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Course Specification

Postgraduate Diploma
Specialist Community
Public Health Nursing -
School Nursing

Course Code: SCDSN

2026/27

leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Postgraduate Diploma Specialist Community Public Health Nursing - School Nursing (SCDSN)

Applicant Facing Course Specification for 2026/27 Entrants

Confirmed at November 2025

General Information

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

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

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

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

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
- Public Health in Practice
- Safeguarding Children, Young People and Families
- Specialist Community Public Health Nursing Practice - School Nursing
- 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. 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

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.

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

Graduates will be eligible to register as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse annotated with the specialist field of School Nursing.

NMC Subsequent qualifications information

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

NMC (2023) Standards for Post-Registration Programmes, 5.2

The SCPHN award must be registered with the NMC within five years of successfully completing the programme and if you fail to do so you will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in NMC standards for the award to be registered.

'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 a minimum of five days in 'alternative practice'.
- Complete a 50 day 'consolidation of practice' placement towards the end of the course.

While a focus is to meet standards for specialist practice, there is also scope to plan and undertake a range of placement based learning to broaden the scope of practice. Students will complete a minimum of five days 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 the wider public health workforce, specialist services, commissioning, governance and regulatory bodies, or in other countries. Evidence of this experience is detailed in the ePortfolio.

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

See above.

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

Course Overview

Aims

This is a course for registered nurses (all fields) and registered midwives who wish to work within a specialist public health role. Students consolidate their pre-registration nursing outcomes and gain a deeper understanding in relevant, professional practice prior to joining the course. This is a postgraduate programme that enables graduates to become registered with the NMC as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SCPHN) (NMC, 2022) and gain employment as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse - School Nurse.

Obtaining this qualification allows for enhanced employment opportunities as a SCPHN, including further postgraduate education and specialist practice within the field. As such, the course is rooted in facilitating the achievement of meeting NMC Standards (2022) for safe and effective SCPHN practice; the course framework therefore adheres to these standards as a basis for the assessment of proficiencies, grouped into core standards of proficiency that apply to all fields of SCPHN practice, and field-specific standards of proficiency (Core + School Nurse), all of which are grouped under six defined spheres of influence (NMC, 2022).

The six spheres of influence	Specialist Community Public Health Nursing core standards of proficiency for School Nursing	Core and field-specific proficiencies
Sphere A	Autonomous specialist community public health nursing practice	Core standards
Sphere B	Transforming specialist community public health nursing practice: evidence, research, evaluation and translation	Core standards
Sphere C	Promoting human rights and addressing inequalities: assessment, surveillance and intervention	Core + SN
Sphere D	Population health: enabling, supporting and improving health outcomes of people across the life course	Core + SN
Sphere E	Advancing public health services and promoting healthy places, environments and cultures	Core + SN
Sphere F	Leading and collaborating: from investment to action and dissemination	Core + SN

Working towards being a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (NMC, 2022) requires learning to respond to and appreciate the complexity of working at the individual, community and population level. This includes providing an inclusive, community-wide assessment of needs to form multi-agency perspectives while maintaining a specialist nursing role. Students will learn to maximise the positive impact of school nursing services by working within a collaborative system, planning and coordinating care and maintaining crucial continuity for children, young people and families across different services and agencies. Inevitably, this includes influencing the commissioning, procurement and evaluation of services. The course therefore prepares the practitioner to understand their role within whole systems approaches, building on alliances with individuals, families, communities, national and local governments, education, business and industry,

voluntary, faith and charitable organisations. This recognises the core values of tackling inequality and social injustice 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 sustainable development goals, improving the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families.
2	Lead, manage and influence services and service improvement that is underpinned by theory and reflexive recognition that the needs and the welfare of the child are always central to School Nursing practice.
3	Critically evaluate the complexity of the Specialist School Nurse role and examine the scope for safe, innovative care and effective practice.
4	Synthesise specialist knowledge, skills and behaviours that are central to safeguarding the most vulnerable in society.
5	Deal with complex issues systematically and creatively to ensure a person-centred approach is central to prevention and early intervention.
6	Demonstrate professional autonomy and responsibility and a higher level of professional decision-making and judgements that affect children, young people, families and communities.

Teaching and Learning Activities

Summary

Course induction

It is recognised that professionals may be 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 offered. This assists in the orientation of online systems and the campus, 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 Practitioner 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 nursing practice (Benner 1984; NMC, 2022). 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 Course 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 to ensure the theory/practice balance. 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.

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 (2022) standards for specialist practice: 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 a final phase of study that is spent entirely in practice; students work in transition to registering as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse. This period is designed to stimulate the autonomous experience of being a qualified specialist practitioner while retaining 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
Specialist Community Public Health Nursing Practice – School Nursing	20	2
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Families	20	2
Understanding Social Research and Evaluation	20	2
Becoming and Autonomous Specialist Practitioner	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, a portfolio for practice and practical skills assessments. Students are assessed in practice.

Workload

The course exceeds the normal 1200 notional hours for a PG Diploma due to placement requirements.

Overall Workload	Level 7
Teaching, learning and assessment	192 hours
Independent study	512 hours
Placement	1548 hours

