaints procedures and the UMSU Advice Centre. In cases where a student does contact an External Examiner directly, External Examiners have been requested not to respond to direct queries. Instead, External Examiners should report the matter to their Division contact who will then contact the student to remind them of the other methods available for students. If students have any queries concerning this, they should contact their Programme Office (or equivalent).

Project/Dissertation Arrangements

Students progressing to the dissertation will, under the supervision of a nominated academic (and where appropriate a practice) supervisor, complete a 12,000 – 15,000 word, dissertation related to a specific aspect of nursing practice, policy, research or education. Detailed dissertation guidelines are provided in the programme handbook. Each student will be allocated an individual dissertation supervisor who is an academic member of staff with relevant expertise, knowledge and experience in graduate supervision. Key milestones for achievement will be negotiated and set out very clearly and students will be required to submit formatively assessed components of their developing project/dissertation. All dissertation students are entitled to the equivalent of 20 hours individual supervision which includes time spent by the supervisor reading drafts. It is the student's

responsibility to initiate and maintain contact with their supervisor. The dissertation will be assessed independently by two internal examiners and a sample is sent to the external examiner for the programme.

Students are required to follow the University guidance for Taught Masters Dissertation [Guidance for the presentation of Taught Masters dissertations](#). The guidance explains the required presentation of the dissertation, and failure to follow the instructions in the guidance may result in the dissertation being rejected by the examiners.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=6914 snippet_title=SHS Health and Conduct Committee]

Harassment is unwanted conduct that may create the effect (intentionally or unintentionally) of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment which interferes with an individual's learning, working or social environment or induces stress, anxiety or sickness on the part of the harassed person.

Discrimination takes place when an individual or a group of people is treated less favourably than others because of their race, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, status as a civil partner, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation or other factors unrelated to their ability or potential.

Bullying can be defined as repeated or persistent actions, criticism or personal abuse, either in public or private, which (intentionally or unintentionally) humiliates, denigrates, undermines, intimidates or injures the recipient. It should, in particular, be borne in mind that much bullying occurs in the context of a power imbalance between victims and alleged perpetrators.