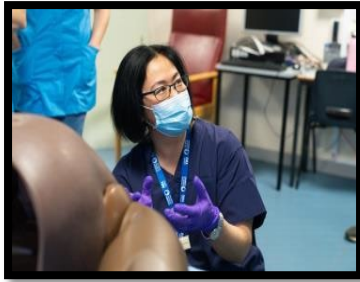


Department of Allied Health and Social Work

A flexible route to NHSE recognition as a Musculoskeletal First Contact Practitioner (FCP) in Primary Care



With an established reputation for running successful NHS England (NHSE) approved First Contact Practitioner (FCP) short courses, the University of Hertfordshire has again been awarded a contract by NHSE to offer **fully funded** training for registered Musculoskeletal (MSK) Practitioners, Paramedics, Occupational Therapists and Dietitians.

Why should you study?

FCP roles are integral to providing a sustainable and effective workforce, optimising patient care pathways and ensuring the right healthcare professional sees the right patient in the right place and at the right time. By 2024, all adults in England should be able to see a MSK FCP at their local GP practice without being referred by a GP. The benefits of these roles are manifold, and include facilitating timely and appropriate onward referrals, reducing imaging referral rates and enhancing patient experience and outcomes (NHS England, 2019). NHSE's 'Roadmap to Practice' sets out the training and educational pathways to FCP recognition for MSK practitioners (HEE, 2021). The University of Hertfordshire's flexible programme of study is approved by NHSE as fulfilling stages 1 and 2 of the FCP Roadmap. The University of Hertfordshire is one of only select few providers in England approved by NHSE to deliver this training.

What will it involve?

All applicants will initially undertake a Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) to establish if they would be most suited to undertake either:

1. The taught short course route to becoming a recognised FCP, consisting of two short courses: First Contact Practitioner 1 (FCP1): 30 Credits at Level 7, and First Contact Practitioner 2 (FCP2): 15 credits at Level 7
2. A supported ePortfolio route (please note this route does not confer Level 7 credits and requires Stage 1 & Stage 2 completion)

FCP 1 and FCP 2 **short courses** form part of a broader CPD framework & currently can contribute up to 45 Level 7 credits towards the awards of [Postgraduate Certificate](#), [Postgraduate Diploma](#) or [MSc Advanced Physiotherapy](#) or [MSc Advanced Clinical Practice](#) or [Masters in Health Studies](#) for eligible candidates.

Who will I study with?

FCP1 short course focuses on MSK practitioners (registered Physiotherapists and Osteopaths), with selected sessions shared with multidisciplinary FCP professionals (OTs, Paramedics, Dietetics), facilitating networking opportunities and a deeper understanding of the expansive FCP role. FCP2 short course is predominantly undertaken in primary care as supervised practice, supported by interdisciplinary university FCP2 study. If you are undertaking the supported ePortfolio route you will be working with a named academic tutor to support the development and submission of your FCP1 & FCP2 ePortfolio alongside your clinical supervisor - with the supported ePortfolio route it is important to understand there is minimal academic teaching, and no conferment of level 7 credits.

How will I learn?

This programme of study has been developed to be innovative, progressive and accessible with the aim of developing high quality FCPs for the future. For FCP1 & FCP2 short courses the university teaching is on-line. Teaching uses synchronous and asynchronous activities including lectures, tutorials, workshops, group work and presentations, involving previously successful students and relevant stakeholders, use of case studies and supported peer learning. FCP1 covers the theoretical content of the Road Map and FCP2 enables consolidation of knowledge and skills with a period of supervised practice, which is supported by the university team, a clinical mentor and peer review sessions. Both these activities are supported with enhanced technology, so students will require access to a PC & reliable internet connection. Varied assessment methods help to support different learning styles.

What do our previous FCP students say?

"[this course] will ensure competence & quality of FCP clinicians"

"It was really good to have the module on-line, easier to fit in clinics & life without travel"

"Really enjoyed it and the content. Feel I've learnt a lot since I first started"

"I have already made changes to my practice"

"Amazing experience, all the respective tutors each day of the course were literally amazing"

"The entire team is very supportive, felt quite comfortable to discuss anything"

Who teaches on this programme of study?

Past and future lecturer contributors include Dr Giles Hazan (GP), Gulden Dogan (Consultant Physiotherapist & Senior Lecturer), Rishi Navsaria (Consultant Physiotherapist & Senior Lecturer), James Busby (Radiography), Aurelien Noyer (Osteopath), Marie Tanner (APP), Aldo Russell De Boer (APP), Laura Eccott (ACP & Senior Lecturer), Caroline Coulthard (FCP & Senior Lecturer), and Dr Robert Shannon (Clinical Psychologist), along with other clinical and research experts.

What are the entry requirements?

Applications are welcome from qualified, experienced & highly motivated MSK practitioners (HCPC registered MSK Physiotherapists & GOsC registered MSK Osteopaths) who want to be change makers in the clinical field, working at an enhanced level of practice.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- Evidence of current registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) or The General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)
- Current evidence of appropriate Professional Indemnity/Liability Insurance as outlined by a relevant professional regulatory body, e.g. Current Membership of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) which includes current Professional Liability Insurance or The General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) (evidenced by provision of membership number and appropriate insurance certificate)
- A minimum of five years relevant post registration experience with a minimum of three years' experience within an MSK role (evidenced by CV, confirmation from employer and qualification certificates)
- Evidence of successful level 7 (Masters level) education, this could include a pre-registration MSc MSK qualification, accredited MSc modules etc*
- Evidence of working in, or working towards, an NHS based MSK FCP role on completion of study (evidenced by confirmation from employer)
- Confirmation of access to an appropriately qualified Clinical Supervisor, i.e. a GP, recognised advanced practitioner (recognised by the NHSE centre having completed the portfolio route to advanced practitioner or the taught ACP/AP master's degree), or more experienced MSK first contact physiotherapist (who is recognised by the NHSE centre). Supervisors will normally have completed the 2-day roadmap to practice supervision training prior to supervising students on

FCP Stage 2 (note any Tier 3 Advanced Practitioner or Tier 3 GP Educational Supervisors do not need to attend the training days but instead should be able to complete a short online resource).

- Evidence of employer support to attend online teaching sessions for FCP1 & FCP2 and undertake 75 hours of ring-fenced clinical supervision scheduled in an NHS Primary Care workplace based in England when completing FCP2 (evidenced by confirmation from employer)
- At every stage, evidence of up to date statutory and mandatory training in their area of practice (evidenced by confirmation from employer)
- Evidence (certificates to be supplied) of contemporaneous completion of: 1. Eight e-learning modules ([e-learning for healthcare, E-LfH](#)) modules as stated in the Roadmap to Practice (MSK) 2. Selected Personalised Care Institute modules (found at: <https://www.personalisedcareinstitute.org.uk/education-and-training/your-learning-options/>)

*Applications are also welcome from learners with significant relevant clinical experience and relevant, current, CPD (evidenced by CV). All applications will be considered on an individual basis.

To be signed off as a First Contact Practitioner learners must successfully achieve a pass in both short courses, therefore it is expected that successful students from FCP1 enrol on FCP2. All applications will be considered on an individual basis. The deadline for applications is 31st January 2027. The course will close once we have received sufficient applications. You are advised to apply as soon as possible.

It is anticipated that you will study FCP1 and FCP2. We may consider applicants who wish to register for FCP1 but may not have supervisory arrangements in place for FCP2 at the start of FCP1 if we have places available.

Cost This programme of study is fully funded by NHSE. There are a limited number of places.

First Contact Practitioner 1 (FCP1) Short Course: 30 Credits at Level 7

Course aim

On successful completion of this short course students should be able to demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of theories, principles and concepts underpinning evidence based MSK practice in Primary Care.

This course is equivalent to 300 hours of student effort including ten teaching days & one assessment day

Provisional Teaching Dates:

Block 1	Tuesday 2 nd March 2027 Wednesday 3 rd March 2027	
Block 2	Monday 15 th March 2027 Tuesday 16 th March 2027	Please note this block is Monday and Tuesday
Block 3	Tuesday 13 th April 2027 Wednesday 14 th April 2027	
Block 4	Tuesday 18 th May 2027 Wednesday 19 th May 2027	
Block 5	Tuesday 15 th June 2027 Wednesday 16 th June 2027	

Assessment dates: week commencing 12th July 2027

University based sessions are taught on-line, with student attendance required on-line.

First Contact Practitioner 2 (FCP2) Short Course: 15 Credits at Level 7

Course aim

On successful completion of this short course students will be able to

- develop advanced clinical and evaluative skills and to critically evaluate the effectiveness of aspects of service delivery within the FCP scope of practice.
- evidence capabilities required for an FCP role, whilst working alongside the multi professional healthcare team within Primary Care to provide high quality services.

This course is equivalent to 150 hours of student effort including five on-line synchronous teaching days & one assessment day

Provisional Teaching Dates:

Block 1	Tues 9 th and Wed 10 th November 2027
Block 2	Tues 7 th and Wed 8 th December 2027
Block 3	Wed 12 th January 2028

Assessment dates – tbc

Assessment includes a QIP, practice portfolio and an online VIVA

University based sessions are taught on-line, with student attendance required on-line. Students will need to complete 75 hours of mentored clinical practice in an NHS Primary Care workplace as part of FCP2.

Course Enquiries

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Booking Enquiries

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