



## **Information for prospective applicants to:**

### **Non-Medical Prescribing: Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Allied Health Professions**

#### **Campus Code:**

**a) Allied Health Professions:**

**Degree NURS 3025**

**Masters NURS 4114**

**b) Dietitians:**

**Degree NURS 3082**

**Masters NURS 4164**

**Number of Credits: 40**

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## 1. Welcome & course details

This booklet is written to provide managers and prospective non-medical prescribing (NMP) students with information about the independent and supplementary prescribing course at the University of Nottingham.

**Programme title:** Non-medical prescribing

**Course and award:** Independent and supplementary prescribing

**Course code:** Degree level: NURS 3025                      NURS 3082  
Masters level: NURS 4114                      NURS 4164

**Study centre:** School of Health Sciences  
Queens Medical Centre - Nottingham

**Length:** 6 months (26 Weeks)  
26 university led days  
12 days (90 hours) supervised practice  
**Total: 38 days of study**

**Frequency:** At least once a year in the autumn semester

**Credit:** **Degree level 3:** 40 credits  
**Masters level 4:** 40 credits

## 2. Course team

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The application process is managed by the student services admissions team. For enquiries regarding application or admission please contact email us: [ss-programmes-MHS@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:ss-programmes-MHS@nottingham.ac.uk).

### Background:

The University of Nottingham first offered prescribing education in 2001. The course is highly regarded by students and service partners, providing prescribing education to a range of non-medical healthcare professions.

**Programme and course:**

This booklet provides information for Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) wishing to train as independent and supplementary prescribers. Dietitians are only permitted to qualify as supplementary prescribers.

Independent and supplementary prescribing is a 38-day course of prescribing education consisting of 26 taught days and 12 days of supervised practice with assessment over 26 weeks (6 months). In addition, students will require personal study time. The amount of time varies between individuals but can be in the region of 100 - 200 hours.

The course will deliver digitally using a diverse range of resources and packages including screencasts, online quizzes, and Microsoft Teams seminars.

The course has five elements of assessment. Students must achieve a pass mark on all five assessments to obtain the award. There is no compensation between assessments. Furthermore, if a student fails to correctly answer any question that may result in direct harm to a patient / client or provides an answer that may potentially lead to patient harm; the academic assessor will award a fail mark. The course must be completed within 2 calendar years of starting.

**3. Course attendance**

26 designated days for university led teaching will be allocated by the academic team. A timetable has been provided on the course webpage. Please make sure you have reviewed the course dates and can commit to these before you apply.

Teaching material will be delivered digitally; using a blend of live lectures; pre-recorded screencasts, quizzes etc.

**Level of study:**

The course can be taken at degree or master's level. Please give careful consideration when choosing your level of study. You will not be able to change the level of study once the course has started.

The professional award and prescribing authority (i.e., independent, and supplementary prescribing) is the same, regardless of the level of study. The difference lies with the award of academic credit for study. Completion at degree level provides an academic award of 40 x degree level 3 (level 6 equivalent) credits and at masters of 40 x masters level 4 (level 7 equivalent) credits. There are however differences in how each level is assessed. If you have any questions about level of study, please contact one of the team.

**4. What will the qualification enable you to prescribe?**

For physiotherapists, podiatrists, chiropodists, and paramedics the award is a dual qualification of independent and supplementary prescribing. Dietitians qualify as supplementary prescribers only. Students undertaking this course are taught and assessed in independent and supplementary prescribing regardless of clinical need.

**As an independent prescriber:**

Physiotherapists, podiatrists, chiropodists, and paramedics will be able to prescribe licensed medicines, within and outside of their license for any medical condition within your scope of practice, including from a limited list of controlled drugs. AHPs are not permitted to prescribe controlled drugs not listed on your formulary by name or outside of a specified formulation.

Paramedic prescribers are waiting on home office approval to authorise independent prescribing of a limited list of controlled drugs. Unlicensed medicines cannot be prescribed.

**As a supplementary prescriber:**

Within the bounds of an agreed patient specific clinical management plan, you will be able to prescribe all licensed and unlicensed medicines within and outside of the license within your scope of practice including controlled drugs.

Whilst all prescribers are expected to prescribe only within their scope of practice and appropriate to their profession; podiatrist and chiropodist prescribers are restricted to prescribing those medicines which are relevant to the treatment of disorders affecting the foot, ankle, and associated structures. Dietitian prescribers may only prescribe under this form of prescribing.

**Prescribing for children:**

Students who will or are likely in the future to prescribe for children must demonstrate achievement of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) competencies within the context of prescribing for children.

## 5. Entry criteria

**Please note:** All entry requirements **must** be met before the first course day.

Those wishing to study for the master's level prescribing qualification must meet the postgraduate admission criteria laid out in the University of Nottingham quality manual:

*“Applicants [must] hold a good first degree with at least second-class honours, or an equivalent qualification.”*

All AHP's wishing to apply for degree level or master's level non-medical prescribing at the University of Nottingham must meet the following criteria:

- Registered with the HCPC in one of the relevant Allied Health Professions
- Be able to provide a HCPC pin number and expiry date
- Be working at an advanced practitioner or equivalent level\*
- Be able to provide evidence of at least a degree or equivalent level qualification in physiotherapy, chiropody, podiatry, paramedic study or dietetics
- Be able to provide evidence of a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) **enhanced** certificate; issued within **3 years** of applying to the course
- Have **at least 3 years** or equivalent relevant post qualification experience; (5 years for paramedics)
- Be competent to take a history, undertake clinical assessment and make a diagnosis in the intended area of prescribing practice
- Have approved funding arrangements in place (see course application webpage for more details)
- Have in place (or will have in place), an appropriate indemnity arrangement for the prospective role as a prescriber
- Have a clinical placement (e.g., ward, GP surgery) with an educational audit in place or to undertake a 'self-audit' prior to enrolment on the course

- Take responsibility for continuing professional development.
- Achieve a mark of at least 9 out of 10 in an online pre-course numeracy test provided by the University of Nottingham; School of Health Sciences.

\* **Advanced clinical practice** is delivered by experienced, registered health and care practitioners. It is a level of practice characterised by a high degree of autonomy and complex decision making. This is underpinned by a master's level award or equivalent that encompasses the four pillars of clinical practice, leadership and management, education, and research, with demonstration of core capabilities and area specific clinical competence

**Advanced clinical practice** embodies the ability to manage clinical care in partnership with individuals, families, and carers. It includes the analysis and synthesis of complex problems across a range of settings, enabling innovative solutions to enhance people's experience and improve outcomes

**Paramedic applicants:**

In addition to the requirements stated above; the College of Paramedics further stipulate that **at least one** of the following criteria must be met for non-medical prescribing admission:

- MSc qualification / other study at master's level within last 6 years (applicable to healthcare)
- If over 6 years ago; evidence of continuous advanced clinical practice\*
- Ongoing participation in masters level modules (applicable to healthcare)
- Postgraduate diploma/certificate PLUS a commendation from the College of Paramedics confirming continuous advanced clinical practice\*

Where an applicant has dual professional registration; the prospective student must meet the entry criteria for the professional regulator consistent with the employed job role. For example, a clinician who is registered as both a paramedic and nurse but employed as a paramedic practitioner; must meet HCPC paramedic entry criteria.

**Self-employed applicants:**

We are open to applications from those who are self-employed. You will be required to complete a 'declaration of governance for private sector working' document. A link to this form will be provided once your initial application to the course has been processed.

## 6. Practice assessor / Practice supervisor / Practice educator roles

All applicants must have an agreement from a medical or non-medical prescriber to take the role of practice **educator**. The practice educator will act as both practice supervisor and practice assessor. If a **medical** practice educator is designated; they must meet the Department of Health criteria stated below:

**Department of Health eligibility criteria to act as the practice assessors for the assessment of non-medical prescribers by medical prescribers.**

- Has normally at least 3 years recent clinical experience for a group of patients/clients in the relevant field of practice
- Is within a GP practice and is either vocationally trained or is in possession of a certificate of equivalent experience from the joint committee for Post-graduate Training in General Practice (JCPTGP)

**OR**

- Is a specialist registrar, clinical assistant or a consultant within an NHS Trust or other NHS employer
- Has the support of the employing organisation or GP practice to act as the practice assessor who will provide supervision, support, and opportunities to develop competence in prescribing practice
- Has some experience or training in teaching and / or supervising in practice

**Non-medical** prescribers taking the role of practice educator must meet the School of Health Sciences role eligibility criteria shown below. This guidance has been developed in partnership with NHS Trust:

**School of Health Sciences eligibility criteria to act as the practice assessor for a nurse/midwife prescribing student:**

- A registrant on a health professions register
- To assess a V300 nurse prescribing student the assessor must be a V300 prescriber or other health professional who is an independent and supplementary prescriber
- To assess a V150 nurse prescribing student the assessor must be a V100, V150 or V300 prescriber
- An active prescriber with a minimum of one year post prescribing qualification experience
- Has some experience or training in teaching and / or supervising in practice
- Has agreement from the line manager for time to support the nurse prescribing student

Whilst the requirement to have both a practice **assessor** ('practice educator' equivalent) and a practice **supervisor** is specific to nurses and midwives on the course; you may wish to take the opportunity to undertake some of your practice time under the supervision of a non-medical prescriber or other doctor.

Where another professional is taking responsibility for practice supervision this must be agreed with your practice educator. The person taking the role of practice supervisor must be a doctor or registered health professional who:

- Is an active prescriber
- Works in the same clinical area as the AHP prescribing student
- Is a role model for safe and effective practice
- Has up to date knowledge of skills of prescribing in the clinical area
- Can commit time to supervise and support the student.

**Please note:** You must not be related to or in a relationship with your practice educator. The designated practice educator, practice supervisor and manager must all be different people. If this isn't possible, please contact a member of the academic team.

**The final requirement for entry** requires support from the programme lead. The course team will check your application for compliance with the entry requirements set out above. Where all requirements are met; the programme lead formally supports the application. **Please note that a place cannot be offered until all criteria are met.** It takes time to make the checks required therefore applications received after the closing date cannot be accepted.

## 7. Recognition of learning

The university has established systems for the verification of prior credit and expertise within the school to provide guidance and support for this process where required. University regulation and process of application for recognition of learning is set out in the University of Nottingham quality manual:

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/qualitymanual/studies-away-from-university/recog-other-learning.aspx>

When taken as a standalone course non-medical prescribing does not meet the university criteria for recognition of certificated learning. Applicants are invited to apply for recognition of prior experiential learning. Applicants must be aware that to assure competence in prescribing at the point of qualification there is no recognition of prior assessment, and all assessments must therefore be taken to complete the award.

## 8. Course content

- Consultation and decision making
- The psychology of prescribing and influencing factors
- Prescribing in a team context
- General principles and application of pharmacology and therapeutics
- Principles and methods of patient monitoring
- Evidence-based practice and clinical governance in relation to supplementary prescribing.
- Legal, policy, professional and ethical aspects
- Prescribing in the public health context

### Learning outcomes:

a) Degree level (NURS3025 and NURS3082)

Discuss the legal, ethical, and professional framework for accountability and responsibility in relation to the legal parameters of independent and supplementary non-medical prescribing. Reflects, is aware of own limitations and works within professional competence.

Outline the pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of drug groups which they intend to prescribe.

Understand the conditions being treated and the impact of co-morbidities, altered physiology and drug-drug interactions as well as social and environmental factors on drug response.

Critically analyse information obtained from the various dimensions of clinical assessment. Formulate a differential diagnosis and discuss how the findings of clinical assessments support clinical decision making in prescribing situations applying relevant national frameworks.

Take and present a systematic clinical history to include medical history and detailed medication history which includes allergy status, prescribed and over the counter medicines, complementary and herbal remedies.



Critically consider the options when prescribing including non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatments, de-prescribing, patient factors, clinical evidence, cost effectiveness and public health including antimicrobial stewardship.

b) Masters level (NURS4114 and NURS4164)

Critically discuss the legal, ethical, and professional framework for accountability and responsibility in relation to the legal parameters of independent and supplementary non-medical prescribing at individual, client group, team, and organisational level. Reflects, is aware of own limitations and works within professional competence.

Describe the pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of drug groups which they intend to prescribe. Demonstrate a contextual understanding of the pharmacology and therapeutics of drug groups in varied populations.

Understand the conditions being treated and the impact of co-morbidities, altered physiology and drug-drug interactions as well as social and environmental factors on drug response.

Critically appraise and synthesize information obtained from the various dimensions of clinical assessment. Formulate a differential diagnosis and critically discuss how the findings of clinical assessments inform clinical decision making in prescribing situations applying relevant national frameworks.

Take and present a systematic clinical history to include medical history and detailed medication history which includes allergy status, prescribed and over the counter medicines, complementary and herbal remedies.

Critically evaluate the options when prescribing on individuals, groups and the wider population including non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatments, de-prescribing, patient factors, clinical evidence, cost effectiveness and public health including antimicrobial s

## 9. Assessments

There are five elements of assessment in this course: numeracy examination, two-part portfolio, pharmacology examination, poster presentation and practice assessment. There is no compensation between assessments.

Assessment	Time (minutes if exam)	Detail	Pass mark (%)	Overall weighting (%)
Numeracy exam	30	Assessment of numeracy skills relating to prescribing	100 (pass/fail)	0
Portfolio		<b>Element 1:</b> 1500 word (degree level) / 2,000 word (master's level) critical application of the principles of law, accountability and ethics to a patient prescribing scenario from supervised practice <b>Element 2:</b> Prescription and clinical management plan (pass/fail)	Degree: 40, Masters: 50	30
Pharmacology exam	70	Unseen exam comprising single best response and short answer questions	80	20
Poster	8 – 10 mins presentation  5 – 6 mins viva	Presentation of the evidence base, pharmacology, therapeutics, and related continuing professional development of the prescription of a single drug within a specified client group (degree level) or three drugs in a patient case (master's level)	Degree: 40, Masters: 50	30
Practice assessment		Assessment of prescribing competency standards (RPS 2016) by practice assessor / educator (i.e., final report).  Evidence of 78 / 90 hours recorded within a learning log  OSCE consultation mark sheet and service user feedback	100 (pass/fail)  OSCE consultation (pass/fail)  Service user feedback (pass/fail)	20  0  0

### The assessment of numeracy:

All prescribing students have a numeracy assessment. The pass mark for this assessment is 100%. The exam is a computer based numerical calculation of 10 questions to answer in 30 minutes. You will have access to an on-screen calculator during the assessment. Below are some examples of the sort of questions to expect:

#### Supply amount / dose:

John is prescribed drug A to be taken at a dose of 10mg one tablet a day for 1 week and twice a day for the second week. The drug comes in 10mg tablets. How many tablets do you need to prescribe for a two-week course?

#### Conversions:

Jane is to be given a dose of 1.5g of drug B. The drug has been dispensed in 500mg tablets. How many tablets should Jane be given?

How many mLs are there in 1.5 litres?

#### Dose by weight or surface area:

Thomas weighs 10kg and is prescribed a dose of 2mg per kg. How many mg should be given?

### Percentage increase or decrease:

James is currently prescribed 50mg of Drug E. The drug is available in 50mg in 10mls. The dose must be decreased by 10%.

Using the same stock of 50mg in 10mls calculate his new dose in mg and mLs.

We hope having read the information here that you will want to study with us. Here are some frequently asked questions:

## 10. How do I apply?

a) Check you meet the entry criteria determined by the HCPC

b) The majority of healthcare trusts have their own systems for employees wishing to enrol on a university programme of study. Please contact the WDF (workforce development fund) or continuing professional development lead for your organisation. Their support is needed for you to access a funded place. Once you have gained agreement from your employer you must apply to the university for a place using the online application system.

Please give careful consideration when choosing your level of study, i.e., degree or masters. It is not possible to change level of study once the course has started.

Take the following steps and apply online:

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/healthsciences/cpd/courses/2021/fact-files/non-medical-prescribing-nmp.aspx>

c) Click on the web address above. Please ensure your HCPC details are up to date and the information you submit on the application form is consistent with the details held by your professional body. We do check your pin registration along with your assigned practice supervisor and assessor / educator.

d) As part of the application process you will be asked to provide the name of your practice assessor / educator. This clinician must meet the criteria set out on page 7.

e) Think carefully about your choice of practice supervisor and practice assessor / educator. Think about who might be best placed to help you meet your learning needs as well as who meets the criteria. You will not be able to commence the course without a practice supervisor and practice assessor / educator. Please speak to a member of the team if you are not able to identify a different supervisor and assessor / educator.

f) Contact the people you have in mind and ask them if they are willing to undertake the role.

g) Check your DBS status: Healthcare professionals wishing to enrol on prescribing courses must have had an **enhanced** DBS (formally CRB) check completed **within the last 3 years**. If your DBS is out of date or you do not have one, please arrange for your employer to apply for you.

h) What happens once I have applied?

- The admission team will process your application and send you a link to a pre course numeracy test. You must achieve a score of 90% or more to continue your application. You are permitted two attempts and calculators are allowed.

- You will receive access to a pre course page where you are required to download declaration forms for your manager, assessor / educator, and supervisor. You must ensure that they are completed and returned by email to the admissions team.

- Both academic and admission teams will then confirm professional entry requirements are met. A place will be formally offered by the admissions team usually 4-6 weeks prior to the start of the course.

## 11. How can I prepare for the course?

There are many ways to prepare for the course, but student feedback suggests that as the pharmacology element of the course is generally new to prescribing students; this is the area where preparation time is best spent.

We strongly recommend prescribing students bring their knowledge of normal anatomy and physiology of the major body systems up to date. A good working knowledge of normal anatomy and physiology helps you to understand where the drug acts and what the drug does in the presence of disease or altered physiology.

In particular, the pharmacology of many drugs requires knowledge of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Whilst this is part of the course, students find it very useful to revise these systems before starting. Other body systems should also be revised. These include gastro-intestinal, respiratory, cardiac, nervous system, kidneys, and liver. A pre-registration nursing A&P book will be sufficient. Students have also found GCSE revision guides and websites such as BBC bitesize to be useful.

Click on this web link, go to biology and you will see different exam specifications each of which has different content. All however include cell biology, some circulatory system, some nervous system etc. <https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/z9ddmp3>

You may also like to think about your prospective role as a prescriber. It is useful to start thinking about the drugs you will regularly prescribe and begin to develop a personal prescribing formulary. Think about:

- How prescribing may enhance your present role and how it might be used to offer new services.
- What benefits will prescribing offer your patients / clients, yourself, and your colleagues?
- If you observe a prescription being written, medication being dispensed, or advice being provided; consider the following:
  - Look up the item in the British National Formulary.
  - Are there any cautions, contraindications, side effects or potential interactions associated with the prescribing of the item?
  - Think about the assessment / consultation that preceded the decision to request a prescription from a prescriber. If you were to prescribe the item would the assessment / consultation, be different? Why?
  - Do you have sufficient knowledge and clinical skills to diagnose the conditions for which you would want to prescribe?
  - Do you need additional information from the patient / client or about the product before you would feel safe to prescribe in that situation?

The prescribing team at the University of Nottingham have written a prescribing textbook which is recommended reading for the course. The book is available from bookshops and online retailers:

The New Prescriber

Lymn J, Bowskill, D. Bath-Hextall F. Knaggs R. 2010

Wiley Blackwell

The course is computer based using an online system called moodle. This system is great for busy practitioners like yourselves because it allows unlimited access to course resources. You will be sent instruction to access the timetable and some pre-course information once your place is confirmed but if you have limited experience of using computers you may like to take this opportunity to find out more before you start.

If you want to revise your numeracy skills, there are lots of online resources and textbooks to choose from. We find that people approach maths differently and we therefore do not recommend a particular resource. Have a browse around and choose what works best for you.

For those who feel they need to go back to the beginning with maths; the Open University offer a free online course. There are two parts that can be studied. Each part takes 8 weeks with a requirement for 3 hours of study per week: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/science-maths-technology/succeed-maths-part-1/content-section-overview?active-tab=content-tab>

If you want to know more about nonmedical prescribing, go to the Department of Health web site [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) and search using the terms 'independent prescribing' or 'supplementary prescribing.'

**Please contact a member of the team if you have any questions.**

**We hope to see you soon.**