



Bournemouth
University

MSc Adult Nursing and MSc Mental Health Nursing

Entry Portfolio Guide

Assessment of your entry portfolio

If you are successful at interview you are required to submit a written two-part portfolio in which you will be expected to demonstrate that you meet the criteria for entry to either the MSc Adult Nursing **OR** MSc Mental Health Nursing programme.

The two-part portfolio is your opportunity to provide evidence (Part 1) of your practice-based experience to date, including knowledge, skills gained, and your approach to practice. Part 2 requires you to demonstrate your potential to write academically at Master's level in response to questions about your current level of evidence-based knowledge and understanding of aspects of nursing and healthcare.

After completing and submitting your MSc applicant portfolio, it will be assessed by the Programme Leader or a delegate who will decide if it satisfies the requirements to enter/start the course.

If the Programme Leader or their delegate feels minor amendments are required, your portfolio will be returned to you with feedback advising on the changes required. If your changes do not meet the expected standard on your second attempt, your application may be unsuccessful. Please note, applicants will normally only be given one opportunity for resubmission. Satisfactory portfolios are managed through the university's [Recognition of Prior Learning](#) process so that the hours of theory and practice evidenced can be formally recognised. The portfolios are also available for audit by the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC).

Please note: It is an essential requirement that your first, and any subsequent submission if this is required, is **completed only by you as the applicant**. You will be required to sign and confirm this at the end of the portfolio. Please also note that we use plagiarism detection software, and we check for AI-generated responses. If your portfolio indicates at the time of your submission or after enrolment that the work has been copied from another source, your application/offer may be withdrawn.

A link to the portfolio template can be found on page three of this guide.

The portfolio is designed for you to demonstrate:

1. Experience of practice in a healthcare role (a minimum of 720 hours completed within the two years prior to the course start date*).
2. Prior learning equivalent to key learning outcomes (and 650 hours of theory) from year one of the BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing/Mental Health Nursing programmes, with responses written in an academic style consistent with that expected during the final year of a first degree.

*Evidence of recent practice (within the two-years prior to the programme start date) must be provided

by successful applicants to progress onto the course. If some practice experience has been gained within the two years of the course intake, but the required 720 hours have not been achieved at the time of interview an employee reference that confirms recent practice will also be required by the August of the year you intend to start the course.

Deferred applicants

If your application and portfolio submission are successful but you subsequently defer your start date until the following year, you will be required to provide an updated reference in the summer before you join the course to confirm you have completed the minimum requirement of 720 hours practice within the two years preceding your **new** course start date.

1. Experience of practice in a health care role

In order to comply with NMC standards, applicants require a minimum of 720 hours prior experience of healthcare practice*.

*Examples of healthcare experience include:

- Working as a healthcare assistant/support worker or activity coordinator in a nursing home, hospital, or similar setting.
- Other support worker roles in health or social care relevant to the field of nursing applied for (Adult **or** Mental Health nursing), for example, operating department assistant, physiotherapy assistant.
- Working as any registered healthcare professional.
- Alternative experience will be considered on an individual basis.

If you currently do not have 720 hours of practice-based experience, it is a requirement of you, as a prospective applicant, to arrange this. The hours are equivalent to approximately 4-5 months of full-time work but may be achieved through part-time work over a longer period. This would normally be through paid employment, allowing applicants to gain care experience with a range of patients, clients or service users. It may be possible for some applicants to gain the required experience in a voluntary capacity, and this must also be verified by a referee. Caring experiences with family members or with a single client would not normally be considered as providing adequate evidence of care experience. As mentioned, this health care practice experience should normally have been carried out within one year of the date of application to the programme.

Healthcare practice experience

You will be required to provide details of your relevant experience. This should quantify the hours spent in practice (a minimum of 720 hours is required by the commencement of the programme) and demonstrate that the knowledge and skills you have gained during your experience of care are relevant to nursing and the field of nursing practice (adult **or** mental health) you are applying for. In addition to confirming hours, the supporting reference should also give an indication of your role, skills, and approach to practice and patient care.

You must be able to describe your experience in detail and reflect on what you have learnt so far, demonstrating the relevance of this to the principles that underpin the UK's **Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) Code** - prioritise people; practice effectively; preserve safety and promote professionalism and trust (NMC 2018).

Verification of hours

The verification of hours is required in a reference from a manager or employer. This must confirm the number of hours worked, activities carried out as part of your normal duties and your approach to patient care. Entry to the programme is subject to satisfactory verification of hours and approach to practice. The practice hours evidenced will contribute to the minimum 2,300 practice hours that need to have been accrued by the end of the MSc programme. These must be completed in accordance with the requirements of the NMC as necessary for gaining entry to the NMC register as an adult nurse or mental health nurse. Please note you must include a reference that verifies your hours within the portfolio document.

Successful completion of Part 1 of the entry portfolio will entitle you to recognition of prior learning (RPL) for the Online Practice Assessment Learning portfolio (OPAL) Part 1.

2. Prior learning equivalent to key learning outcomes from year one theory units of the BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing/BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing programmes (and equivalent to 650 hours of theory)

The portfolio of prior learning will require you to demonstrate the level of academic writing and referencing skills you acquired during previous higher-level study at degree level or above. You will apply these academic skills in completing your portfolio for example in a summary of your prior experiences, and the knowledge and skills gained, which you will be required to place in context as you reflect on your clinical practice during the two years preceding the programme start date.

The portfolio of prior learning is designed to enable you to demonstrate learning equivalent to identified key learning outcomes from year one theory of the Nursing and Midwifery Council approved nursing programme. This means that you should use the academic writing and referencing skills acquired during previous higher-level study at degree level or above equivalent when completing your portfolio. Your responses should be written to a good academic standard and supported appropriately by references as expected at degree level study. Your portfolio **must** be written (typed) and **completed only by you**, and you will be required to verify it is your own work at the end of the portfolio. Please **do not copy and paste information** into your portfolio from websites, journals, books, or other sources. Instead, please write in your own words and reference any literature you are using to support your responses.

[Please click here to access the entry portfolio template for the MSc Adult Nursing or Mental Health Nursing programme](#)

[Please click here to see the academic writing criteria used for assessing your portfolio](#)

Please submit your completed portfolio and references by the deadline provided when we request your portfolio. This is usually 21 days from our request being sent, but your deadline may be shorter depending on which point of the admissions cycle your interview takes place during. If we have not received your completed portfolio and references by the deadline given, your application may be withdrawn.

Unsuccessful applicants may be eligible to be considered for the BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing or BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing programmes.