Programme Specification

Doctor of Health and Social Care Practice

Valid from: September 2015
Programme Code: PB9AG
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SECTION ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION

Programme Title

Postgraduate

Doctor of Health and Social Care Practice

Award title and interim awards

Final Award

Postgraduate

Doctor of Health and Social Care Practice (with named awards as detailed below)

1. (Art Psychotherapy)
2. (Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy)
3. (Drama Psychotherapy)
4. (Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy)
5. (Nursing)
6. (Occupational Therapy)
7. (Psychodynamic Psychotherapy)
8. (Radiography)
9. (Health and Social Care Practice)
10. (Ergonomics)
11. (Applied Psychology)

Interim Award

Post Graduate Certificate in Health and Social Care Practice
PG Diploma in Health and Social Care Practice
Master of Science in Health and Social Care Practice

Mode of Study

Part-time only

Programme Start/review date

Start date: January 2011
Period of Validation: 2011-2016

Awarding Institution

University of Derby

College Managing the Programme

College of Health and Social Care

Institution delivering the Programme
Relevant External Subject Benchmark Statements


External Accreditation/Recognition

Not applicable

JACS Code

B990

Programme Specification last updated

New Programme

SECTION TWO: OVERVIEW AND PROGRAMME AIMS

Overview

This programme is for professionals who wish to undertake a structured programme of study to doctoral level (level 8) and is designed to support and inform professional practice in a wide range of occupations and work settings. It is likely that you will be mid-career and have identified the programme as part of your own personal and/or professional development. The course of study would be beneficial to those professionals working in a wide variety of areas within the health and social care fields.

On completion of this programme you will be able to demonstrate the ability to contribute or facilitate or manage the development of services, improve practice and outcomes for people who use services. You will also be able to create and interpret new knowledge, usually through original research that would satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of your discipline and merit publication. You will have gained a substantial body of professional knowledge that will put you to the forefront of an area of professional practice. You will be able to conceptualise, design and undertake a research project in professional practice acquiring a deep, broad understanding of research methodologies and the vagaries of researching on practice. You will be able to synthesize data and communicate your ideas and conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences. Finally as a result of your work on this programme, you will be able to demonstrate those qualities and transferable skills required in the professional setting to make an impact on your professional life and that of and others.

Programme Aims

The Doctor of Health and Social Care Practice programme aims to enable candidates to develop as professional and clinical leaders who have a direct impact on practice, service outputs and innovation within their practice fields. This will be achieved through
engagement in a structured, supported and progressive programme of learning that develops critical thinking, a synthesis of knowledge and practice, practice development projects and original research in the candidate’s own organisation or professional context. The broad aims of the professional doctorate are thus three-fold:

1. To develop a thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of research and enquiry skills;
2. To enable candidates to make an original contribution or application of knowledge to their specialist field of study;
3. To enable and develop the competencies required for the development of services and/or professional practice through development projects and independent research.

More specifically, graduates from the programme will have:

- made a significant and original contribution to professional knowledge and practice in the discipline or field of enquiry.
- command of relevant research methodology; and a deep and broad understanding of a range of research methodologies more generally.
- developed a critical understanding of the value of empirical and non empirical ideas and evidence demonstrating appropriate engagement in academic debate relating to professional knowledge and practice.
- an understanding of the ethical and/or professional considerations in the context of the discipline or field of enquiry.
- highly developed professional skills in the presentation and discussion of data, ideas and applications of professional practice, and be accomplished in the organisation and management of practice, service development and a research project or collective works conducted in the professional context.
- the ability to reflect and articulate critically on their experience of professional knowledge, service development and practice.
- the knowledge and skills to change and develop practice and have a direct impact on services, service outputs and outcomes.
- highly developed skills in the dissemination of professional and service development through publication and/or conference presentations.
SECTION THREE: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge and Understanding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and Understanding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of:</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. the concept of original contribution to professional knowledge at level 8;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How to engage in academic debate and discussion;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. a broad and deep understanding of a range of research methodologies into research-led practice;</td>
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<td>4. a critique of ethical considerations within the professional field and how they might be resolved;</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. a critical understanding of the values of ideas and evidence within the academic and professional arenas.</td>
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</table>

Intellectual Skills
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intellectual Skills – an ability to:</th>
<th>Learning/Teaching Methods and Strategies</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Critically review and appraise a selected range of research methodologies and be able to make justifications for the choices made;</td>
<td>Study at HE level 8 must involve the student substantially in independent modes of study. Tutorials, both individual and group focused in character, will be a central feature of teaching within the programme.</td>
<td>The assessment strategy must demonstrate clear evidence of individual achievement of the programme's learning outcomes in order for credit to be awarded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Evaluate the range of possible professional and/or academic dissemination strategies for the chosen research;</td>
<td>Initial face-to-face group teaching sessions will usually lead into individual supervisions as students explore their selected area of study.</td>
<td>Students must be able to show command of the seminal and current literature relating to their chosen research area including issues of ethical and/or professional considerations and their relevance to their own professional practice. There is an expectation that students will gain confidence in presenting their emerging research findings in both written and oral contexts which will lead to a robust defence of their doctoral thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Undertake critical analysis of procedures of data analysis, synthesis and interpretation of research data;</td>
<td>At doctoral level the student is expected to make a significant and original contribution to the practice field of enquiry and to display command of appropriate methodological issues and applications.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Rigorously address ethical considerations in respect of undertaking research in educational/professional settings;</td>
<td>Students will be expected critically to present and evaluate information and ideas about their ‘practice’ focus and relevant directed tasks in a variety of forms of communication in order to facilitate and develop peer-supported learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Critically reflect and articulate on experience of professional practice;</td>
<td>Formal (summative) assessment strategies will be undergirded by formative assessment points designed to support and guide students at each stage.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Conceptualize theoretical models as drawn from the literature or elsewhere as a potential means of making sense of research outcomes in the professional setting.</td>
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</table>
## Subject Specific Skills

### Practical and Subject-Specific Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical Skills – an ability to:</th>
<th>Learning/Teaching Methods and Strategies</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Be accomplished in the organisation and management of independent studies in the form of self-managed tasks and a research thesis;</td>
<td>Programmes of study at HE level 8 must involve the student in the active synthesis of theory and practice mediated by university and practice-based learning gained through independent modes of study. In particular, students will engage with learning through a structured programme of seminars, supported by a mixture of workshops, case studies and lectures. A range of active learning approaches will be employed throughout.</td>
<td>Students will be expected to demonstrate command of relevant theoretical material relating to research in health and social care, together with the ability to integrate research and personal/professional issues focused on matters of professional enhancement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Establish criteria to be applied in making a selection of a number of publications in varied forms and formats and relevant to directed tasks and the student’s particular field of enquiry;</td>
<td>Additionally, process focused tutorials, both individual and group in character, will be a central feature of teaching on the programme as a whole.</td>
<td>In order to move from the taught to the research phase of the programme, students must have successfully completed the Theory for Practice component and have acquired 120 credits. Students carrying referrals may not progress to the research stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use these criteria to review critically works identified as appropriate to directed tasks and the student’s particular field of enquiry;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Complete the process by which an item might be submitted for professional dissemination and/or academic publication;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Justify the use of particular methods and techniques of data gathering and reporting for specified purposes in educational settings;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Make a significant and original contribution to professional practice in the discipline or the field of enquiry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transferable Skills</td>
<td>Learning/Teaching Methods and Strategies</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transferable Skills – an ability to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Within this programme, emphasis is placed on all forms and modes of direct teaching contact (including individual and small group tutorials) specifically designed to assist students in undertaking the processes of preparing and submitting their work for academic and peer review, wider dissemination, and formal assessment.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>The programme design includes specific workshop opportunities to help students recognise and respond effectively to the requirements and expectations of a viva voce examination.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Direct contacts are also designed to support and extend transferable skills in students’ use of varied forms of ICT for study and professional development purposes.</strong></td>
<td><strong>All work for formal assessment should normally be written or otherwise presented in English. Students are expected to do so with confidence and in an informed and fluent manner.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Additionally, a viva voce examination of the thesis submission is required in order to be able to confirm the achievement of the learning outcomes specific to the student's area of research.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Students are supported in developing the skills required to successfully undertake the viva voce examination by both formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments occur as part of the module delivery specification, summative assessments are characterised by substantial written assignments. Additionally, students will undertake preparation for the viva voce examination through working with supervisors and attending relevant workshops and research seminars as detailed in University Research Seminars series.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify, critique and synthesise information, ideas and concepts from relevant items in both the academic and professional literature, appropriate to either directed tasks, a particular field of enquiry, or both;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Contribute to an active community of professionally focussed researchers, learning from each other;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Respond to critical feedback from professional peers, specifically from feedback at academic points of reference;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Demonstrate highly developed personal skills in the presentation and discussion of data, ideas and applications of professional practice;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Work effectively (and with developing confidence) both in an academic and professional environment;</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Undertake relevant dissemination pathways as required by their professional status, or within the academic community.</td>
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</tbody>
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SECTION FOUR: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Structure and Curriculum

The programme consists of two required components: first, the *Theory for Practice* stage which comprises 2 years of study and second, the *Independent Research* stage during which the research thesis is developed, notionally also two years of study (minimum engagement with programme is 4 years). All modules are core modules and, in order to graduate from the programme, students must successfully complete all elements.

Table 1 gives an outline of the doctoral route over 6 years:

**Table 2: Curricula structure for 2011 - 2016 Dr Practice Health and Social Practice programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Module title</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Academic level</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ENGAGING WITH STUDY AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AT DOCTORAL LEVEL</td>
<td>Written Assignment in the form of a publication</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total credits &amp; step-off award</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>60 (PG Certificate Health and Social Care Practice)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SERVICE AND PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>Research Proposal Dissemination Activities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total credits &amp; step-off award</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>120 (PG Diploma Health and Social Care Practice)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>INDEPENDENT SCHOLARSHIP FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>Thesis or creative works and critical appraisal and Viva voce examination</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total credits &amp; Completion award</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>540 Dr of Health and Social Care Practice (NamedField)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Independent Studies</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total credits &amp; Step Of award</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>180 MSc Health and Social Care Practice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The programme is offered on a part-time basis only and is intended for late, early and mid-career professionals who will continue to work in their professional role.

During Year 1 a single module will undertaken that will support the student in understanding how to work at doctoral level and will build on students post graduate level knowledge. Students will be encouraged to develop their research field and their academic writing so that they have a firm foundation upon which to base their level 8 submissions.

In Year 2 students will develop a broader and deeper understanding of service and practice development issues, philosophical and practical research methods in the professional context, culminating in the construction of a small practice development project and a research Proposal which will inform and plan the next part of the research. Students will not be allowed to progress to the next stage of study without clearance of the proposal by the School of Health Sciences Ethics Committee. On completion of this the student will be eligible to move to the Independent Research Stage.

Students wishing to exit the programme at the end of Year 2 may do so with 120 credits and be awarded a Diploma in Education in recognition of credits gained. If they do not or cannot continue they will also have the option of taking a further level 7 60 credit Independent Scholarly Activities module and receive a step off award of MSc in Health and Social Care Practice.

During the Independent Research stage students, with support from their supervisors, will develop and submit a completed research thesis for examination. All components of the final module (thesis and examination) will need to be completed successfully, including any revision to the submission as detailed in the final examiner’s report following the viva voce examination. For students unsuccessful at this stage the award of Master of Practice may be available as a default award.

**Personal Development Planning (PDP)**

This programme is offered on a part-time basis only and is specifically designed for those in full-time professional employment. While there is no recent policy on PDP at doctoral level (only level 7) (University of Derby 2004), it is useful to consider how the programme will shape and impact upon students’ professional practice and how the teaching team might begin to manage that impact. In a recent paper Ibbotson, Davies, Dolan, Morgan, Kreindler and Parker-Jenkins (2008) suggest that students undertaking the doctoral experience have a significant impact on practice and the ability to reflect and act on new experiences gained as a result of engaging in higher level study. For many students, the opportunity to re-engage with academic study and with other professionals is also significant in shaping their thinking in both academic and professional arenas. One of the core pillars of the doctorate is the focus on students’ ability to reflect on existing skills and to make sense of knowledge gained in relation to their professional practices. The proposed programme gives opportunities for this and for students to understand how they might progress professionally in line with their programme of study.

In light of the above each student will be required to maintain a scholarly/professional portfolio that documents their journey through the programme. The focus will be on reflective learning, support and the progress of their course and its impacts in the workplace on practice and improvements of outcomes in their professional field. It will incorporate details of supervision and annual review and will be contributed to by their mentor and manager in the workplace in order to identify and verify changes made. In this
way engagement with employer can take place. PDP and training needs and how these are met will also be included. The portfolio will also document progress with independent research, practice and service development and will be used to prepare the student for thesis or creative works presentation and viva Voce. The PDP folder will be submitted alongside each piece of work in order to give feedback to the student. This will be a mandatory requirement.

SECTION FIVE: PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Learning and Teaching Methods

Working at doctoral level means that the student must demonstrate active synthesis of theory and practice gained through group and independent study. Students will be required to make a specific contribution to knowledge through their service, practice development and research, and to develop an understanding of a broad range of research methods and methodologies. Additionally, students will be required to develop a good command of methodological issues that can be conveyed in both written and oral mediums to a variety of audiences. The professional doctorate is seeking, specifically, to impact on, and make positive change to service development and professional practice. This aspect of professional doctoral study will be at the forefront of all teaching and learning on the programme.

For all groups of students, the programme will be conducted in English through a medium of small-group and individual tutorials (in the Theory for Practice stage) and supervisions (in the Independent Research stage). Teaching sessions will provide opportunities for students to explore their understanding of service and practice development and research in the professional arena, through discussions, debate and synthesis of materials. Additionally, seminar-type sessions will allow students to rehearse their research methodologies in peer-supported groups. Students will also undertake informal presentations, supported by, for example, poster presentations. Students will be encouraged to take their work outside the University to student conferences and other external events during their journey through the programme. Tutors and supervisors will role-model doctoral level study through the taught sessions and during individual tutorials/supervisions. Availability of workshops, seminars, informal discussion groups and formal teaching sessions will support the student and help in the preparation of written assignments and in the production of the thesis. Further support in the form of workshops and mock viva voce examinations will help students to gain confidence with the final examination.

Please note:

All students are required to comply with research governance and ethics principles whilst undertaking their programme of study. This is of particular importance when conducting research involving other people. Information on these principles can be found on the University web site at: www.derby.ac.uk/research/ethics

Assessment

The assessment strategy must demonstrate clear evidence of individual achievement of the programme’s learning outcomes in order for credit to be awarded. Students must be able to successfully complete the Theory for Practice component of the programme.
before being allowed to progress to the Independent Research stage. The successful production of the final research thesis rests on students being able to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and academic prowess in order to sustain high quality writing in order to produce a substantive thesis. The increase in word limit during the taught component of the programme gives ample opportunity for students to develop their research knowledge and understanding and to rehearse its effectiveness.

The basis of doctoral work is assessed at the end of Year 1, the point at which students have had the opportunity to consider their broad area for research, the literature contained therein and their own position as academic/professional researcher. Students working at the highest level will demonstrate the ability to move from level 7 to level 8 by the end of Year 1, so when research for the module in Year 2 is undertaken they will have developed the ability to think critically about their proposed research and will have demonstrated that they can evaluate a relevance field of literature pertinent to their research subject. Through completing the first year of study, students are likely to demonstrate an increased confidence in disseminating their findings and/or arguments.

Students will develop a clear understanding of a broad range of research methodologies, and begin to articulate the emerging research approach likely to form the basis of the final assessment in Year 2. Subsequently, development of the research thesis will embrace all the facets detailed above. In addition, students will develop, and demonstrate (through annual research reports) progression of the research culminating in the final viva voce examination which meets the learning outcomes of the Independent Research module.

RESEARCH ETHICS

The programme involves both practice/service development projects and formal research. The programme has been designed so that the relevant ethical procedures of the University of Derby, employing organisations and external bodies such as NREC/LREC are fully complied with and relevant permissions applied for early in the process and secured before any data is collected. The required processes will be included as part of module and course induction procedures and the supervisory team will also support and advice the student through the process.

Please note:

This programme operates within the University’s Regulatory Framework and conforms with its regulations on assessment.

SECTION SIX: ADMISSIONS

Entry requirements

Pre-entry counselling will be provided by admissions tutors/programme leader to ensure that any potential students are made aware of all the options available to them at Doctoral Level within the University of Derby. This is to ensure the best fit in terms of personal, professional and career aspirations.

Entry to the programme is in line with University of Derby Regulations (2008: 20). The programme seeks to admit highly capable individuals able to demonstrate motivation, interest and aptitude for doctoral level study within either the broadly defined area of Health and Social Care Practice or within the specific professional areas of: Art Psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy, Drama Psychotherapy, Integrative
Counselling and Psychotherapy, Nursing, Occupational Therapy; Psychodynamic Psychotherapy and Radiography. The students selected for the programme are likely to be both mature and experienced professionals.

Additional Support for the students will also come wherever possible from their employers or professional fields, as such all students will need a practice mentor to be identified. This will not be a mandatory requirement but will be advisory. It will be the students’ responsibility to identify this mentor in the first instance. This mentorship is to facilitate support in the practice field and a local champion, improved communication between the University and the practice areas and also to develop a real and vibrant community of practice amongst stakeholders around and throughout the programme. The academic team will work with the student and the mentor to negotiate the role and agree a three way agreement as to roles and responsibilities. The mentor would usually be a senior figure in the student’s professional field. Training for mentors will also be provided by the course team.

Applicants for professional doctorate programmes should normally have obtained a professional qualification and a relevant Post Graduate Diploma qualification and they must have considerable experience of their profession generally and have specific expertise in the areas that they intend to focus on during their studies. Candidates should demonstrate an ability to identify the implications of their studies for the wider benefit of their profession.

Applicants wishing to gain entry with advanced standing may make an application subject to specific course requirements as detailed within the programme regulations (see advance standing and APL section 1.4.2 below).

1.4.1 ADMISSIONS POLICY [including APL]

Admissions policy

The Dr Practice in Health and Social Care Practice programme is designed for people who have attained PG Diploma Level in the fields of: Art Psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy, Drama Psychotherapy, Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy, Nursing, Occupational Therapy; Psychodynamic Psychotherapy and Radiography, or a related discipline or who have an equivalent level of accomplishment through professional practice.

The programme is principally taught at doctoral level 8, after a year of teaching at level 7 (60 credits). In summary level 8 is defined by the University as follows.

At doctoral level the student is expected to make a significant and original contribution to the field of enquiry and to display command of the methodological issues and applications.

University of Derby Regulatory Framework (200:14)

It follows, therefore, that entrants will need to show clear evidence of their ability to achieve the specified learning outcomes at this level.
The admissions policy applied by the programme will be consistent with the regulatory framework for Doctor of Practice awards (September 2008).

- The purpose of the admissions procedure is to ensure that secure decisions are made about the suitability of applicants seeking entry to the programme to undertake work at doctoral level 8.

- The Dr Practice in Health and Social Care Studies will be taught and examined in English and therefore it is essential that applicants have high levels of competence in English, if necessary, demonstrated by an International English Language Test Score [IELTS] of a minimum of 7.5.

- All applicants will be interviewed.

- References (2) will be taken up for all applicants; normally before interview.

- It is expected that all candidates will normally already have achieved a Post Graduate Qualification such as a Post Graduate Diploma or a Master's degree before being accepted on the programme.

- The applicant should have a minimum of 18 months of professional experience.

- Decisions about entry to the programme will be made on the basis of the application, educational level obtained academic reference[s], interview, professional experience and likelihood of completion.

Further, the development team would like to strengthen the application/admissions process by ensuring that students’ proposed research areas match, as far as possible, areas of expertise of supervisors at the University and that the expertise in supervision will be available to the students. It will be programme policy that it is confirmed by the relevant subject manager as part of a package of support the availability of supervisors to students’ proposed research areas at the point of entry to the programme. The core programme team can then act in terms of facilitation of academic and pastoral support that can be offered to the students. This would align the Dr of Practice in Health and Social Care Practice with the Dr of Education and more closely with the RD2 phase of PhD admission (see Appendix 1)

1.4.2 ADVANCED STANDING AND ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL)

Students applying for the Dr Practice Health and Social Practice programme are eligible to apply for advanced standing but not APL in recognition of prior achievements providing the learning has not already contributed to the award for a higher degree. There are therefore 2 constraints for the professional doctorate programme:

1. Advanced standing is only available for the taught modules;
2. APL is not available for any elements of the programme.

Advanced standing may also be awarded for phase 1 but this would be in respect of the assignments, rather than at the expense of the teaching. Students would be required to join in the taught sessions to facilitate for example, networking opportunities and group cohesiveness. They would not however be expected to submit the assignments. The
advanced standing will also be granted following the mandatory attendance for the teaching with an 80% attendance being required.

It is envisaged that the majority of applicants will not hold previous doctoral awards; however some may and in such circumstances advanced standing for phases 1 and 2 together may be considered. Such students would normally omit phase one and two and proceed directly to Independent Research.

Students presenting with evidence of Level 8 (Doctoral work) for consideration of advanced standing will be assessed by at least two members of the programme team and the decision confirmed by the Programme Leader.

SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Candidates for the EdD will be invited to an induction evening where information about the programme and general support provided by the University will be disseminated. Detailed information will be provided in the programme handbook.

On entry to the programme students will be allocated a supervisor who will guide them academically and pastorally (where appropriate) through the Theory for Practice stage of the programme. The initial allocation of a supervisor will based on research interests and it is envisaged that supervisors will remain with students throughout their course of study. However, as research develops (or as roles change) the focus of the student's research may change. This may trigger a change in supervisor (and also that of second supervisor in the Independent Research stage). Academic module leaders and tutors delivering on each module will provide general support. This will be mainly academic support related to the completion of final assignments. Such support can be accessed through face-to-face meetings with academics and via telephone and email contact. Additionally, programme materials will be posted onto the Blackboard platform. Module leaders will use this as a means of conversing (through discussion boards, wikis, blogs and similar) with the whole teaching group.

On successful completion of the Theory for Practice stage students will progress to the Independent Research stage and be allocated a second supervisor to complete their Supervisory Package. As part-time postgraduate students, they will receive 10 hours of supervision support per year, and 5 hours from second supervisor. At final examination, submission of the thesis will be managed by the first supervisor and the examinations officer based in the College Office.

SECTION EIGHT: POST PROGRAMME OPPORTUNITIES

For most experienced professionals, the opportunity to link their professional expertise with an academic degree has many advantages; namely the ability to gain accreditation for work they have done for many years and the opportunity to make more sense (and in some cases change) their professional practice. For some, completion of a doctoral qualification may lead to promotion or the development of different or enhanced career routes. For example senior posts are linked to Doctoral level qualifications on the NHS Skills Escalator; for others, the possibility of studying for a doctoral qualification in a professionally related field whilst remaining in full-time employment. Such has been the experience of many graduates from the programme representing a wide variety of professions. Opportunities for post-doctoral work, in its broadest sense, are manifold. Students undertake doctoral research for many different reasons and many students will
have already seen benefits in terms of promoted posts within their professional sphere. Other students may wish to facilitate a move into Higher Education and can seek advice on all aspects of career guidance through the University’s Career Service.