Programme Specification

Assistant Practitioner (Mental Health) [UCS]

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Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Assistant Practitioner (Mental Health) [UCS]

Highest award: FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Mental Health)

Interim award: CertHE Assistant Practitioner (Mental Health)

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Affiliated institutions: UCS

Teaching institutions: UCS

Study abroad: Yes

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CHSS School of Health and Social Wellbeing, College of Health, Science & Society

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies:

Department for Education (DfE)

Modes of delivery: Full-time

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website

For implementation from: 01 September 2023

Programme code: B82M13

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: Supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of adults requires knowledgeable, skilled and compassionate practitioners. This programme aims to develop the skills and knowledge of individuals currently working within social care and mental health services. It is a vocational higher education qualification, which integrates both theory and work-based learning, in order to increase individual's knowledge and skills in the delivery of person-centered care.

This two-year programme is a route for individuals to develop their current practice in social care and mental health settings. On successful completion of the programme you may be eligible to apply for advanced entry to a BSc(Hons) health and social care programme (for example BSc(Hons) Nursing), or top up to a BSc (Hons) non-professionally regulated programme, for example the UWE BSc (Hons) Health and Social Care.

Students are required to be in suitable employment and undertake mandatory work placement throughout the programme. The suitability of work placement settings must be agreed by the designated College or University Centre.

The Programme will enable individuals to have the evidence base to support their practice and allow them to work in an effective and informed way, with adults who require support with mental health and wellbeing. The ability to deliver evidence based care, to challenge opinions, to evaluate their own work and to cope with the demands of the dynamic nature of nursing is fundamental to this preparation. The programme also fulfils a need identified within professional networks organised through Health Education England (South West) to provide clear and appropriate career pathways particularly within the field of mental health and a qualification that will also support the creation of Band 4 assistant practitioners.

Features of the programme:

Educational Aims: The broad aims of this programme are as follows:

Contribute to local employer aims for improved performance, recruitment and retention strategies through negotiation of mutually beneficial work based learning opportunities.

To produce practitioners who understand, adhere to and promote professional codes of conduct and standards of practice.

Develop students' ability to become autonomous learners and to reflect upon personal skill development, thus encouraging life-long learning.

Enable progression to further study, including top up to honours degree programmes.

Widen access to Higher Education in this field.

Specific Aims:

To provide students with high quality teaching and learning experiences that are relevant to careers in the mental health and social care sectors.

Develop subject specific knowledge and understanding appropriate to the delivery of high quality care and service improvement.

To develop the capacity for critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis, through the application of knowledge to a wide range of contexts relating to study within the broad field of mental health and social care.

Develop appropriate research and communication skills to underpin safe and high quality practice that meets professional codes of practice.

Prepare students to use skills developed in an employment context, enabling them to work independently and collaboratively within their designated remit.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1. Demonstrate skills in evaluation; audit; critical appraisal; and research, in order to evaluate professional skills and intervention, enhancing clinical effectiveness; and reflective and evidence based practice.

PO2. Use professional reasoning and problem-solving skills to underpin safe, effective and ethical interventions; promoting equality and respecting the rights, beliefs and identity of individuals and communities

PO3. Demonstrate understanding of leadership roles and the ability to apply leadership skills in the political and policy context of practice

PO4. Demonstrate the knowledge, understanding, and application of the fundamental holistic, personalisation, and scientific principles, approaches, theories, perspectives and factors that underpin and apply to mental health practice

PO5. Recognise the nature and range of provision within mental health and social care services and how interdisciplinary approaches to care impact on the individual, their families and carers

PO6. Demonstrate the communication and collaborative working skills necessary to develop effective and collaborative relationships, and work effectively with service users, carers, families, members of the interprofessional team and other agencies

PO7. Undertake collaborative assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of care for people experiencing mental health difficulties, recognising the protective factors which support wellbeing

PO8. Work at an appropriate technical and occupational level, using relevant and appropriate assessment, diagnostic and risk management skills, and evidence-based interventions, in order to meet the fundamental needs of care and support and promote the health and wellbeing of people with mental health needs

PO9. Demonstrate the ability to recognise and respond appropriately and effectively in changing situations of care, including safeguarding concerns, and act independently where appropriate at a competent level

PO10. Understand and effectively apply principles of quality assurance and/or clinical governance to practice

PO1 1. Use skills in management of self; workload; health; and continuing personal and professional development effectively

Assessment strategy: The FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Mental Health) incorporates a range of assessment types based on the programme learning outcomes, resulting in a coherent overall assessment which evaluates the whole range of attributes required of advanced practitioners. As far as possible, assessments are spread through the academic year to allow learners to manage their time, and to minimise anxiety caused by bunching of assessments.

Learner engagement is encouraged through the use of authentic assessments which mirror the characteristics of their practice, such as presentations, or encourage them to consider enhancements they could make to their practice.

The requirements of each assessment are clearly defined, to maximise learners' engagement with the programme and to aid learners to recognise the value of assessment as a form of learning. Staff are strenuous in providing good quality feedback which also incorporates feed-forward advice so that learners build their confidence and competence.

The overall programme assessment considers the competencies, knowledge and attributes required of an advanced practitioner in health and social care, while individual modules contribute varied approaches. Skills such as presentations and digital literacy maximise inclusivity and enables learners with different aptitudes to demonstrate their learning, while transferable skills such as report writing are elements of other assessments.

Student support: Learners are principally aligned to the establishment delivering the programme, who provide academic, pastoral and workplace support. In addition, Learners have access to UWE support mechanisms and facilities.

Learners have the usual support mechanisms associated with employment in their workplace, and in addition, have an identified workplace mentor. Arrangements vary

between providers, but learners are also able to access support from the academic team delivering the programme at the partner institution.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UZYYLT-30-1	Anatomy and Physiology 2025-26	30
UZYYM9-30-1	Clinical Practice in Mental Health 1 2025-26	30
UZYYLV-15-1	Communication for Practice 2025-26	15
UZYYLW-30-1	Psychology and Sociology of Health 2025-26	30
UZYYMC-15-1	Risk Management for Mental Health 2025-26	15

Year 2

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 2

Year 2 Compulsory Modules

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UZYYMA-20-2	Clinical Practice in Mental Health 2 2026-27	20
UZYYM3-15-2	Methods of Enquiry 2026-27	15
UZYYM4-40-2	Occupational Case Study 2026-27	40

UZYYM5-15-2	Principles of Leadership and Management 2026-27	15
UZYYMB-15-2	Professional Assessment for Mental Health 2026-27	15
UZYYM6-15-2	Professional Development 2026-27	15

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

This programme is centered on the development of individuals who can respond professionally and skillfully to work challenges in mental health and social care, who are able to communicate effectively with clients and colleagues in the wider multi-disciplinary teams, and have the confidence to work autonomously within their skill set and sphere of responsibility. The programme covers the core knowledge and skills required in mental health and social care, including interpersonal communication skills, the application of appropriate health models to practice, psychology, sociology, anatomy, physiology, health and disease, pharmacology, mental health literacy, the influence and impact of social relationships, crisis care, research and assessment of skills competency in practice. Students will emerge with comprehensive understanding of factors that influence both the cause of poor mental health or social circumstance and the resulting care that may be offered.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education:
Foundation Degree Characteristics statement (2015)
The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf)

Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education:
Apprenticeship Standards
(https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/healthcare-assistant-practitioner/)

Skills for Health:
Career frameworks and qualification pathways
(https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/careerframework/?sec=qp)

Mental Health Core Skills Education and Training Framework: Framework Subjects 2016

Mental Health Core Skills Education and Training Framework: Tier 3 learning outcomes

BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health)

UWE Strategy 2030
UWE University policies

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.