Programme Specification Learning Disability Nursing

Teaching Institution  London South Bank University

Programme Accredited by  Nursing and Midwifery Council

Faculty of Origin  Faculty of Health and Social Care

Year of Publication  2011

Full Name of Highest Award within the Programme  BSc (Hons) Learning Disability Nursing

Other Awards within the Programme  BSc Learning Disability Nursing
Dip HE Health and Social Care

Reference Points for Development of this Programme Specification
Internal:
LSBU Mission and Corporate Plan
LSBU Core Skills Policy
LSBU Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes

External:
NMC Standards for pre-registration nursing education (2010)
Standards, to support learning and assessment in practice (NMC, 2008)
Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (QAA, 2008)
Subject Benchmark Statements: Nursing (QAA, 2001)
Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher
Education – Section 7: Programme design, approval, monitoring and review (2006)
Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher
Education – Section 9: Work based and placement learning (2007)
SEEC Credit Level Descriptors (2010)

Rationale and Aims of the Programme

Nursing programmes involve integrated study of the knowledge, skills and values from a range of subject disciplines applied to the practice of nursing. Nursing competence requires the development of technical, cognitive and interpersonal skills
and involves a variety of different ways of knowing and understanding. Technical skills are the most visible part of some fields of nursing while for other fields interpersonal skills are the primary focus. Interpersonal and interactive skills are needed to enable nurses to form appropriate professional relationships and for some fields the depth and breadth of interpersonal skills required is greater. Through their educational preparation nurses become equipped to understand, contribute to, and work within the context of their profession and to analyse, adapt to, manage and eventually lead the processes of change.

Learning Disabilities Nursing

Programmes in the learning disabilities nursing field of practice, prepare nurses to work with people with a range of learning disabilities and with their families and significant others. Learning disability nurses' work is underpinned by the concepts of partnership, inclusion and advocacy. The role of the learning disability nurse, specifically, is to assist and support people to become and remain healthy, to improve their competence and quality of life, and to fulfil their potential. Learning disability nurses work with people with a spectrum of needs and abilities in a wide variety of settings, often working collaboratively with professionals from a range of health and social care agencies. This support may take place in the National Health Service (NHS), voluntary or independent sector, or in the patient/client's own home.

Distinctive features

The distinctive features of this programme include:

- It meets the new NMC Standards for pre-registration nursing education (2010) and enables successful students to register as a nurse in their chosen field of practice of Learning Disability Nursing. Students, joining the programme, must register for practice within 5 years of completing the degree programme.
- Support throughout the programme is from expert nurses and subject specialists
- There is a strong emphasis on integrating theoretical approaches with the practice of nursing; 50% of the programme is theoretical and 50% is practice based
- The taught programme is complemented by blended learning support and interactive e-tivities
- Potential students can claim Accreditation of Prior Learning for up to 50% of the programme (for suitably qualified and/or experienced applicants)

Aims

The aims of the programme are to:

- Ensure that the graduate nurse achieves the competencies for pre-registration nurse education specified in the NMC Standards (2010)
Develop confident and competent practitioners who practise autonomously, compassionately, skilfully and safely whilst maintaining dignity and promoting health and wellbeing

Develop a graduate nurse who is a critical consumer of research and evidence

Foster independence in learning and commitment to lifelong learning

Develop the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment

Programme Outcomes

A. Students will acquire knowledge and understanding of:

A1. The life, behavioural and social sciences as applied to health, ill-health and disability

A2. Common physical and mental health problems, treatments and management in the students own field of practice, including co-morbidity and physiological and psychological vulnerability

A3. Nursing theory and theoretical perspectives underpinning nursing practice in the students own field

A4. Working in partnership with other health and social care professionals and agencies, service users, carers and families

A5. The critical use of research and governance processes to maintain and improve nursing practice and standards of healthcare

A6. How people’s lifestyles, environments and the location of care within and outside of hospital settings, influence their health and wellbeing

A7. When people have a disability, working with service users and others to obtain the information needed to make reasonable adjustments that promote optimum health

Teaching and learning strategy

Module Co-ordinators are encouraged to provide learning material on-line and are encouraged to explore the use of on-line technologies that provide virtual teaching and assessment environments (Blackboard™).

- Lectures will be used to introduce and provide new information and update existing knowledge
- Seminars and discussions to share varied ideas amongst students
- Tutorials with individuals and groups
- Critical incident analysis to reflect upon practice based issues
- Structured reading/guided study
- Workbooks to develop and update knowledge
- Small group exercises

Assessment

Assessment methods are specified in each Module Guide and cover the module and course learning outcomes prescribed in the Module Guide. Content, knowledge and understanding is assessed through either coursework and/or competencies. Coursework can take many forms based on the practical or theoretical content of the modules.
- Practice scenarios provide a simulated experience in which knowledge and skills can be demonstrated.
- Achievement of identified competencies related to field of practice at designated level
- Client/patient narrative, reflective essay to develop integration of theory and practice.
- Care and case presentation, to develop skills in articulating knowledge and decision making processes.
- Examinations to test underpinning knowledge
- Oral presentations, to allow the student to demonstrate their ability to make practice focussed decisions based on their assessment and interpretation.

B. Students will develop their intellectual skills such that they are able to:

B1. Evaluate the impact the impact of social, cultural, spiritual, legal, political and economic factors on care and care delivery
B2. Demonstrate a critical understanding of contemporary research that underpins nursing practice within and outside of the hospital setting
B3. Demonstrate independent thinking, critical thinking, problem solving and creativity
B4. Critically examine the impact of political and social contexts on the provision of healthcare
B5. Appraise relevant research and theoretical evidence to inform delivery of best practice
B6. Demonstrate research awareness and a commitment to evidence based practice.

Teaching and learning strategy

Students can expect, as part of the teaching and learning strategy, to be pro-active participants in the development of intellectual skills through discussion and peer presentation and subject reporting.
- Lectures will be used to introduce and provide new information and update existing knowledge.
- Use of Blackboard for e-tivities including discussion amongst students, quizzes, critique, literature searching and sharing
- Tutorials with individuals and groups.
- Problem solving to reflect upon practice based issues.
- Research critique underpinning care
- Structured reading/guided study to support key lectures

Assessment

Intellectual skills are normally assessed through written coursework and group or individual student presentations.
- Written assignments, for example, essay, case study, critical review and evidence based scenarios to examine selected aspects of care and suggest strategies for care enhancement
- Literature search and review to examine the evidence for a care
C. Students will acquire and develop practical skills such that they are able to:

C1. Practice within The Code: Standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives (NMC 2008) to meet public and professional expectations
C2. Confidently meet the competencies for pre-registration education (NMC 2010) to ensure delivery of safe nursing care
C3. Act with professionalism and integrity, and work within agreed professional, ethical and legal frameworks and processes to maintain and improve standards
C4. Assess, plan, deliver and evaluate care in hospital and out of hospital settings using the best available evidence
C5. Practice in a compassionate, respectful way, maintaining dignity and well being and communicating effectively using a wide range of strategies and interventions including communication technologies.
C6. Recognise when a person is at risk and in need of extra support and protection and take all reasonable steps to protect them from abuse
C7. Reflect on and in practice

Teaching and learning strategy
Practical skills are normally developed through practical, skills based sessions and problem based approaches.
- Role modelling in practice learning environments
- Practice workshops, high and low fidelity simulation
- Clinical Skill laboratory demonstration and practice sessions
- Direct observation and discussion
- Lecture and seminar
- Problem solving scenarios and seminars
- Mock clinical scenarios

Assessment
A variety of assessment methods are used to assess practical skills. These include OSCEs, evidence based student presentations, practice learning and assessment portfolio, care and case studies and problem based scenarios.
- Achievement of identified competencies related to field of practice at designated level
- Reflective care study
- Client/patient narratives
- Case study approaches
- Scenario based coursework

D. Students will acquire and develop transferable skills such that they are able to:

D1. Demonstrate self awareness and recognise how the students’ own values, principles and assumptions may affect their practice
D2. Confidently present information orally, in writing and, where appropriate through the use of technology, to provide coherent and logical arguments to support decision making

D3. Use leadership skills to supervise and manage others and contribute to planning, designing, delivering and improving future services

D4. Maintain the students’ own personal and professional development, learning from experience, through supervision, feedback, reflection and evaluation

D5. Work effectively across professional and agency boundaries, and co-ordinate smooth effective transition within and between services and agencies.

Teaching and learning strategy

- Role modelling and discussions.
- Attending inter-professional forums and meetings.
- Use of Blackboard for e-tivities including discussion amongst students, quizzes, critique, literature searching and sharing
- Information technology workshops
- Seminars and discussions to share varied ideas amongst students
- Tutorials with individuals and groups

Assessment

- Practice Learning and Assessment Portfolio, achievement of identified competencies related to field of practice at designated level
- Reflective care study
- Client/patient narrative
- Reflective accounts
- Case Study

Entry Requirements

Applicants to these programmes will need to meet the following entry criteria (or recognised equivalent):

- 200 UCAS tariff points  
  (eg. 2 A-Levels at grade B; BTEC National Cert (DM); BTEC National Dip (MMP); Advanced GNVQ (passed with distinction))
- PLUS GCSE (A–C): five subjects including English and Mathematics
  OR
- NVQ Level 3 in Health/Health and Social Care PLUS 1 year relevant experience PLUS GCSE English and Mathematics (A-C)
  OR
- Access to HE course in Nursing, Science or Health Studies or similar with 45 credits at L3 [minimum 30 at merit and 15 at pass grade] and 15 credits at L2
- For applicants from outside the EEA, an IELTS score of 7.0 is required.

In addition:

All applicants are required to be successful in a numeracy and literacy assessment at interview. This assessment is benchmarked at Adult Literacy and Numeracy Level
2. A sample numeracy and literacy paper is included in the interview invitation letter sent to all shortlisted applicants.

In addition to the appropriate academic qualifications, students will need to demonstrate the following abilities:

- communicate effectively both verbally and in writing
- demonstrate reasons for interest in chosen field of nursing
- indicate a high motivation to nurse
- undertake independent study, prioritise own workload and possess time management/organisational skills
- articulate their understanding of the role of the nurse including the value base of the profession
- meet the professional demands of nursing and the course of study to be undertaken
- Demonstrate due regard for dignity, respect for persons, confidentiality and equal opportunities.
- Reflect upon their life skills and the relevance to nursing.

Acceptance on the programme is always conditional upon successful occupational health clearance. Students are required to undergo a health assessment as a prerequisite to completing their enrolment on the Pre-registration Nursing Programme in order to ensure that students are ‘fit’ to undertake their course of study and to attend practice placements. Occupational Health clearance is separated into two distinct ‘phases’; pre-enrolment and post-enrolment.

The Pre-registration Nursing Programmes are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974). All candidates are subject to the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) enhanced disclosure to facilitate safer recruitment to protect patients, children and vulnerable adults. The Faculty requires all candidates to complete a Criminal Record Declaration at interview and declare any previous convictions, cautions, warnings or reprimands. If the decision is made at interview to offer a candidate, the declaration is reviewed.

The DDA will apply and all reasonable adjustments made to support students with identified needs.

The Faculty of Health & Social Care has developed its recruitment and selection processes in close partnership with NHS Trusts, other practice partners, NHS London and service users. All prospective students normally apply for all courses in the pre-registration nursing programme through UCAS. Attendance at interview is essential for all programmes. Interview panels comprise a member of the academic staff and a service colleague.

Service colleagues and, in the case of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Nursing, service users, form part of the group interview panels.

A positive decision will always be conditional on references, outstanding educational results, occupational health and CRB clearance. Unsuccessful candidates are provided with feedback.
Accreditation of Prior Learning

The Faculty’s policy on Accreditation of Prior Learning offers a transparent, rigorous and fair framework for judging the APL claims from individual applicants. Applicants who indicate that they wish to make a claim are provided with guidance notes to assist them constructing their claim. Student may apply for APL through both certificated learning and the production of a portfolio to demonstrate achievement of programme outcomes through experience.

The process in place allows individual applicants to map previous learning against programme outcomes up to the permitted NMC maximum of 50%. Should an applicant be granted any APL claim, regulations are in place to permit progression within the programme. Classification of this final award for students who have been awarded agreed APL credit on their profiles is calculated in accordance with LSBU Academic Regulation for Taught Programmes.

The Faculty currently offers a number of Foundation Degrees (FdSc) qualifications. It is our intention to map the Level 4 and level 5 outcomes from the FdSc onto the Level 4 and level 5 outcomes from the BSc (Hons) programme, recognising the NMC maximum 50% claim regulation. When this mapping is complete, it is intended to create bespoke bridging programmes to allow applicants with an LSBU FdSc to access the pre-qualifying nursing programme at a set point within the programme. Applicants who hold Foundation Degrees from other HEIs will be considered on an individual basis.

Programme Structure

The programme is full-time and extends over a period of three calendar years (156 weeks) inclusive of holidays. These are organised as far as possible around university academic semesters. There are two semesters per year. Within each semester, there are a range of modules of learning, each module comprises 20 credits. Practice units attract academic credit.

The curriculum is modular and comprises 4,600 hours of theory and practice as required by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and a holiday requirement of seven weeks per year. The programme is designed to incorporate the balance of 50% theory (2300 hours) and 50% practice (2300 hours). There are normally no more than 45 programmed weeks in any one-year.

The three-year programme is designed to be a continuous educational programme with an appropriate balance between health and illness, between the educative, restorative and rehabilitative aspects of nursing and between hospital and out of hospital settings. It has been designed to reflect the available human and financial resources and within the range of available practice learning opportunities. An integrated framework is used as much as possible in order to promote sharing and working together across professional disciplines, academic subjects and across graduate and post-graduate courses.
Practice experience will begin early on in the programme and students will gain practice experience close to the end of years one and two. An extended placement of at least 12 weeks will take place at the end of the course in order to enable students to consolidate their education and their competence in practice. Practice experience is gained within both hospital care and community settings.

There will be two intakes a year in September and in March.

**Programme**

Theory: minimum 2300 hours  
Practice: minimum 2300 hours  
Total: 4600 hours

The key tenet of the new NMC Standards is that students will commence their field specific study from year one. Generic modules common to all fields are offered in all years of the programme. The first year has four generic modules and two field specific modules, year two has equal numbers of generic and field specific modules and in the final year there are two generic modules and four field specific modules.

**Practice Learning**

The NMC Standards for pre-registration nursing education (2010) provide the standards of competency for entry to the register and are reflected in the pre-registration nursing programme. These relate to professional standards of competence and fitness for practice. Nursing is a practice based profession and recognises the importance of the service user and respect of the individual. The primary aim in the pre-registration nursing programme is to ensure that students are prepared to practice safely and therefore protect the public. In accordance with this principle the programme is practice-centred and directed to achievement of professional competence.

The following modules comprise each year of the course.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generic module:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Generic module:</strong> Practice module</td>
<td><strong>Field specific module:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to Life Sciences</td>
<td>Practice Skills for Nursing</td>
<td>Concepts and Theories of Learning Disability Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Core module:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Generic module:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Field specific module:</strong> Practice module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Values, Ethics and Law</td>
<td>Social Sciences and Nursing</td>
<td>Personal Effectiveness and Communication</td>
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**Assessment Methods**

A variety of approaches will be used in order to balance the assessment methods and to promote different skills/abilities whilst reflecting the nature of the module of learning. The main rationale for choosing the assessment method is helping students in the development of a wide range of professional knowledge and skills. The types of assignments demonstrate progression of skills and abilities as students’ progress on the course. Students will be assessed in each practice placement against specific practice learning outcomes, incorporated within the practice module. In a similar way, practice learning outcomes will necessarily demonstrate differentiation and progression.

The organisation of theory and practice assessment running concurrently will promote the integration of theory and practice for students. This coherent approach underpins the structure throughout the programme.
The proposed strategy aims to help students to:

- Develop key skills such as communication, literacy, numeracy, information technology and professional practice skills
- Develop a range of transferable skills
- Develop an understanding of the complexity of the professional role
- Integrate knowledge from a variety of disciplines to the practice of nursing
- Develop skills of self and peer assessment
- Become competent in the practice of delivering and managing care
- Gain the necessary competencies and essential skills to be successful on completion of the course to register as a Nurse with the NMC.