



LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY

# Course Specification

Postgraduate Diploma  
Community Specialist  
Practitioner - District  
Nursing

Course Code: CSDDN

2026/27

# Postgraduate Diploma Community Specialist Practitioner - District Nursing (CSDDN)

## Applicant Facing Course Specification for 2026/27 Entrants

Confirmed at November 2025

### General Information

<b>Award</b>	Postgraduate Diploma Community Specialist Practitioner - District Nursing
<b>Contained awards</b>	Postgraduate Certificate Health Related Studies
<b>Awarding body</b>	Leeds Beckett University
<b>Level of qualification and credits</b>	Level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, with 120 credit points at Level 7 of the Higher Education Credit Framework for England.
<b>Course lengths and standard timescales</b>	<p>Start dates will be notified to students via their offer letter. The length and mode of delivery of the course is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 months (full time, campus based)</li></ul>
<b>Location(s) of delivery</b>	The majority of teaching will be at City campus but on occasion may be at Headingley campus, plus the location of work placement.
<b>Entry requirements</b>	<p>Admissions criteria are confirmed in your offer letter. Details of how the University recognises prior learning and supports credit transfer are located here: <a href="https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/student-information/course-information/recognition-of-prior-learning/">https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/student-information/course-information/recognition-of-prior-learning/</a></p> <p>Admissions enquiries may be directed to: <a href="mailto:AdmissionsEnquiries@leedsbeckett.ac.uk">AdmissionsEnquiries@leedsbeckett.ac.uk</a>.</p>
<b>Course fees</b>	<p>Course fees are confirmed in your offer letter. A breakdown of any additional costs is included on the online prospectus entry for this course.</p> <p>Fees enquiries may be directed to <a href="mailto:Fees@leedsbeckett.ac.uk">Fees@leedsbeckett.ac.uk</a>.</p>

### Policies, Standards and Regulations

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/our-university/public-information/academic-regulations/>

Standard regulations apply to this course except where noted below.

### Fitness to Practise

Template last updated: September 2025

The course is authorised to use the University Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedure. Students are expected to act in a professional manner at all times in line with the Policy. Any concerns will be discussed with the student and if employed, the employer, in the first instance. The Policy and Procedure link: [https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/policies/student/ups\\_fitness\\_to\\_practise\\_policy\\_procedure.pdf](https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/policies/student/ups_fitness_to_practise_policy_procedure.pdf)

### **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) - requests for credit transfer**

The maximum credit transfer for a Postgraduate Diploma is 60 credits under the Academic Regulations. For students who already hold a Non-Medical Prescribing V300 qualification:

- RPL requests will be subject to mapping to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2021) Competency Framework.
- For RPL requests for qualifications at level 7 for 30 credits or at level 6, students will also be able to apply for Recognition of Experiential Learning through the submission of a critical reflection. Guidance and tutorial support will be provided for this process.

### **All assessments to be passed**

- All components of assessments must be passed at the threshold mark for the assignment or a pass for pass/fail marking to pass a module.
- All components of assessment and all modules must be passed to achieve the award.
- There can be no compensation or condoning of marks by the Exam Board.

### **Pass/fail marking of assessments**

The following components of assessment have pass/fail marking:

- Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner: Practice Assessment (mid-point), Practice Assessment (final practice) and Academic Assessment ePortfolio.
- Non-Medical Prescribing: Two examinations, systematic examination of practice, record of prescribing related practice.

### **Non-Medical Prescribing**

While Non-Medical Prescribing is a 40-credit module within this course, it is also separately approved by the NMC (V300). The practice hours and practice assessment are dealt with separately in the last semester of the course. Students must satisfy the criteria for this element of their course to comply with NMC standards.

Two assessments have pass marks above the threshold pass mark: the examination has a pass mark of 80% and the numerical assessment examination has a pass mark of 100%. The overall mark is pass/fail for both assessments.

An exception to the regulations to allow for a 3rd attempt at the pharmacology and numeracy exams.

### **Non-Medical Prescribing module and the District Nursing target award**

To meet NMC requirements, students who complete the Non-Medical Prescribing module but do not successfully complete the target award, will not receive credit for the Non-Medical Prescribing module and will receive credit for the CPD Evidencing Professional Learning module instead. The NMC has advised that 'the integration of V300 into a post-registration programme means that the award/ qualification is predicated on successful completion of both, as the students' prescribing practice in practice assessment is integrated to their SPQ practice. One therefore cannot be awarded without the other.'

### **In-level stage for mid-point assessment for practice in Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner**

There is a summative assessment of practice midway through the course in the module Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner. The student's Practice Assessor in practice is responsible for assessing this and signs the Confirmation of Student Progression. If a student does not pass the mid-point assessment in practice and then fails to meet the requirements set in order to retrieve this failed assessment, this will be reported to the Board of Examiners prior to the student attempting to complete the level. This may mean that the student cannot repeat the practice placement if a new placement cannot be secured. The student would then receive a 'withdraw' not 'repeat' decision from the Board of Examiners.

### **Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner ePortfolio assessment**

This module is the practice learning module whereby the student is assessed by both the Practice Assessor and Academic Assessor as meeting professional standards for practice. They do this via uploading evidence to an ePortfolio workbook against each professional standard. The summative assessments for the modules below may be used as part of this evidence in the ePortfolio without concern for self-plagiarism. These assessments are not marked again for the ePortfolio assessment in this module but may form part of the evidence. The ePortfolio has an overall pass/fail mark. The modules are:

- Compassionate Leadership
- Non-Medical Prescribing
- Public Health in Practice
- Understanding Social Research and Evaluation

### **Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner module hours**

The Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner module is linked to the NMC placement requirements which includes 50 days in practice, five days alternative placement and 50 days consolidation of practice and excludes the Non-Medical Prescribing practice hours. The practice requirement is calculated to be 844 hours of work based learning (practice hours). This 20 credit module's usual 200 notional hours have therefore been exceeded and the 1200 hours for a postgraduate diploma.

### **Contained award**

Students not meeting the requirements of the Postgraduate Diploma, may be eligible for the contained award Postgraduate Certificate Health Related Studies for the attainment of a minimum of 60 credits from any of the modules of the target award.

### **Attendance requirements**

[https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/policies/student/ups\\_academic\\_engagement\\_policy.pdf](https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/policies/student/ups_academic_engagement_policy.pdf)

In line with the Academic Engagement Policy, attendance is monitored and students are expected to attend all timetabled teaching sessions and placement. If academic engagement is not satisfactory, the Policy sets out the interventions that will be followed. Attendance is also monitored as a requirement of employers funding the course, if funded, and to ensure the NMC standard for a balance of theory and practice learning opportunities is met.

### **Reasonable adjustment plans**

Due to the professional requirements of the course, readers and scribes are not usually permitted in any exams relating to online calculations, health care numeracy assessments or practical exams. These exams and assessments replicate practice and this level of support is not reasonable in practice. Students will be supported with extra time if detailed in the reasonable adjustment plan.

### **Non-standard student calendar**

The course follows a non-standard calendar over 52 weeks due to placement requirements.

## Professional Accreditation or Recognition Associated with the Course

### Professional body

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

### Accreditation/recognition summary

The course is recognised by the NMC for the purpose of annotating the registration of a qualified nurse with:

- The title of Specialist Practitioner District Nurse, and
- Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (V300)

### NMC Recordable qualifications information

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/staying-on-the-register/adding-qualifications/>

*NMC (2023) Standards for Post-Registration Programmes, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5*

- **Specialist practitioner District Nursing:** The community nursing specialist practitioner qualification award must be registered with the NMC within five years of successfully completing the programme and if you fail to do this, you will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in NMC standards for the award to be added as an annotation to your professional registration.
- **V300 Non-Medical Prescribing:** The V300 award must be registered with the NMC within five years of successfully completing the prescribing programme. If you fail to do this, you will have to retake and successfully complete the programme in order to qualify as a prescriber. You may only prescribe once your prescribing qualification has been annotated on the NMC register and you may only prescribe from the formulary you are qualified to prescribe from and within your competence and scope of practice.

NB: It is an NMC requirement that the District Nursing target award is successfully completed in order to register V300 undertaken on this course.

## 'In Year' Work Placement Information

### Summary

This course is delivered in collaboration with healthcare employers (practice learning partners). As an NMC approved course there is a balance of time spent in the practice placement, in order to meet the theory/practice balance requirements and to allow for experiential learning. The ePortfolio facilitates this process acting as a guide to developing action plans and in self-assessment tasks. The outcome is that all students must evidence, through practice, the meeting of the NMC standards. Each module assessment also is rooted in practice learning and is based upon a work-based project. It is a requirement that all students are supernumerary to the staff establishment for practice-based learning.

### Placement Delivery

The overall course is 52 weeks and of this 45 weeks are programmed, with the remaining seven weeks taken as leave. These are detailed on the annual course calendar that is provided prior to the commencement of the course. To maintain a theory/practice balance, the expectation is that full-time students allocate their time as:

- Two days per week in practice placement when they also have two days a week in University (50 days).
- Spend up to five days in 'alternative practice'.
- Complete a 50 day 'consolidation of practice' placement towards the end of the course.

## **Location**

Placements are provided by the student's employer. If a student is self-funding, then the placement will be with a mutually agreed and quality assured placement provider.

## **Approval**

While the focus is to meet standards for specialist practice, there is scope also to plan and undertake a range of placement-based learning to broaden the scope of practice. A minimum of five days should be spent in self-sourced alternative settings. The selection of these settings can be based upon professional interest, learning needs or as opportunities arise. Past examples include working in rural teams, urban inner-city, specialist teams, or in other countries. Evidence of this experience is detailed in the ePortfolio.

## **Timetable**

Timetables for Semester 1 will be made available to students during induction week via:

- i) The Student Portal (MyBeckett)
- ii) The Leeds Beckett app

Any difficulties relating to timetabled sessions may be discussed with your Course Administrator.

## **Key Contacts**

**Your course director**

Paul Mackreth

**Your course administrator**

Sarah Holstead [s.holstead@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:s.holstead@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

## Course Overview

### Aims

This is a course for registered nurses (adult field of nursing) who wish to specialise within an area of Community Nursing Specialist Practice Qualification, District Nursing. Students consolidate their pre-registration nursing outcomes and gained a deeper understanding in relevant professional practice prior to joining the course. This is a postgraduate course that enables graduates to record on their NMC register the title of Specialist Practitioner Qualification in District Nursing (NMC 2022) and V300 Independent and Supplementary prescribing (NMC 2018, updated 2024).

Obtaining these professional qualifications allow for enhanced employment opportunities as a specialist in community nursing practice. As such the course is rooted in facilitating the achievement of meeting NMC Standards (2022 and 2023) for safe and effective Specialist Community District Nursing Practice. The course framework therefore adheres to these standards for community nursing specialist practice qualifications that are used as a basis for assessment of practice, grouped into platforms; with the addition of prescribing:

- Platform 1: Being an accountable, autonomous professional and partner in care
- Platform 2: Promoting health and wellbeing and preventing ill health
- Platform 3: Assessing people's abilities and needs, and planning care
- Platform 4: Providing and evaluating evidence-based care
- Platform 5: Leading, supporting and managing teams
- Platform 6: Leading improvements in safety and quality of care
- Platform 7: Care coordination and system leadership
- Non-Medical Prescribing (V300)

Working toward being a Specialist Community Practitioner (NMC, 2022) requires learning to respond to both individuals and population groups. These include providing an all-embracing inclusive, community-wide perspective of needs, forming multi-agency perspectives and the ability to lead and manage teams of nurses within their communities. Inevitably this should also include influencing the commissioning and procurement of services and monitoring/evaluating outcomes to ensure sustainability of resources. The course therefore prepares the practitioner to build upon alliances with a range of people and groups, such as individuals with health needs, families, communities, national and local governments, education providers, business and industry, voluntary, faith and charitable organisations. The overall aim is to improve the health of the people within communities through addressing health inequality and social injustice. This can only be done through integrated working and through dialogue.

All modules are core to the programme, and by working with students from other nursing and health disciplines who can undertake some of the modules, learning is enhanced, enabling students to acquire greater understanding of each other's roles, shared challenges and opportunities to collaboratively identify and respond to health needs across the life course.

### Course learning outcomes

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1	Demonstrate a critical understanding and application of skills, knowledge and behaviours to make a valuable contribution to improving community health and wellbeing.
2	Lead, manage and influence service improvement that is underpinned by theory and reflexive recognition of the context in delivering a range of community services.
3	Critically evaluate the breadth of the Specialist role and examine the scope for safe innovative care and effective practice.
4	Synthesise new knowledge into practice in order to achieve NMC (2022 and 2023) standards for specialist practice with independent prescribing (V300).
5	Deal with complex issues systematically and creatively to make sound and safe decisions.
6	Demonstrate professional autonomy and responsibility and a higher level of professional decision making and judgment that are in the interest of the community and individuals who require care.

## Teaching and Learning Activities

### Summary

Teaching and learning sessions mainly take place in person on campus, with the occasional activity online and also blended delivery for the Understanding Social Research and Evaluation module.

### Course induction

It is recognised that some professionals are challenged by the prospect of returning to academic study. Mid-career study is an opportunity to stand back and reflect upon approaches to nursing practice. To facilitate the transition between busy day to day nursing practice and formal postgraduate study a one week induction programme is provided. This assists in the orientation of online systems, the campus, and allows time for the student registration process, provides opportunities to create and form groups and is the commencement of course, professional and University relationships. As part of the induction to the course and specifically as part of the commencement of the Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner - District Nurse module, students are expected to undertake a process of personal development and skills analysis as a basis for embarking on a placement. This is the start of their critical reflection and experiential learning.

### Experiential learning in developing specialist practice

Assessment, learning and teaching activities embrace a student-centred philosophy and are designed around the principles of progressive lifelong learning and the development of postgraduate skills. Students enter their course as experienced 'expert' nurses and then become 'novices' in their journey in meeting their new standards for specialist community nursing practice and independent and supplementary prescribing (Benner 1984; NMC, 2022, 2023). They form a strong professional and course identity in working as a peer group in classroom based and work-based tasks. This process is facilitated by the Programme Leader/ Academic Adviser (Academic Assessor) who is a specialist in the field of practice, together with a practice-based Practice Assessor. One of the first tasks students and the course team undertake is the formation of the tripartite relationship between these three agencies. This supports the one to one recognition of a student's individual learning needs together with their learning strengths. The tripartite relationship is

supported by the ePortfolio which provides a means by which students can share and develop their reflective work with both Academic and Practice Assessors.

From the start of the course, the student develops learning contracts and works in partnership with their practice and academic assessors to ensure that the balance between theory and practice is synthesised as evidence is transferred to practice. Students therefore systematically develop their ability to make stronger, explicit links between theory and practice as they progress to their specialist role.

### **Modular learning**

Modular learning and assessment are rooted in work-based discussion and the development of work-based projects. These are designed for theory/practice balance requirements. Modular learning develops in-depth knowledge and an understanding of shared challenges in practice. This in turn leads to increased respect for the role of other health and community care practitioners, working in diverse long-term care and public health settings; promoting improved inter-professional co-operation; and ultimately prescribing and administering of treatment/ palliation.

Modules are purposely delivered to ensure that, by the end of the course, students produce for assessment a document that evidences the meeting of NMC standards for specialist community practice and prescribing (2022 and 2023): the PebblePad ePortfolio. Each module challenges students to complete tasks and activities via lectures, seminars, simulated learning, and pre/post-classroom activities. The specific activities depend on modules undertaken, but artefacts and evidence from these sessions can be used in the ePortfolio. Throughout the course there is a focus on encouraging increasing independence and advancing academic skills, and the ePortfolio is central to this process as it allows for student self-assessment, planning of learning, the production of evidence to meet learning plans and ultimately their ability to confirm that they, under the supervision and assessment of a Practice Assessor, have met their own learning plans.

At the end of the course, students are provided with ongoing alumni-access to their ePortfolio and its contents on a 'free for life' basis allowing them to continue to use it for ongoing CDP and to support NMC professional revalidation processes for nurses.

### **Transition to specialist practice**

The final weeks of the course are the 'consolidation of practice'. This is the final phase of study that is all spent entirely in practice; students work in transition to registering/recording as a specialist community nurse. It is designed to simulate the experience of being a qualified specialist practitioner but retains the support mechanism and the protection of being supernumerary.

### **Your modules**

This information is correct for students progressing through the programme within standard timescales. Students who are required to undertake repeat study may be taught alternate modules which meet the overall course learning outcomes. Details of module delivery will be provided in your timetable.

### **Level 7**

## Compulsory modules

Module title	Credits	Semester/ teaching period
Compassionate Leadership	20	1
Public Health in Practice	20	1
Understanding Social Research and Evaluation	20	1
Non-Medical Prescribing	40	2
Becoming an Autonomous Specialist Practitioner - District Nurse	20	Year-long
Number of credits of compulsory modules	120	

## Assessment and Scheduled Learning and Teaching Activities

The assessment balance and overall workload associated with this course are calculated from core modules. They have been reviewed and confirmed as representative by the Course Director.

A standard module equates to 200 notional learning hours, which may be comprised of teaching, learning and assessment, any embedded placement activities and independent study. Modules may have more than one component of assessment.

### Assessment

#### Level 7

This course is assessed by coursework, examinations, a portfolio for practice and practical assessments. Students are assessed in practice.

### Workload

Overall Workload	Level 7
Teaching, learning and assessment	296 hours
Independent study	478 hours
Placement	934 hours