



Programme Handbook 2025/2026

Programme Name:
FdSc Assistant Practitioner

Programme Leader:
Cathy Holloway:
HOLLOWAYC@ucscolleg
egroup.ac.uk

07799 264524

Campus and Cohort: UCS
College Group, University Centre
Somerset, Taunton Campus

Aims of the Handbook

The handbook is designed to provide information relevant to the programme. The information in the handbook may also be provided in a number of other electronic or paper sources and this document provides links to the definitive data sources wherever possible.

Please note that the electronic version of the handbook will be kept up to date and you will be notified of any significant changes. If you have taken a hard copy of any information, please remember to refer back to the electronic version to ensure that you are working with the most up to date information.

The University of the West England and University Centre Somerset are both committed to ensuring that people with a disability, including those with specific learning difficulties and/or mental health difficulties are treated fairly. Reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure that students/people with a disability are not disadvantaged. This handbook can be provided in a variety of formats upon request. This handbook is for advice and guidance only and is not a substitute for the formal Academic Regulations and Procedures of the University of the West England. Both University Centre Somerset and the University of the West England wish to create environments where diversity is celebrated, anti-social attitudes and behaviours are challenged and any type of harassment, assault and discrimination are not accepted. We want you to speak up if you see or hear something that is not right.

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Dear Student,

At University Centre Somerset our mission is to transform the lives of our students and our communities by delivering outstanding and aspirational teaching, learning and skills development. As our student you will be studying in a vibrant and stimulating environment. There is a team of experienced and well-qualified lecturers and support staff here to help you realise your ambitions to become an outstanding Assistant Practitioner.

I look forward to welcoming you.

Laira Pearson (Head of Nursing & Health professions)

Welcome to the next chapter of your academic journey. I hope you enjoy your time at University Centre Somerset, and that you make the most of the awarding winning resources and support available to you. This handbook provides you with all the information you need to get started with your Assistant Practitioner Apprenticeship. I wish you success in your studies.

Cathy Holloway (Course Leader)

1. Programme team information

Programme Lead: Cathy Holloway

Chief external examiners from other institutions are appointed to a suite of programmes to act independently and work with the College in the management of threshold academic standards, ensuring parity of approach to assessment across all awards available.

2. Key Faculty Staff & Academic Calendar

Programme Team:

Cathy Holloway –

HOLLOWAYC@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk

Richard Clarke –

CLARKER@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk Lucy

Childs – CHILDSDL@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk

Maria Santrian: Deputy Head of Nursing and Health Professions –

SANTRIANM@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk

UCS Contacts:

Role	Name	Contact information
For all queries related to HE Polices and procedures such as Extenuating Circumstances Requests, Academic Appeals etc.	Higher Education Team	HE@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
Registrar (HE Admissions)	Emma Lilley	LILLEYE@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
HE Student Engagement Officer	Sue Stevens	STEVENSS@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
To solve IT issues	Technology Helpdesk	ITSHelpdesk@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
Library resources queries and support sessions; HEADstart	The LRC Team	lrcenquiries@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk (for B/W and Cannington) tauntonlrc@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk (for Taunton)
Printing and copying	Reprographics	reprographics@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
Support with specific difficulties you may be facing	Wellbeing Team	Bridgwaterwellbeing@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk Tauntonwellbeing@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk Canningtonwellbeing@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk

Safeguarding concerns	Campus Specific Safeguarding Officers	Taunton Campus–Helen Windsor: windsorh@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk Bridgwater Campus–Keira Scott: scottk@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk Cannington Campus–Leesa Hayes:
		hayesl@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
For advice about support tailored to your needs	Student Support	StudentSupport@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
To help with accommodation queries	Student Liaison Team	Residentialenquiries@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk residentialservices@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk canningtonresidential@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
Loan and payment queries	Finance Team	Finance@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
To provide extra support with learning in lessons and exams	Learning Support Team	ALSHESUPPORT@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk
For future course and career options and information	Information and Guidance Team	Info@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk

Academic Calendar

Autumn Term 2025	
Start of term: Monday 15 September 2025	End of term: Thursday 18 December 2025
Reading week: Monday 27 October – Friday 31 October 2025	
Spring Term 2026	
Start of term: Monday 5 January 2026	End of term: Thursday 2 April 2026
Reading week: Monday 16 February – Friday 20 February 2026	
Easter Holidays: Friday 3 April – Friday 17 April 2026	
Summer Term 2026	
Start of term: Monday 20 April 2026	End of term: Friday 12 June 2026

Reading week: **Monday 25 May – Friday 29 May 2026**

UCS and College are open throughout the year, except for the Christmas period shown above and Bank Holidays.

The dates shown above signify principal teaching and learning dates, key administrative times, and College closures.

If you are enrolled on an apprenticeship programme, we do adhere to these dates. The exception to this is the two week Christmas closure.

3. Programme specific information

Welcome to University Centre Somerset (UCS), part of UCS College Group; in partnership with the University of the West of England. We at University Centre Somerset are very proud of what we have to offer and the high standards our students achieve. Our focus is very much on you the student, and our aim is to help you achieve your goals. The College has strong professional sector links and we have close relationships with employers to ensure our courses prepare our students to be successful in their chosen careers. Your course is validated and awarded by the University of the West of England, Bristol (UWE), to be delivered by University Centre Somerset (UCS), part of Bridgwater & Taunton College (UCS COLLEGE GROUP) and NHS Partners at the Taunton Campus of UCS/UCS COLLEGE GROUP. You will therefore be a student of both UWE and UCS, following UWE academic regulations and policies whilst attending UCS

Programme Description:

As an Assistant Practitioner (Health) you will be expected to meet the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSB's) listed in the Occupational Standards, these can be found on www.instituteforapprenticeships.org and the course programme content will be based around the End Point Assessment (EPA) requirements.

The training provider will work with the employer and support the apprentice during the off-the-job training to provide the opportunities to develop the KSB's, we will monitor your progress and advise the employer, upon request, on your readiness for the End Point Assessment.

The UCS Department's vision and philosophy mirrors that of our UWE partners and responds to the current strategic direction for the provision of Health and Social Care, reflecting the enhanced emphasis on developing integrated services focused on innovation and sustainable quality and placing the service user at the centre of the decision making. Our collaborative philosophy of nursing education encompasses a flexible, progressive and innovative approach to ensure our graduates are caring, competent and critical thinking nurses. This will be realised by our continued commitment to working in partnership with our local National Health Service, Private and Voluntary sector partners but also forging national and international links. This ensures we represent the breadth of opportunities available in healthcare.

UCS, in collaboration with local employers, aims to provide innovative practice learning opportunities through our strategic planning of placement periods and anticipating future trends in care delivery. Our collaborative philosophy of teaching and learning recognises the value of theoretical and practical experience equally to ensure that education and training is valued in all learning environments. We embed international and inter-cultural perspectives that create and maintain an inclusive learning environment and we utilise educational approaches that take into account multi-culturalism, society, culture and diversity and the contribution of international students. We promote positive learning communities because our learning culture prioritises the safety of people and enables the values of 'The Code' of the NMC to be upheld. We aspire to equip our Assistant Practitioner students with the knowledge, skills and values to be empowered and proactive; challenging assumptions to become transformative as well as transforming. The UCS Assistant Practitioner seeks out opportunities to enhance their learning and continuously develop their practice and that of others.

	Module Title	Module Code	Credit
Year 1	Communicating in Practice	UZYYMJ-15-1	15
	Developing Your Clinical Practice 1	UZYYMH-30-1	30
	Fundamentals of Anatomy and Physiology	UZYYMG-30-1	30
	Sociology and Psychology of Health	UZYYMK-30-1	30
	The Management of Risk	UZYYML-15-1	15
Year 2	Assistant Practitioner End-Point Assessment	UZYYMD-40-2	40
	Developing Your Clinical Practice 2	UZYYMR-20-2	20
	Enquiry Methods	UZYYMQ-15-2	15
	Principles of Management and Leadership	UZYYMP-15-2	15
	The Principles of Professional Assessment	UZYYMN-15-2	15
	The Principles of Professional Development	UZYYMM-15-2	15

This professional course, validated by UWE has two core standards at the centre of the learning culture. This programme is employer led and, as such, runs across fifty-two weeks of the year, over a two-year period. There are designated periods when students will work in their usual place of employment (on the job) and times when students will undertake practice-based learning in other placement settings and theoretical study (off the job). Students will attend UCS online and in person for lectures, seminars, tutorials and study days and are also expected to study independently throughout the programme

for assignments and to improve knowledge base and understanding. Annual leave will be organised with individual employers. There will be periods of time when students are not expected to attend UCS or to study for modules.

This may coincide with Christmas and Easter when the Taunton campus is closed. The way in which the programme runs is negotiated with employers and it may be that the standard leave dates advertised on the UCS webpages do not apply to you. However, UCS closure dates are relevant, refer to the academic calendar in section 2 of this handbook.

You are asked to pay particular attention to assessment dates and ensure you check with your academic team if you are unsure when assessments are due. Students are expected to be available during these periods and absence from scheduled assessments may have a significant impact on your studies. Please take care to avoid these dates when planning any holidays.

4. Communication

Blackboard provides the main communication channel for module specific information and should be checked regularly for new content and announcements. This is accessed with your UWE account. Other communications will be on Teams and via UCS email. It is important that you regularly access both your UWE and UCS email accounts.

In myUWE you can access your UWE student email account, which you are expected to check regularly (at least twice a week) as this is the email address that the University will use to contact you. If you do not activate this account, or choose to automatically forward emails to a different email account, then the University will not be responsible if you miss important information such as details about classes, assessments, examinations, fees, registration etc. You can find more [information on all aspects of your myUWE portal](#) on the website.

Changes to your Programme

We strive, and are expected, to continually enhance our Programmes by responding to feedback from students and other Stakeholders, ensuring the curriculum is kept up to date and our graduates are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need. We may make any such changes to our Programmes without consulting you if the changes will not involve a Material Change.

There may be circumstances where we have to make a Material Change to the Material Information. In these circumstances, we will give you advance notice of the change and inform you about how this change will impact on your Programme and work with you to ensure you understand the reasons for, and the effect of, the change.

A Material change would be a change to the programme from the information we provided to you when we made you an offer of a place on your Programme, which includes:

- the published details of your Programme, including: Programme title; entry requirements; what you will study (for example core modules);
- method of study (for example, lectures, seminars, work placements); expected workload including number of contact hours and expected self-study;
- the overall assessment strategy for your Programme (not a change to the balance of assessment within individual modules);
- the award you will receive on successful completion of your Programme;
- location of study or possible locations;
- length of your Programme;
- whether your Programme is accredited by a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB).

Examples of reasons for making a Material Change to your Programme may include:

- a commissioning or accrediting body requires us to add new course content to your Programme;
- in response to feedback from stakeholders or our students;
- where there is an insufficient number of students applying to the Programme/module of a Programme to make running the Programme or module impractical to provide a suitable student experience and/or financially viable;
- to reflect the introduction of new technologies;
- where staff have taken extended leave or left the University;
- following changes to the funding we receive or that students may be eligible for;
- Government legislation

Where we wish to make a material change your rights are defined within the University's [Terms and Conditions](#)

5. Regulations/Policies

Late Submission Window

If students encounter unexpected difficulties, a 72-hour late submission window is available to all students, during which they can submit their assignment without penalty. An assignment cannot be submitted after the late submission window has ended. Failure to submit the assignment within the 72-hour late submission window will result in a non- submission being recorded.

Assessment Offences

In order to ensure that all students are assessed fairly and equitably, it is important that markers are able to be sure it is your own work which is being assessed and that all your assessed work is done within the University rules and regulations. If a marker or invigilator believes that you have committed an assessment offence this will be reported and the allegation will have to be investigated. The University take the committing of assessment offences very seriously. Action is always taken to investigate and follow through any such cases that are reported. The process and consequences can be found within the [UWE Assessment Offences policy](#)

An assessment offence is defined by the University as 'any action which has the potential to give a student an unfair advantage in an assessment.' Plagiarism, collusion, and contract cheating are examples of the use of unfair means of presenting work for assessment.

Plagiarism – Demonstrating that you have read a wide range of material (books, journals or other sources) in writing a piece of coursework is essential, but so is ensuring that you acknowledge that work properly through correct referencing i.e. the naming of authors/sources and the use of paraphrasing, quotation marks or indented paragraphs.

Collusion – You may be asked to work with other students on a project, in class or analysing data, it is essential that any work you hand in for assessment purposes is written up by you on an individual basis. The text and diagrams / pictures etc. you use must be your own. You must be particularly careful if you are sharing a computer with another student or passing information between yourself and others in an electronic format such as email that you do not use someone else's words – or that they use your words.

Non-compliance – it is important that you follow the instructions given to you by staff and adhere to the regulations of the University. For example, non-compliance could include taking unauthorised papers or items into an examination room.

Regulations

[The University regulations](#) are designed to ensure consistency and equity for students and to provide clarity in how they will be treated by the University in any given situation.

Please see the UWE website for more information about [how your degree will be calculated](#)

In addition to the academic regulations, students should pay particular attention to the [IT Acceptable Use Policy](#) as this defines what you can or cannot do for the protection of systems and of individual users.

Details of the [Assessment Content Limit Policy](#) can be found on the website.

Referencing guide

Referencing is the technique used to direct readers of a piece of written work to the sources of information that have been used in the preparation of the written work.

If you wish to refer to something you have read you MUST give a reference for this material. [The University Library provides advice on managing references.](#)

Health and Safety

Use of the Simulation Suite and other facilities will be subject to all students following guidance and policies in place. These are under continuous development due to the new initiative and building taking place. Updated guidance and code of conduct to be signed will be in you Course Team.

Student representation

The programme team recognise the importance students place on the feedback they receive and, as a programme team, we value feedback from all students. Similar to the feedback you value, we also value positive and developmental feedback so that the programme team can continuously improve student experiences and maintain the quality of the programme. Feedback to the programme team can be provided formally and informally in various ways. Further information will be given regarding the nomination of students to represent each intake (set reps.) Representatives will be asked to attend informal regular student engagement meetings and also more formal Programme Committee meetings (PCM).

Students are encouraged to ensure that student representatives are informed about your views as individuals and groups on all aspects of the programme. Students will also be invited to evaluate the modules and clinical learning experiences (by each module team) at specific points throughout the year. Students may also comment on the programme with academic personal tutors, module and programme leaders as well as the programme management. Students will also be asked to complete student surveys. Putting yourself forward as a student representative is beneficial in terms of skills development and is viewed positively by employers thereby boosting your C.V. Each course is asked to recruit at least one rep for each year. Further information is available from your Course Lead.

6. Advice and Support

Academic Support is provided through a number of roles and students should seek advice from academic staff on specific matters relating to teaching and learning.

Programme Leader programme related issues, issues impacting on a number of modules within the programme, programme specific activities happening outside modules

Module Leader module related issues, issues that affect that module only

[UCS COLLEGE GROUP / UCS Student Portals](#)

New undergraduate students have the opportunity to complete our HEADstart programme (Higher Education Academic Development), which will develop the skills required to confidently succeed at university level studies. The core sessions in the programme are:

1. UCS College Group Library resources
2. Partner University portal and library resources (where applicable)
3. Harvard referencing
4. Avoiding plagiarism
5. Evaluation of information
6. Academic writing

In addition, the Learning Resources Service (LRS) offers sessions that help you with study skills and research. Group sessions are organised by your lecturers, but you can arrange individual appointments to help with the following areas:

1. The Harvard referencing systems
2. Academic writing skills
3. Essay structure
4. Searching the library catalogue
5. Searching e-books
6. Searching other academic electronic sources – databases, e-journals, e newspapers, company/market research reports
7. Searching the Internet
8. Searching strategy (Boolean operators, search strings)
9. General research sessions (using various information sources from printed to electronic and audio-visual)
10. Advanced study skills/research (conducting a literature search and literature review)
11. Using TurnitinUK plagiarism detection service
12. Being an effective learner (critical thinking skills, information dissemination, writing skills), etc.

A dedicated study skills area is available on the UCS COLLEGE GROUP Libraries link on the VLE. The libraries at all our campuses stock a good range of study skills books, details are available via the Heritage library catalogue <http://heritage.ucscollegegroup.ac.uk/>

You can also find more support on the UCS COLLEGE GROUP/UCS Libraries page on the VLE which can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

[Online resources and learning support, together with advice from Library Services](#) on managing references and improving your learning, writing and research skills are available.

At UWE, if you need help with a particular mathematical or statistical problem, then just pop along to an [espressoMaths session](#), sit down at the espressoMaths table, and have a chat with one of the staff on duty; this person will be able to provide you with free user-friendly advice concerning your problem.

Additional academic support can be provided through UWE Studiosity.

<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/study-support/studiosity>

7. Values, Safeguarding and Prevent

The NHS Constitution, NMC The Code; Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates and Apprenticeship British Values: These documents set out principles to ensure that we work for the good of the individual. There is mutual respect for all regardless of culture, creed, age, gender and sexuality. We work within the law and are committed to delivering quality care with compassion. The society we contribute to, allows free speech and democracy. [UWE Information on Equality and Diversity](#)

NMC Code	NHS Constitution	British Values
Prioritise People Practise effectively Preserve safety Promote professionalism and trust	Working together for patients Respect and dignity Everyone counts Commitment to quality care Compassion Improving lives	Democracy The rule of the law Individual liberty Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths, and beliefs and for those without faith

Safeguarding principles

Within the nursing associate role safeguarding has two routes. Firstly, it is to ensure the client group that is being cared for is safe and protected. Secondly, it is to ensure the people delivering the care are safe and that includes you.

UWE Bristol and UCS are committed to:

Supporting and promoting the welfare of our students, staff and visitors. The provision of a safe environment that's conducive to work, study and the enjoyment of a positive experience for all members of our community.

The NMC state: The nurse should make sure they have enough knowledge about safeguarding to carry out duties in line with the Code, underpinning guidance on raising concerns and our standards. (NMC 2018) NMC safeguarding.

Prevent:

Government legislation has placed a statutory duty on Higher Education Institutions to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The legislation, known as the Prevent Duty, applies to all kinds of extremism, such as the far right, Islamist groups and animal rights groups. The objective is to safeguard individuals from being radicalised and drawn into terrorism.