

COURSE INFORMATION for PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

This document provides prospective students with an overview of the NP program at the University of Melbourne (MC_ANPNP), which includes the mode of delivery, the time commitment, details about the clinical practice component of the course, entry requirements and the application process.

It is intended that this document and the associated Frequently Asked Questions document will ensure that potential course applicants are well informed about the program and the commitment required of the student enrolled in this program.

Course overview

Course title	Master of Advanced Nursing Practice (Nurse Practitioner)
Course code	MC_ANPNP
Duration	2 years
Study load	Part-time only
Commencement	February and July each year
Delivery mode	Dual delivery (Parkville campus /Online attendance) Online self-directed, Clinical practice placements
School	Department of Nursing, School of Health Sciences
Contact	Department of Nursing Email: nursing_enquiries@unimelb.edu.au Tel no: 03 8344 4947

Course aim:

The aim of the Master of Advanced Nursing Practice (Nurse Practitioner) program is to produce advanced practice nurses capable of providing a high standard of clinically focused care of varying levels of complexity and in a variety of contexts to improve outcomes for people, their families and the community. This program aims to develop clinical leaders with the capacity to lead practice and service development, influence healthcare service and policy and contribute professionally to their specialty and discipline. Nurse practitioners practice across five practice domains: direct and comprehensive care, support of services, education, research, publication and professional leadership. The program learning outcomes, curriculum and assessments are designed to address capability in each of these domains.

This course will prepare graduates to meet the NMBA Nurse Practitioner Standards for Practice (2021). Furthermore, on completion of the program they will be educationally prepared for endorsement as a nurse practitioner with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (see section titled *Professional Accreditation* for more details).

Course objectives

As a graduate of the Master of Nurse Practitioner the graduate will have the advanced discipline specific knowledge and skills to:

- Provide safe, effective, person-centred health care to consumers (direct and comprehensive care).
- Influence health care systems and services to achieve better outcomes for consumers, their families, health care providers, the community and the health care system (support of systems).
- Educate self and others (consumers, health care professionals etc) regarding the focus of and available options for care (education).
- Apply evidence to practice, identify the clinical evidence gaps and inform and contribute to future clinical and research inquiry to address these gaps (Research).
- Demonstrate professional and clinical leadership in clinical, organisational, political and community forums and make scholarly contribution to the discipline and/or specialty (publication and professional leadership)

Course structure

The program is conducted part-time over two years using a range of delivery modes. Students will attend workshops (on-campus or remotely), use a range of online resources to support their learning and will undertake clinical practice throughout the course to link theory to practice. The teaching faculty include clinicians and academics who are experts in their area. The subjects, the semester in which they are taught, and the delivery mode are shown in the following table.

Subject code and name	Year	Semester	Delivery mode	Credit points	Hours
NURS90134 Introduction to Advanced Practice		1	On-campus/remote access Integrated Professional Practice Online and self-directed learning	12.5	20 75 55
NURS90069 Clinical Leadership in Context	1	1	On campus/remote access Online and self-directed learning	12.5	26 144
POPH90302 Introducing Health Services Research	1	2	On campus/remote access Online and self-directed learning	12.5	12 158
NURS90163 Developing Advanced Practice	1	2	On-campus/remotely Integrated Professional Practice Online and self-directed learning	12.5	15 75 80
PHRM90002 Pharmacology for Healthcare Professionals	2	1	On-campus/remotely Online and self-directed learning	12.5	36 134
NURS90002 Health innovation and Improvement Project	2	1 & 2	On-campus/remotely Self-directed	12.5	20 150
NURS90071 Quality Use of Medicines	2	2	On-campus/remotely Integrated Professional Practice Online and self-directed learning	12.5	36 75 60

NURS90132			On-campus/remotely		12
Transitioning to Advanced Practice	2	2	Integrated Professional Practice	12.5	75
			Online and self-directed learning		83

The course is designed to make study for regional students possible with classes scheduled in blocks to support on-campus attendance. Video-link is also available to allow students to attend all on-campus lectures, workshops and tutorials remotely. Attendance at synchronous sessions (on-campus or remotely) is encouraged; however, sessions are recorded and available via LMS if attendance is not possible.

The following graphics map the standard course plan for the program. There are also alternative pathways shown for those students who wish to spread the course over 3 or 4 years. More detail about each subject can be found via the course information page *What will I Study* (<https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/master-of-advanced-nursing-practice-nurse-practitioner/what-will-i-study/>). Alternative pathways for students who wish to complete the program over 3 or 4 years or commence mid-year may be negotiated.



Figure 1. Standard course plan scheduled over 2 years

Clinical practice

Overview

The clinical practice component of the nurse practitioner (NP) program is comprised of Integrated Professional Practice (IPP) placements and the student's employed clinical practice (ECP); the sum of which will provide students with the necessary clinical learning environment and practice opportunities to graduate as a capable advanced practice nurse able to meet the [NMBA Nurse Practitioner Standards for Practice](#). The student's role must be in an Australian health service, in their chosen clinical field and be considered advanced practice to be eligible for the program. The total clinical commitment of the student during the course is an average of 38hours/fortnight (ECP + IPP) during which students must have access to clinical support and the opportunity to develop their

practice. Students must complete a total of 300 hours of IPP during the program. The IPP hours and the associated are imbedded in four subjects of the program, which are as follows:

- NURS90134 Introducing the Advanced Practice
- NURS90163 Developing Advanced Practice
- NURS90071 Quality Use of Medicines
- NURS90135 Transitioning to Advanced Practice

Students will require the support of expert clinicians during their employed clinical practice and their integrated professional practice placements. These experts will make up the students Clinical Teaching and Supervision (CTS) Team.

Employed Clinical Practice

All students enrolled in this program must be employed in an advanced clinical nursing role throughout the program. It is not essential that this is an NP candidate position but it must provide opportunity for the student to opportunity for the student to practice and consolidate their learning during their employed practice. The NMBA definition for advanced practice is provided below. To achieve this, students must have regular access to clinical support from members of their Clinical Teaching and Supervision (CTS) Team. Furthermore, their employer must be willing for the student to undertake a significant amount of their IPP within the clinical service in which they are employed. The CTS Team and IPP are described in more detail in following sections.

Advanced nursing is where nurses incorporate professional leadership, education, research and support of systems into their practice. Their practice includes relevant expertise, critical thinking, complex decision-making, autonomous practice and is effective and safe. They work within a generalist or specialist context and they are responsible and accountable in managing people who have complex healthcare requirements.

Advanced practice in nursing is demonstrated by a level of practice and not by a job title or level of remuneration.

Employed Clinical Practice summary

Role	Clinical advanced nursing role*
Hours:	38 hours/fortnight (minimum) over the duration of the program**
Location:	Clinical practice setting
Governance	Employer Agreement Form
Clinical support	Access to members of Clinical Teaching and Supervision (CTS)** team

* Students should be aware that this does not require the organisation to commit to an NP candidate role or an NP position at the completion of the program.

** Clinical experience (employed and IPP) must total an average of 38 hours/fortnight

Integrated professional practice

Integrated professional practice (IPP) is included in the NP program to provide students with supernumerary clinical placement where the aim is to apply theory to practice to develop advanced practice competency consistent with the NMBA Practice Standards for Nurse Practitioners. The emphasis is on the student identifying and meeting their learning objectives. Integrated Professional Practice is defined by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) as:

‘... an integrated learning approach that enables nurse practitioner students to develop and demonstrate the Nurse Practitioner Standards for Practice within the clinical practice setting. Supports the use and generation of theory to enhance emerging and developed knowledge, behaviours and clinical and professional judgement. Also provides a supported learning environment for the development of clinical practice skills, including, but not limited to:

- comprehensive assessment, diagnosis and management of complete episodes of care
- prescription of medicines
- ordering and interpreting of diagnostic tests
- initiating and accepting referrals from other health professionals for the purposes of care coordination.

Integrated professional practice is mandatory and must be supernumerary, which means that the student undertakes practice outside their employed position or when they are not counted in the staffing roster. Students must be supervised and supported by clinical experts during this experience to ensure that they can meet their clinical objectives. The IPP hours are allocated to subjects in the first and second year of the program making a total of 300 hours of IPP across the two years. A more comprehensive explanation of supernumerary IPP is provided in an ANMAC explanatory statement, which can be found on their website at the following web address: <https://www.anmac.org.au/document/supernumerary-definition>

Students will undertake most of their IPP under the supervision and guidance of clinical experts selected from their clinical service (CTS Team members) who are also available to support them in their employed practice. Therefore, the bulk of their IPP is likely to be completed in their employment setting. However, appropriate alternatives to this approach may be negotiated; for example; where a member of the CTS Team is employed elsewhere and can provide opportunity for the student to complete IPP at this agency this may be accepted as an alternative.

Students are also mandated to complete 40 hours of their IPP hours in alternative and complimentary services to broaden their experience. This may be within the same organisation within a complementary clinical service or it may be with another agency. External placements should be discussed and agreed to by their CTS Team and the Course Coordinator. Furthermore, appropriate governance arrangements must be negotiated with the external agency (See Preparing for Clinical Practice). Students will need to meet the occupational health and safety requirements of the organisation and therefore need to be able to provide evidence of a current police check, a Working with Children's Check and their immunisation records. For students who have not identified a suitable placement to complement their clinical practice, the Department of Nursing have a range of options that can be arranged for the student. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Course Coordinator to discuss their IPP arrangements.

Several assessments will be completed during IPP and they will be completed by a member of the CTS Team. Students must complete all IPP hours for each subject before progressing to the next

subjects. However, support will be provided by the Course Coordinator where there are difficulties meeting this requirement and extensions may be negotiated where appropriate. In addition, the Course Coordinator is responsible for managing the quality of the student's IPP placements and instituting measures to manage issues related to quality. This governed by the IPP quality framework which is available for review.

IPP Summary

Role	Supernumerary clinical placement*
Hours:	300 hours (minimum) over the duration of the program
Location:	Clinical practice setting - Employment setting - External complementary placements
Clinical support	NP coordinator, The University of Melbourne Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team members

* Students should be aware that the University places no expectation that this time is paid or unpaid. These arrangements are negotiated with the placement agency

Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team

Students will require the support of expert clinicians during their employed clinical practice and their integrated professional practice placements. These experts will make up the students Clinical Teaching and Supervision (CTS) Team. Members of the CTS Team will assist the student to apply theory to practice and develop the necessary clinical knowledge and skill to meet the NMBA Practice Standards. Members of the team will also supervise performance, provide feedback and complete assessments to meet course requirements. It is essential that the practice of at least one member of this team includes the extensions to practice gained with NP endorsement; in particular prescribing. Students should also consider including health professionals from other disciplines. Finally, the CTS Team must also include an appropriate professional nursing lead. This is particularly important for student's relying on a medical practitioner to assist them to extend their clinical scope of practice. The nurse selected for this role should hold a leadership position and will play a significant role in supporting the student to develop their clinical leadership capacity.

The role of the team members will require that they have clinical expertise in the student's area of practice and education and clinical support experience. The University will provide the members of the CTS Team with resources to support them in their role and they will liaise with the Course Coordinator at regular intervals.

Criteria for selection

Prospective students should consider the following criteria when considering colleagues as potential members of their CTS Team. This information is also available in the Information for CTS Team members document as they will be required to provide a curriculum vitae to illustrate how they meet these criteria.

Clinical lead:	Prescribing clinician (NP where possible) Post registration specialty education/training Practices in student's specialty (minimum 5 years) Education/student supervision and assessment qualification and/or experience Capacity to commit the necessary time
Professional lead:	Registered nurse Employed in leadership role (minimum 5 years) Education/student supervision and mentorship experience Capacity to commit the necessary time
Team member:	Clinician practicing in student's specialty or complementary specialty (minimum 3 years) or Non-clinician with relevant scope that may contribute to the student's development of advanced practice capability Education/student supervision and assessment experience Capacity to commit the necessary time

Responsibilities

Students, members of the Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team, the organisation and the University Course Coordinator all contribute to ensuring that students are given the best opportunity to achieve the clinical objectives of the program. The following sections provide a summary of their responsibilities.

Student

- Collaborate with CTS Team members to identify clinical objectives
- Negotiate and plan support and supervision opportunities with CTS Team members to achieve clinical objectives
- Document and submit IPP plan to course coordinator for approval
- Schedule assessments with CTS Team member and provide appropriate documentation
- Identify concerns about clinical experience, support and/or progress and raise with appropriate members of the IPP Support Team (e.g: CTS Team member or Course Coordinator).
- Notify the clinical agency and/or course coordinator if they are aware of personal circumstances that place themselves, patients/clients, colleagues or the organisation at risk.
- Resubmit CTS Team Member Agreement Form and the Clinical Agency: Employment and IPP Agreement form annually or sooner if employment or clinical support arrangements change.

Clinical Supervision and Teaching team

- Understand the course aims, the clinical requirements of the student and the role of the CTS Team*
- Allocate adequate/appropriate time to support student to meet course requirements

- Undertake regular assessments of the student which will include patient assessments and clinical performance appraisals
- Contribute to clinical governance to ensure patient/client safety while providing an appropriate learning environment for the student
- Liaise with Course Coordinator for guidance about meeting the requirements of the role or concerns regarding the student.
- Inform the Course Coordinator of any concerns that they have about the student's competence or fitness to practice

Organisation

- Reasonably commit to maintaining current employment during the 2 year program
- Provide opportunity for the student to complete the IPP requirements of the program in their clinical area and in other complementary services within the organisation
- Commit the resources to provide adequate clinical support to assist the student to meet the clinical requirements of the program
- Ensure that appropriate support and governance is in place to enable the student to practice or simulate advanced practice and clinical decision-making.

University - Course coordinator

- Support the student to negotiate appropriate IPP arrangements, objectives and schedule
- Liaise with CTS Team members to ensure that they are well prepared to provide support and supervision and assess performance
- Respond to student concerns about clinical support
- Respond to mentor/organisational concerns about student's performance
- Oversee the clinical performance review process
- Notify AHPRA if it is reasonably believed that a student's fitness for practice or circumstances may place the student, their patient/clients or colleagues at substantial risk of harm during their clinical experience (employed or IPP experience).

CTS Team summary

Team members (mandatory)	Clinical lead: Nurse Practitioner or Physician*
Team members (desirable)	Professional lead: senior nurse (mandatory if clinical lead is a physician) Clinician from other discipline (may include but is not limited to: pharmacist, physiotherapist, psychologist) Other (non-clinician who may contribute to the development of advanced practice capability, e.g. safety and quality officer)

* Must be from area of clinical practice and able to work closely with student

Professional accreditation

Nurse Practitioners in Australia are registered nurses endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) under section 95 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. To achieve this endorsement applicants must meet several requirements*, one of which is successful completion of a postgraduate nursing master degree approved by the NMBA or a program that is substantially equivalent to an NMBA approved program of study.

Programs are approved by the NMBA following review and recommendation by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC). The Council is an independent body responsible for establishing the standards for and reviewing nursing and midwifery registration and endorsement education programs and making recommendations to the NMBA. The ANMAC NP Accreditation Standards are available from ANMAC [website](#) and programs assessed as meeting these standards and approved by the NMBA are recorded on the NMBA [website](#).

Applicants who have successfully completed an approved program of study will apply for endorsement via Pathway 1. Applicants applying for endorsement having completed a program that is not an NMBA approved program will apply via Pathway 2 and will therefore be expected to provide evidence that the program completed is substantially equivalent. Advice about the format that this should take should be sought from the NMBA before committing to a non-approved program of study.

The NP program offered by the Department of Nursing at the University of Melbourne was first assessed and accredited by ANMAC and approved by the NMBA in 2013. Graduates of this program will meet the education requirements of NP endorsement and will therefore be eligible to apply for endorsement via pathway 1.

* NMBA endorsement requirements are:

1. current general registration as a registered nurse in Australia with no conditions or undertakings relating to unsatisfactory professional performance or unprofessional conduct
2. The equivalent of three years' full-time experience (5,000 hours) at the clinical advanced nursing practice level, within the past six years, from the date when the complete application seeking endorsement as a nurse practitioner is received by the NMBA.
3. Successful completion of an approved program of study or a program that is substantially equivalent as an NMBA approved program
4. Compliance with the NMBA's Nurse practitioner standards for practice.

Further details regarding NP endorsement can be found on the [NMBA website](#).

Course admission criteria

Nurses seeking entry to the NP Program must meet the following criteria:

- Current general Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) registration as a registered nurse
- A minimum of two (2) years full time equivalent practice as a registered nurse in a specified clinical field and two (2) years full time equivalent advanced practice in the last 6 years in the same clinical field

- A postgraduate qualification (minimum graduate certificate) in a clinical field relevant to specified practice field
- Current employment in an Australian health care service at a minimum of 40 hours/fortnight in an advanced clinical nursing role.
- Documentation of clinical practice and support agreements *
- Applicants must meet the university's English language requirements**.

* The [Pre-enrolment Clinical Practice Information Guide](#) will provide details of the documentation required

** Further details are available on the Future Students' [Graduate English language requirements](#) web page. For those applicants seeking to meet these requirements by one of the standard tests approved by the Academic Board, performance [band 7](#) is required.

Preparing an Application

Before enrolling in the NP program at The University of Melbourne students will need to negotiate their clinical practice setting, which includes their employed clinical practice and IPP arrangements and membership of their Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team.

The arrangements for employed clinical practice, IPP and Clinical Teaching and Supervision must be agreed to by the agency providing employment and/or placement, Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team members and the University to ensure that the practice opportunities will provide suitable opportunity for the student to meet the requirements of the program. Employer agreement also ensures that appropriate clinical governance is in place. For this reason, students are encouraged to discuss their plans with their employer, potential CTS Team members and the course coordinator early.

Prospective students should also refer to the Frequently Asked Questions, which is available at the following link www.unimelb.edu.au/nursing/NP/FAQ. Several case studies and examples of the arrangements that students may negotiate are provided.

Agreements and other documentation

Several agreements will need to be completed before a student can enrol in this study program. These agreements and other explanatory documents can be downloaded from the website www.unimelb.edu.au/nursing/NP/Agreements and are listed in the Appendix.

Employer Agreement

This agreement is signed by the manager of the clinical service and the executive Director of Nursing (or equivalent) and documents the following:

- the conditions of employment, e.g. practice area, role* and hours
- agency willingness to provide these conditions for the duration of the program (2 years)
- agency commitment to providing a suitable clinical environment for development of advanced practice competence. This will include the provision of clinical support and IPP opportunities.
- clear clinical governance in place to support student completing the requirements of the program

* It is essential that all parties understand that this agreement is not a commitment to an NP candidate role or an NP position at the completion of the program.

IPP Placement Agreement

The student will require an agreement from all other agencies that have agreed to provide an IPP placement. This agreement will document the following:

- conditions of placement, e.g. practice setting, contact person, hours of placement etc
- clinical governance arrangements, e.g. honorary appointment, observation or practice etc.
- the extent of the support and in some cases supervision provided during the IPP placement

CTS Team Member Agreement

All members of the Clinical Teaching and Supervision Team will be required to sign the CTS Team member agreement to acknowledge the following:

- commitment to a clinical support plan to ensure the student is adequately supported in employed clinical practice and during IPP placements
- commitment to supervision of clinical activities and performance and completion of or contribution to clinical assessments and performance appraisals.
- commitment to escalating learning and performance related issues and concerns to the Course Coordinator

CTS Team member curriculum vitae

In addition to the CTS Team Member Agreement, the student will need to provide a copy of each team members CV. Students should advise mentors to include details in their CV about their education and student support experience to substantiate their capacity to support the student.

Study credit and advanced standing

As all subjects in the NP program are considered core and therefore compulsory, to gain credit for previous study, students will be required to apply for advanced standing for the subject. This means that the only way that students can be given credit for a subject is if they have previously completed a subject that is substantially similar to one that is included in the program. Applicants who consider that they are eligible should provide a copy of the subject guide for the completed unit that they believe is similar to one included in the NP course for assessment by an academic from the department.

More information

More information is available in the following documents:

- Pre-enrolment – Student's Frequently Asked Questions

If the answer to your question is not available or clear in these documents or you wish to discuss your study plans enquiries can be directed to nursing_enquiries@unimelb.edu.au. The student administration staff will respond to your query or redirect it to someone who is better able to answer your specific question.

Applications checklist

1. Prospective students should have read this document, the *Frequently Asked Questions for Prospective Students* document and reviewed the course website (including the page titled *How to Apply*) before contacting the team or proceeding with an application.
2. Students should prepare:
 - a. a detailed curriculum vitae
 - b. a position description or statement as evidence of current advanced practice
 - c. a position description or statement as evidence of two (2) years advanced practice in the last six (6) years (required if the applicant has been in their current advanced practice position for less than two (2) years.
 - d. evidence of completion of a Bachelor of Nursing (or equivalent) and a relevant postgraduate qualification (e.g: certified copy of award testamurs) in a clinical field
 - e. signed clinical practice and support agreement form.
3. Student's may need to submit evidence that they meet the University's English language requirements^b.

^b More information regarding the English language requirements of the University can be found [here](#)

Applications can be made via a link on the course website from the NP program [application page](#).