

DEFINITIVE COURSE RECORD

Course Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting)
Awarding Bodies	University of Suffolk
Level of Award ¹	FHEQ Level 7
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies Recognition	Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
Credit Structure ²	120 Credits at level 7
Mode of Attendance	Full-time
Standard Length of Course ³	1 year full-time
Intended Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting)
Named Exit Awards	Postgraduate Certificate in Public Health Nursing Studies
Entry Requirements ⁴	Registration on the NMC Register as a Nurse or Midwife Degree or equivalent (120 credits at Level 6)
Delivering Institution	University of Suffolk

This definitive record sets out the essential features and characteristics of the Postgraduate Diploma in **Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting)**. The information provided is accurate for students entering level 7 in the 2026/27 academic year⁵.

Course Summary

The course has been newly developed in response to the NMC (2022b) Standards for specialist community public health nursing and the growing need for practitioners to respond to the public health policy agenda. The course requires students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills of Specialist Community Public Health Nursing and contemporary public health approaches to practice in line with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. A requirement within this context of practice is for health care professionals to develop a comprehensive range of skills. These will enable them to develop and lead

¹ For an explanation of the levels of higher education study, see the [QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(2024\)](#)

² All academic credit awarded as a result of study at the University adheres to the [Higher education credit framework for England](#).

³ Where the course is delivered both full-time and part-time, the standard length of course is provided for the full-time mode of attendance only. The length of the part-time course is variable and dependent upon the intensity of study. Further information about mode of study and maximum registration periods can be found in the [Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards](#).

⁴ Details of standard entry requirements can be found in the [Admissions Policy](#) and further details about Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS) can be found on the [University's DBS webpage](#).

⁵ The University reserves the right to make changes to course content, structure, teaching and assessment as outlined in the [Admissions Policy](#).

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population and individual based public health services designed to tackle inequalities in health, prevent ill health and to work in partnership with individuals, families, workplaces and communities. This requires an understanding of the communities and environments where people live and work.

Course Aims

In providing the Postgraduate Diploma the course team and University aim to enable you to:

1. Achieve recognition, proficiency and registration as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse within an identified field of practice.
2. Explore and analyse a range of theoretical concepts, perspectives, policies and evidence related to public health and to consider their application to specialist community public health practice: health visiting, school nursing or occupational health nursing.
3. Engage in critical understanding and debate on the issues and factors associated with addressing inequalities in health and the associated concepts of social justice, equity, human rights, social inclusion, exclusion, vulnerability and resilience.
4. Critically appraise, analyse and apply relevant ethical, moral, and legal theories and reasoning within the provision and development of Specialist Community Public Health Nursing.
5. Develop knowledge and skills in influencing and leading service delivery, development and innovation; collaborating with others to improve and embed sustainable changes within public health nursing practice,
6. Deliver professional practice with empathy, compassion, cultural competence and resilience to improve people's health and wellbeing.
7. Critically analyse and explore the concepts of partnership and collaborative working in specialist community public health nursing to prevent ill health, protect health and promote wellbeing.
8. Critically analyse their own public health skills and personal development and develop reflective skills in practice whilst promoting a high level of autonomy and self-direction within a multidisciplinary and multiprofessional environment.
9. Consider and effectively manage the conflicting priorities, risks, diverse complexities, ambiguities and uncertainties in specialist community public health nursing
10. Critically analyse opinion, assumptions, concepts and data to determine health needs and become effective and creative problem solvers seeking to understand and address health inequalities.
11. Locate, critically appraise, use, generate and apply relevant research and data in public health with an emphasis on their practice/ professional context.
12. Develop a range of intellectual skills reflecting the rigour required at master's level which will enable the continuation of their personal and professional development beyond the framework of the course.

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Course Learning Outcomes

Knowledge, understanding and cognitive skills

1. Demonstrate professional autonomy and enquiring, reflective, critical and innovative approaches to public health practice, improvement and leadership in a range of changing contexts at home, in school, in the workplace and in communities.
2. Critically evaluate the impact of public health policy and practice on the population's health and wellbeing, advancing public health services and promoting healthy places, environments and cultures.
3. Debate ethical, moral and legal issues and frameworks relevant to a range of public health issues and dilemmas faced by practitioners when supporting and improving health outcomes of people across the life course.
4. Engage with colleagues to discuss and critically debate a variety of public health perspectives.
5. Appreciate the importance of effective implementation and critical evaluation of public health strategies and improvement across a range of practice settings and diverse populations promoting everyone's right to a healthy life.

Subject Specific Skills

6. Critically appraise ways in which public health and social policies impact upon the health and wellbeing of populations to enable, support and improve health outcomes of people across the life course.
7. Demonstrate critical awareness of the social, political and economic factors including sustainable development goals which influence service users experience of health care and right to a healthy life.
8. Demonstrate a critical analysis of the key concepts and theories upon which their practice is predicated.
9. Analyse the concepts of equity and discrimination within the context of public health with sensitivity to diverse cultural perspectives, advocating for vulnerable people.
10. Utilise strategies which will assist with the integration of public health and specialist community public health nursing approaches in complex practice settings, safeguarding the most vulnerable in society.
11. Propose and implement a range of innovative public health/specialist community public health nursing strategies and activities which are effective across a range of practice settings and ambitious for the public health of the community.
12. Appreciate and demonstrate effective appraisal and evaluation of public health/specialist community public health nursing approaches, strategies and provision to optimise public health interventions.
13. Appreciate a wide range of methodological approaches to evidence based public health and research, critiquing, generating and applying evidence and data that seeks to promote health across the life course.
14. Critically analyse relevant implications for partnership and collaborative working with clients, communities and partner organisations.
15. Critically self-evaluate and reflect upon their own identified field of professional practice, including development as a leader and collaborator with others.

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Key/Common Skills

16. Utilise and evaluate problem solving skills in a variety of theoretical and practical settings.
17. Demonstrate an ability to engage effectively lead and collaborate with clients, families, communities, workplaces and stakeholders.
18. Formulate innovative and creative approaches to improve health and wellbeing of people across the life course, making use of modern technologies.
19. Critically analyse, apply, interpret and evaluate the evidence underpinning their practice, to initiate change in practice.
20. Demonstrate an ability to engage in complex discussions with a group in a competent and professional manner.
21. Maximise individual potential by acting as a role model and developing the public health potential of others.

Course Design

The design of this course has been guided by:

NMC (2022a) Part 3: Standards for post-registration programmes

NMC (2022b) Specialist Community Public Health Nursing

Course Structure

The Postgraduate Diploma Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting) comprises modules at level 7.

Module Specifications for each of these modules is included within the course handbook, available to students on-line at the beginning of each academic year.

	Module	Credits	Module Type ⁶
Level 7			
7	Health Needs assessment	30	M
7	Healthy Child Programme	30	M
7	Leading Change and Service Improvement	30	M
7	Research for Evidence based SCPHN Practice	30	M
7	Practice Module	0	M

Awards

On successful completion of the course, students will be awarded a PgD Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting). Students who leave the course early may be eligible for a Postgraduate Certificate in Public Health Nursing Studies on successful completion of 60 credits excluding the practice requirements.

Course Delivery

⁶ Modules are designated as either mandatory (M), requisite (R) or optional (O). For definitions, see the [Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards](#)

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The course is delivered at Ipswich. Students studying full-time on PgD Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting) are likely to have approximately 305 contact hours. The contact hours will be a mix of lectures and seminars. Students will also be required to participate in 825 hours of work placements. Placements will be arranged by the University/Employer. Students will normally be expected to undertake 720 hours of independent study, which is inclusive of tutor set online learning, but should be prepared for this to vary based on assignment deadlines and class exercises.

Course Assessment

A variety of assessments will be used on the course to enable students to experience and adapt to different assessment styles. The assessment methods used will be appropriate to assess each module's intended learning outcomes. Assessments will mainly be coursework (including essays, reports, presentations, group work, reflective learning journals and research projects); but oral examinations and practical assessments are also included.

Special Features

On successful completion of the PgD Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting) students are eligible for registration with the Nursing Midwifery Council on part 3 of the register with the NMC.

Course Team

The academic staff delivering this course are drawn from a team that includes teaching specialists and current practitioners. All staff are qualified in their subjects with their own specialist knowledge to contribute and are registered with the NMC.

Course Costs

Students undertaking the PgD Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting) have their course tuition fees paid for by NHSE.

Students are likely to incur other costs for travel to university and books, although the resources are also available via the library free of charge.

Course Costs for Self-funding/ non- NHS/ self- employed students

Postgraduate tuition fees will apply for self- funding/ non-NHS/ self-employed students. Please contact the University for further details

In addition, self-funding/ non-NHS/ self- employed students will be expected to fund DBS checks and any additional costs associated with placement (equipment, uniforms, travel etc) or the course such as books, although the resources are also available via the library free of charge.

Academic Framework and Regulations

This course is delivered according to the Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards and other academic policies and procedures of the University and published on the [website](#).