

Programme Specification for Foundation Year for Healthcare Professions

This document applies to Academic Year 2024/25 onwards

Table 1 Programme Specification for Healthcare Foundation Year

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A
4.	Final award or awards	BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health) BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Dietetics
5.	Programme title	Foundation Year for Healthcare Professions
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Standard taught programme
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Full time programme over 12 months
9.	UCAS Code	BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) with Foundation Year B741 BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health) with Foundation Year B761 BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy with Foundation Year B935 BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy with Foundation Year B165 BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science with Foundation Year B951 BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography with Foundation Year B822 BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Dietetics with Foundation Year B4D2
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	QAA (2019) Subject Benchmark Statement Health Studies
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Approved July 2024

12. Educational aims of the programme

On successful completion of the Healthcare Professions Foundation Year students will have a range of academic skills and knowledge to ensure they are well prepared to progress onto Level 4 of their chosen degree programme, Nursing (Adult or Mental Health), Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Paramedic Science, Diagnostic Radiography or Nutrition and Dietetics. The course content aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of fundamental facts, concepts and principles of integrated care systems.

The course is aimed at students who have not fully achieved the entry requirements for Level 4 entry onto their chosen professional degree programme, Nursing (Adult or Mental Health), Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Paramedic Science, Diagnostic Radiography or Nutrition and Dietetics.

The main educational aims are:

- To provide students with the ability to develop underpinning knowledge and skills to progress further in their chosen professional degree programme.
- To enable students to develop fundamental knowledge and skills, including academic and information technology capabilities.
- To support students to develop personal and interpersonal skills, self-awareness and personal responsibility; and to reflect on the ethical, social and economic implications in the provision of integrated care systems
- To enable students to develop a variety of transferable skills that will underpin students' academic success in future studies and maximise their employability upon completion of their chosen degree.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Table 2 knowledge and understanding outcomes and which module/code they relate to

Knowledge and Understanding		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1	Discuss the key concepts in healthcare needed to underpin the study of their chosen degree at Level four	HEAL0003
2	Explain key theoretical biological, psychological and sociological aspects of care.	HEAL0002
3	Demonstrate a connected and global understanding of contemporary healthcare	HEAL0003

Table 3 cognitive and intellectual skills outcomes for module code/s

Cognitive and Intellectual skills		
4	Explain evidence-based information and apply subject specific knowledge to tackle problems in a range of areas in healthcare	HEAL0001
5	Search for primary and secondary source material, and understand its relevance, accuracy and limitations to support academic enquiry	HEAL0001

Table 4 learning skills and capabilities related to employability outcomes for module code/s

Skills and capabilities related to employability		
6	Work both independently and with others	HEAL0004
7	Demonstrate developing professionalism, reflecting on performance and progress and respond positively to feedback, taking responsibility for own learning	HEAL0004

Table 5 transferable/key skills outcomes for module code/s

Transferable / key skills		
8	Use a variety of information technologies, databases and analytical tools and explore the relevance of their application in health care	HEAL0002
9	Express ideas clearly and unambiguously both orally and in writing.	HEAL0002 HEAL0003
10	Identify themes and develop strategies to reinforce independent and lifelong learning skills	HEAL0001

Learning, teaching and assessment

Teaching

The aim of the Healthcare Foundation Year is to prepare students to successfully transition to academic study within Higher Education. Students will be supported to develop their level of educational attainment while exploring integrated care systems in the 21st Century. The structure of the course moves students towards increasing independence in their studies to successfully engage with Higher Education study, in line with the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#) and University policies for [assessment](#) and [curriculum design](#). All modules offer students structured tutor support, and each module is designed to lead the student to increasing independence in their confidence.

The learning and teaching strategies of this creative and exciting healthcare course promote active student engagement. The Inclusion Toolkit has been used to develop accessible, flexible and inclusive approaches that empower students to engage with self-directed learning. Students are taught through a combination of interactive workshops, lectures, seminars, clinical skills and simulated learning opportunities, directed study, group projects and self-study packages. Interactive workshops take a variety of formats and are intended to enable the application of learning through discussion and small group activities. Seminars enable the discussion and development of understanding of topics covered in lectures, and practical sessions are focused on identifying subject and / or profession specific skills and applied knowledge through individual and group project work.

The University places emphasis on enabling students to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from [Student Services](#) and [Library Services](#), as well as the [Personal Academic Tutoring system](#) enables students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful.

Contact time

In a typical week, students will have 12 contact hours of teaching.

Typically, class contact time will be structured around:

- Lectures and seminars (face to face and online)
- Workshops
- Group work (problem and enquiry-based learning)

Independent self-study

In addition to the contact time, students are expected to undertake around 22 hours of personal self-study per week. Typically, this will involve completing online activities, reading journal articles

and books, watching selected videos, working through example problems, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library and online, preparing coursework assignments and presentations.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including [the Hive and library resources](#), the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

Teaching staff

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes academics, researchers, clinicians and experts from a variety of health and care backgrounds. Details of individuals can be found on the [Allied Health and Community](#) and [Nursing and Midwifery webpages](#)

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy, and 100% of lecturers on the course have or are working towards a higher education teaching qualification and / or are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy.

Assessment

Applying and anticipatory inclusive assessment by design approach, each module normally has at least two different types of assessment and a range of assessment techniques are used. In addition, every module has at least one type of formative (practice) assessment for feedback to support the development of student's work in summative assessments. Following the Inclusive Assessment Policy, students may have the opportunity to negotiate alternative formats where appropriate.

The precise assessment requirements for an individual student in an academic year will include:

Table 6 Assessment requirements per academic year

Module	Written exam / test	Seminar Presentation	Case study	Reflective portfolio	Individual presentation	Written Assessment
HEAL0002 Science for healthcare	50%				50%	
HEAL0001 Essential skills for learning in healthcare				75%		25%
HEAL0003 Health and wellbeing in today's society			50%			50%
HEAL0004 Becoming a healthcare professional		30%		70%		

14. Assessment strategy

Throughout, the assessments are based on 4 key principles:

- **Adaptability:** All the assessment items apply the university's inclusive assessment policy and allow the student to match their interests, their learning needs and a variety of disciplines.
- **Utility:** Students are encouraged to use topics which will enable them to explore issues and questions across areas of integrated care systems
- **Learning:** The assessments are seen as powerful opportunities for personal, focused learning and developing self-management and self-direction. They are a central aspect of the learning process.
- **Authentic:** Students are able to use problem-based approaches to learning as a context or contribution for any of their assignments.

Extensive feedback is given on assessments and students are supported through Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT), to reflect and act on this feedback in order to support their academic development.

Formative assessment is a key part of the learning process and takes a variety of forms including formative case studies and reflections, formative multiple-choice examinations, formative practice for presentations, as well as more informal feedback on essays and reports.

All module guides contain detailed assignment briefs and grading criteria which are normally specific for that particular assignment. In addition to the specific module on essential skills for learning (HEAL0001), study skills are incorporated into all modules and include sessions on how to make good use of this information.

Please see Course Handbook for a grid showing assessment methods and weightings mapped to modules and an assessment calendar of submission.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Course Title: Foundation Year for Healthcare Professions

Level 3

Table 7 Award map Foundation Year for Healthcare Professions

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))
HEAL0001	Essential skills for learning in healthcare	30	M
HEAL0002	Science for healthcare	30	M
HEAL0003	Health and wellbeing in today's society	30	M
HEAL0004	Becoming a healthcare professional	30	M

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

The Foundation Year is located at level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and has been developed with reference to the [QAA \(2019\) Subject Benchmark Statement Health Studies](#) and [SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education](#) (Level 3) and is located at Level 3 of the [OfS sector recognised standards](#).

Please note: Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) and Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) approval only applies from Level 4 of the associated professional programme. Level 3 is not accredited by these professional bodies as it sits outside HCPC or NMC requirements.

17. Support for students

Student support is a central element of the Foundation Year programme and is available from within the School of Allied Health and Community, Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery and from the wider University. There is extensive programme information on Webpages, in module outlines and within the Course Handbook.

Pre-programme:

Students are invited to a pre-course information day which provides focused details related to the Foundation Year and their chosen professional degree programme, Nursing (Adult or Mental Health), Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Paramedic Science or Radiography.

Induction:

There is a comprehensive induction programme. The first week of the programme provides students with opportunity to meet other students and representatives from their course team and their Personal Academic Tutor, [Student Services](#), [Registry Services](#), [Library Services](#) and [Student Union](#). Sessions exist on introducing students to the principles of learning and teaching in Higher Education.

Personal Academic Tutors (PATs):

Personal Academic Tutoring is at the heart of supporting students personally, professionally and academically. The programme team believe that the Personal Academic Tutor system is fundamental to student success. [Personal Academic Tutors](#) provide an exceptional level of individual academic support and encouragement to students. All students are allocated a Personal Academic Tutor for the duration of the course and are encouraged to meet with them at least four times to discuss feedback on assignments, progressions choice and signposting to further assistance. Personal Academic Tutors will usually be a member of the teaching team from the student's chosen professional degree programme. The support provided is personal, flexible and proactive. It is tailored to the particular needs of students who are known to the team over the duration of their programme. Students are advised to maintain regular contact with their Personal Academic Tutor, with email being the communication tool of choice. All tutorial contact is recorded via SOLE. While it is unlikely, a student may request a change of Personal Academic Tutor (or vice versa).

Course Leader

The Course Leader works closely with Personal Academic Tutors and Course Leaders of the associated professional degree programmes, to carefully monitor student progression and achievement on the course, in order to facilitate early intervention strategies for students struggling to make satisfactory progression and as necessary, to support students to temporarily withdraw from their studies.

Additional support:

There is a course community website via Blackboard for all students that provides ongoing support, information and a way of enabling students to interact with each other when not on the university site. The subject librarian is integral to the teaching on each module and will provide students with support to access and interpret relevant literature. Developing effective study skills is an essential element in achieving academic success. There are a range of free study skills workshops, open to all students on a self-referral basis and the writer in residence offers one to one support. All module leaders provide individual academic support via assessment specific tutorials. This is in addition to Personal Academic Tutor support.

All students are provided with a Course Handbook that comprehensively outlines the programme and provides advice and guidance on the Academic Regulations and Procedures of the University of Worcester. Module outlines and assessment details are provided for all modules.

Disability support

The University is committed to ensuring that disabled people, including those with specific learning difficulties and/or mental health difficulties are treated fairly. Reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure that disabled students are not disadvantaged. The [Disability and Dyslexia Service](#) within Student Services provides screening and assessment of disabilities combined with offering specialist disability support.

Student voice

The University of Worcester is committed to providing an outstanding student experience and consider students to be participating partners in their learning experience. As such, the student voice has a transparent and direct role in informing course development and management. Students are encouraged to give module and course feedback via evaluation forms and surveys and through one-to-one discussion with module and course leads. Students also have the opportunity to be Course Representatives for course, attending Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings to inform staff of wider student feedback to inform the course development and ensure course quality.

18. Admissions

Admissions policy

We welcome applications from people over 18 years of age and all backgrounds with an interest in studying Nursing (Adult or Mental Health) with Foundation Year, Occupational Therapy with Foundation Year, Physiotherapy with Foundation Year, Paramedic Science with Foundation Year, Diagnostic Radiography with Foundation Year or Nutrition and Dietetics with Foundation Year. The University aims to be accessible; it is committed to widening participation and encouraging diversity in the student population.

The School of Allied Health and Community and Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery work closely with central student support services, including the Admissions Office, the [Disability and Dyslexia Service](#) and the [International team \(student services\)](#), to support students from a variety of backgrounds. We actively encourage and welcome people from the widest range of economic and cultural backgrounds, and value the contribution of mature learners.

Entry requirements

Students should be at least 18 years old and normally hold a minimum of GCSE English grade C/4 or above and 1 A Level (or equivalent Level 3 qualification). However, all applicants will be judged on their suitability and preparedness for the Foundation Year, and we may take other skills, qualifications and life experience into account. Details of acceptable Level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus and on the University webpages.

The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW websites.

<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/diagnostic-radiography-bsc-hons-with-foundation-year>
<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/nutrition-and-dietetics-bsc-hons-with-foundation-year>
<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/occupational-therapy-bsc-hons-with-foundation-year>
<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/paramedic-science-bsc-hons-with-foundation-year>
<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/physiotherapy-bsc-hons-with-foundation-year>
<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/nursing-adult-bsc-hons-with-foundation-year>
<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/courses/nursing-mental-health-bsc-hons-with-foundation-year>

See [Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

Students are required to demonstrate health and character sufficient to ensure safe and effective professional practice. This includes a satisfactory enhanced DBS and occupational health assessment. Applicants are required to sign a self-declaration of offenses before prior to an offer being made. Students are then required to self-declare any offenses prior to progressing to Level 4 of their chosen professional programme and then annually via a self-declaration on SOLE.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is available from the University webpages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111). Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

Please note: The Foundation Year provides entry to Level 4 of the associated professional programmes, it does not provide entry with advanced standing.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

Admissions procedures

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS

- BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) with Foundation Year B741
- BSc (Hons) Nursing (Mental Health) with Foundation Year B761
- BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy with Foundation Year B935
- BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy with Foundation Year B165
- BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science with Foundation Year B951
- BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography with Foundation Year B822
- BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Dietetics with Foundation Year B4D2

Admissions/selection criteria

No places are offered without successfully attending an interview. Meeting the minimum entry requirements does not guarantee an interview or a place on the course.

Admissions and selection will follow the process for the applicants chosen final award programme.

All applications received are scrutinised and short listed against set criteria which include both educational and professional requirements:

- Personal statement
- Evidence of transferable skills
- Reference

Candidates who meet the criteria for admission are invited to attend a values-based selection event.

The values-based selection event involves an interview facilitated by the academic team and practitioners and may either involve people who use services or use questions developed in partnership with people who use services. This allows candidates to demonstrate their understanding of their chosen professional programme, including the evidence of appropriate qualities and values, commitment to succeed and suitability for the programme.

All staff involved in the selection process attend training in the principles of selection, equality and diversity through the University or the practice partners employing organisation.

Where a candidate is unsuccessful at an interview, they are offered written feedback against individual performance and interview outcome. In some instances, potential students may be advised to reapply at a later date or to seek further education.

Those students who meet all the criteria for entry and are successful at interview are offered a place, conditional upon confirmation of good health and good character.

Selection events vary slightly depending on the identified professional programme. Please see the associated professional programme, and programme specification for full details.

Please note: For some professional courses the number of places on the Foundation Year will be capped due to limited placement capacity.

Progression to Level 4 of the associated professional programme, is subject to successful completion of all modules of the Foundation Year with a minimum pass mark of D-.

Some professional programmes have specific Maths and English entry requirements, that must be achieved prior to progression to Level 4 of the associate professional programme, please see website for full details.

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's **Taught Courses Regulatory Framework**

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- A student is required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- A student who submits course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- A student who submits work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Progression

- Students are required to pass all 120 credits in the Foundation Year to progress to Level 4 study.

- A student who, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, has failed 90 credits or more (after exhausting all reassessment opportunities) during the academic year, will have their registration with the University terminated.

Requirements for Awards

There is no exit award for completion of the Foundation Year. Students will receive a transcript of their grades upon successful completion of the course.

The requirements to achieve an exit award can be found in the Programme Specification for the following awards:

[BSc \(Hons\) Nursing](#) (School of Nursing & Midwifery)

[BSc \(Hons\) Occupational Therapy](#) (School of Allied Health)

[BSc \(Hons\) Physiotherapy](#) (School of Allied Health)

[BSc \(Hons\) Paramedic Science](#) (School of Allied Health)

[BSc \(Hons\) Diagnostic Radiography](#) (School of Allied Health)

[BSc \(Hons\) Nutrition and Dietetics](#) (School of Allied Health)

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

Students completing the Foundation Year, will progress onto their chosen professional degree programme. Employability is integral to Nursing, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Paramedic Science, Diagnostic Radiography and Nutrition and Dietetics degree programme. They provide access to a career as a registered professional with either HCPC or the NMC, with high rates of employment, either within the NHS or the independent sector.

Student employability

In the Foundation Year, students will be introduced to professional knowledge, values, skills and behaviours of their chosen professional pathway. Careers advice is given at all levels.

Students also have the opportunity to 'earn while they learn', with opportunities for students to gain work as student ambassadors, helping at open days, induction weeks, selection and taster events.

As students' progress to their chosen professional degree, they will undertake placements in a range of health and care settings as an integral part of their studies.

Links with employers

The University has a strong track record of working closely with employers. The School of Allied Health and Community and Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery have excellent working relationships with a wide range of practice learning partners and employer partners, including NHS trusts and the wider Integrated Care System (ICS). Regular strategic and operations meetings support collaborative developments.

Practice learning partners and employer partners not only provide a range of high-quality placement experiences, they work alongside course team, in the selection and recruitment of students and in the co-production, delivery and assessment of professional programmes.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. Course Handbooks, Module Outlines and Module Specifications.