

Nursing Cadet Programme - Departmental Curriculum Statement

Curriculum Intent Statement

The Nurse Cadet programme has been extremely successful, since its launch in 2017. The programme is equivalent to three A-levels and provides valuable experience in a variety of different health care settings, primarily in the NHS and local care provider settings. Cadets will spend two days a week on placement in a hospital, equivalent to over 800 hours of work experience. All students will be expected to wear a uniform during their studies and this will be provided. This course offers students the ability to choose the most appropriate pathway for them into a number of health care professions.

For some this will lead directly onto a Nursing degree followed by a successful career in Nursing. Others may follow the Nursing Apprenticeship route, or work as a care assistant in a hospital with a view to eventually becoming a nurse. Learners will benefit from gaining a number of mandatory units as well as a wide range of optional and specialist optional units according to the route embarked on. They will also benefit from gaining work experience in the sectors. These opportunities will aid career choices and potentially attract learners into the sectors.

The specification lends itself to creative delivery, using learners' work experience as a focal point and enabling learning to be as active, practical and work-related as possible. Alongside this, it provides robust opportunities for learners to gain knowledge and understanding of a wide range of subject areas relating to health and social care. The variety of endorsed titles enables learners to focus on a sector of particular interest or relevance to them, whilst the unendorsed pathway enables those learners who are unsure of potential career pathways to gain a more general health and social care qualification. The units that are common to all endorsed titles provide opportunities for flexible delivery within centres. The BTEC Nationals in Health and Social Care encourage a holistic approach with strong links identified between the delivery and assessment of appropriate units. A key feature is also the opportunity throughout the duration of the programme for learners to produce a personal and professional development portfolio, which links many aspects of their programme, as well as experiences outside the programme.

Curriculum Implementation Statement

In response to a National shortage of Nursing and Care professionals we felt that we needed to design a programme which would help our learners to gain the best possible opportunities to find employment opportunities in a wide variety of Nursing and Caring roles, also including the Allied Health professional's qualifications. This course was designed to provide a substantial element of work experience which was found to be missing in most other Level 3 courses within the local area, therefore making our Cadet Programme bespoke to the local employers needs and wishes.

We have specifically designed a two tier programme to allow a wider variety of learners to join the programme. This means we can support learners who have achieved the correct GCSE profile to continue on a pathway towards a Level 4 qualification, and also those students who have not yet achieved a grade 4 or above in English & Mathematics GCSE, in the hope of finding them employment opportunities within the care sector that perhaps do not require such a high level of qualification, whilst still providing these learners with a breath of knowledge and experience that employers need. We have forged excellent relationships with the local H&SC providers including St Helens & Knowsley NHS Trust a variety of local Care homes and Childcare providers, including placements that cater for children with special needs. This provides our learners with the opportunity to experience the full breath of nursing pathways and be able to make an informed choice as which area they wish to pursue their careers in.

Our curriculum is organised within this programme to provide our learners a core of underpinning knowledge, skills and understanding, and a range of options to reflect the breadth of pathways in a sector. This gives learners the opportunity to gain a broad understanding and knowledge of the Health & Social Care sector as well being able to investigate areas of specific interest. The curriculum is designed to develop essential skills and attributes prized by employers, further education colleges and higher education institutions.

Students studying on the Nurse Cadet Programme at Cowley will start their learning by studying the Core skills that all employers especially those working with in the NHS which underpins their knowledge of the Health Care industry. Following that they study portfolio-based units which culminate in a synoptic/coursework and internal assessments which will require them to utilise all of the skills and knowledge they have acquired in previous units of work.

Curriculum Beyond the Classroom

On the Cadet Programme students will undertake approximately 800 hours of work experience which will span all of the various aspects of Nursing care including Adult, Paediatric, Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Midwifery services.

Experience of the different Health & Social care settings is vital to understanding and developing skills in this sector. As a result, we arrange several guest speakers and we ensure that the mandatory placement hours are supported effectively by our work-related mentors so that student have the greatest possible opportunities to broaden their understanding and experiences of the Health & Social care sector, and make a very informed choice of future career.

Subject Expertise

All staff delivering Health & Social care have delivered the curriculum at Level 2 and Level 3 for over five years. All have relevant qualifications to at least degree level, the Course co-ordinator is a Qualified Nurse. All new members of staff are given a full set of resources, including a mock hospital bed, first aid facilities and access to the NHS simulation training rooms.

All students have access to our study suite where students are supported with their assignments and assessments. And all of the classrooms are fully equipped with ICT facilities so that the students can complete their coursework effectively and efficiently. All coursework is electronically tracked and assessed and student have the opportunity to electronically access work from home.

Destinations

As this is a Level 3 Qualification the students have a wide variety of pathways to follow. We have designed two pathways within the course curriculum so the students will have a variety of opportunities available to them. For the vast majority of students they will progress onto a Nursing Degree course including either Adult, Paediatric, Mental health, Learning disabilities or Midwifery. If the students do not achieve a sufficient GCSE profile including English and Maths GCSE, we have included the opportunity for our students to study Functional skills which is a qualification accepted on both the NHS apprenticeship route and also the Associate Nurse Programme currently being offered at Edge Hill university.

All of the student on the programme are offered the chance to join the Nurse bank at St Helens & Knowsley NHS Trust which provides the students with an opportunity to gain employment within the Trust in the hope of gaining extra experience in the holidays and weekends, and the possibility or gaining employment in the future. Some of our students have chosen to follow a Childcare pathway and have taken up the opportunity of an apprenticeship in this field, whilst other have gained employment in the Care sector as a Care Assistant, both in the NHS and Private sectors. 100% of all of our qualifying students currently have some form of employment in the care sector or are successfully studying for a Degree in Nursing.