

Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care Practice starting in 2025

Course Leader:	Tahira Kosar
Teaching Institution:	Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College
Campus:	Hereford
Awarding Body:	Pearson
Final Award:	HNC
Intermediate Award(s):	N/A
Mode of Study:	Full-time
Qualification number:	610/5301/6
Date of programme specification preparation/revision:	23/06/25

Educational aims of the programme

The aim of the Higher National Certificate in Health and Social Care Practice is to develop students as independent-thinking professionals who can meet the demands of employers and adapt to a constantly changing world. The qualifications aim to widen access to higher education and improve the career prospects of those who take them and to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding that students need to achieve high performance in the health, social care and community environments

The qualification aims to develop students with enquiring minds, who have the abilities and confidence to work across different health, social care and community functions and to lead, manage, respond to change, and tackle a range of complex health, social care and community situations. It aims to provide the core skills required for a range of careers in health, social care and community work, including supportive and assistive roles, offering a balance between employability skills and the knowledge essential for students with entrepreneurial, employment or academic ambitions. It looks to further develop students' understanding of the major impact that technologies have in the health, social care and community environments. Provide insight into the health, social care and community opportunities and challenges presented globally, equipping students with knowledge and understanding of culturally diverse organisations, cross-cultural issues, diversity and values, and to enable flexible study to meet local and specialist needs.

QAA and professional academic standards and quality

The Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care Practice is located at level 4 of the Framework for Higher Qualifications (2014).

The following university and further education tutors, employers, Professional Body representatives and other individuals have generously shared their time and expertise to develop the HNC and HND qualifications: Belfast Metropolitan College, Chirality Consulting, Christine Cowan, Clinical Academic, Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust, Dawn Grant – Healthcare Education Consultant, Dr Carol-Ann Howson, social work education consultant, Dr Cheryl Whiting – Education Consultant and Trainer, Dr Jane Harvey-Lloyd, healthcare education consultant, Gerry Skelton MBE, education and training consultant, Global Banking School, Jo Shuttlewood-Limb, University of Suffolk, Gillian Clarkson, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Mont Rose College, North Staffordshire College Group, North West Regional College, Northern Regional College, Nottingham College, Oldham College, Solihull College and University Centre, South West Regional College, Southern Regional College, Stephanie Tempest Consultancy Ltd. Telford College, Warrington and Vale Royal College, Students, employers and

educators using previous healthcare and social care Higher National qualifications. Special thank you to all the support workers, assistant practitioners and educators from the NHS England facilitated Support Worker Voice group, and Educator and Pastoral Support Network.

National Occupational Standards

Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care Practice have been developed with career progression and recognition by professional bodies in mind. The qualification provides underpinning knowledge as well as developing practical skills in preparation for work and possible study and achievement of Level 6 in due course.

The documents consulted during the design of this course include:

Higher-level Skills

On completion of this programme, learners studying the Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care Practice will be able to:

- understand and demonstrate person-centred care
- thoroughly understand the function and role of their service
- demonstrate core knowledge of clinical, supportive, technical, and/or scientific roles and responsibilities, including risk assessment
- understand the social, cultural, and economic influences, individual circumstances, behaviours, and lifestyle choices that impact outcomes for service users.

Course Structure

The Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care Practice is a qualification with a minimum of 120 credits of which 4 credits are mandatory.

Unit Number		Unit Level	Unit Credit
Mandatory units			
401	Developing Professional Practice (30 credits)	4	30
402	Teamwork and Communication	4	15
403	Evidence Based Practice (Pearson-set)	4	15
404	Compassionate Care and Values-based Practice	4	15
Specialist units			
409	Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology	4	15
413	Applied Human Development and Behaviour	4	15
415	Sociological Perspectives	4	15

Learning and Teaching Methods

Students will learn through a series of lectures, practical sessions, workshops, seminars and tutorials. They will also be required to undertake substantial independent study. 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 assignments and presentations.

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course.

In a typical week, students will normally have 6 hours of contact teaching.

Means of Assessment

Students working at higher levels should be capable of undertaking independent study and research, developing strategies to improve their own performance, supported by teaching staff.

Students will be required to complete coursework as they progress through the programme and undertake assessments at the end of each semester. The assessment of Pearson Higher National qualifications is criterion-referenced and we are required to assess learners' evidence against published learning outcomes and assessment criteria. All units will be individually graded as 'pass', 'merit' or 'distinction'. To achieve a pass grade for the unit learners must meet the assessment criteria set out in the specifications. Merit and distinction grades are awarded for higher-level achievement.

All grades awarded are provisional until they are confirmed at the assessment board. This usually takes place at the end of an academic year.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is 'a method of assessment that considers whether an individual can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning'. If individuals can produce relevant evidence that fully meets learning outcome requirements then RPL can be given for their existing knowledge, understanding or skills

External Examiner

The External Examiner (EE) is a subject assessment specialist appointed by Pearson to conduct external examination. They verify that the management of programmes and assessment decisions meet national standards. External examination is usually conducted by an annual visit, usually in the summer term.

Additional Support

Developing effective study skills is an essential element in achieving academic success. All module leaders provide individual academic support. 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. Module outlines and assessment details are provided for all modules. During your studies you will have access to fully equipped classrooms, practical workshops, Library with text and electronic resources and Student Services.

The College 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 Learning Support Service is your initial point of contact.

Entry Requirements

Entry criteria detail a typical offer but the College considers all applications on an individual basis which means that we could make offers based on qualifications, personal profile and experience. If you have any queries regarding your offer, please contact our Admissions Team.

- Typical offer: A* to C grade and/or 9 to 4 in GCSE Maths (or equivalent) is strongly recommended.
- A GCE Advanced Level profile that demonstrates strong performance in a relevant subject or adequate performance in more than one GCE subject. This profile is likely to be supported by GCSE grades at A* to C and/or 9 to 4 (or equivalent)
- Other related Level 3 qualifications
- An Access to Higher Education Diploma awarded by an approved further education institution
- Related work experience
- An international equivalent of the above

The College welcomes applications from motivated applicants from all backgrounds. We recognise that student potential is not always demonstrated within formal academic qualifications and welcome applications from individuals from backgrounds that are under-represented within higher education.

Course Exit Points

To achieve the qualification a student must achieve at least 120 credits at or above the level of the qualification.

Progression Route

The Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care Practice allows progression into or within employment in the Health and Social Care sector either directly on achievement of the award or following the completion of additional qualifications such as Adult Nursing BSc

The Pearson Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care Practice qualification prepares learners for employment in the music industry and will be suitable for learners who have already decided that they wish to enter this area of work.

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 s/he takes 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 and module specifications.