



**AECC**  
**University College**  
*Transforming lives  
through Health Sciences*

# **MSc Advanced Professional Practice (Musculoskeletal Neuroscience)**

## **Course Specification**

**Version 1.2**

**Document date: June 2019**

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### Record of Modifications

Description of Modification	Date approved	Cohort(s) to which modification applies
Amendment of admissions regulations to include time limit for RPL and internal progression from Postgraduate Certificate Professional Practice (Chiropractic)	ADQC, 27 February 2019	New entrants for October 2019 and thereafter
Amendment to give students option to take units 51 (Research Methods) or 53 (Audit Methods) at stage 2/year 2 or stage 3/year 3, rather than only in stage 3/year 3	ADQC 12 June 2019	All new entrants and all enrolled students entering stage/year 1 or 2, from October 2019 (applies to new and current students).

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course 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.

Courses, major changes to courses and modifications to courses are approved following consideration through the University College's Course Approval and Review processes or Course and Unit Modification procedure, as appropriate. It is, however, expected that courses change over time, for example as a result of changes to professional accreditation requirements, in response to feedback from academic staff and students, and through annual review processes. Any such changes will be discussed with and communicated to students in an appropriate and timely manner.

### Basic Course Information

Awarding Institution	AECC University College
Final award, title and credits	MSc Advanced Professional Practice (Musculoskeletal Neuroscience) 180 Level 7 Credits (90 ECTS)
Interim exit awards, titles and credits	PgDip Advanced Professional Practice (Musculoskeletal Neuroscience) 120 Level 7 Credits (60 ECTS) PgCert Advanced Professional Practice (Musculoskeletal Neuroscience) 60 Level 7 Credits (30 ECTS)
FHEQ level of final award	7
Mode of study	Part -time
Accreditation details	None
Standard length of course	Normally 3-4 years
Minimum and maximum periods of study	Minimum 2-3 years, Maximum 5 years
Language of delivery	English
Place of delivery	AECC University College
UCAS code (where applicable)	N/A
HESA JACS (Joint Academic Coding System) Code(s) per course/pathway	B340 HECOS 100234
Date Framework /Course initially validated	March 2018
Date of first intake	10 October 2018
Version number of this Framework/Course Specification	1.2
Date this version approved/intake to which this applies	12 June 2019/October 2019 and continuing students October 2019
Author	G Rix, J Bolton, ML Thiel

## Course Overview

### 1. Admissions regulations and entry requirements

The regulations for this course are the AECC University College's Standard Admission Regulations which may be found from the [Latest Policies webpage](#). These regulations include the entry requirements and specific requirements regarding English language.

Existing internal progression arrangements are in place for the MSc APP framework as follows: Students who have successfully completed the Postgraduate Certificate Professional Development (Chiropractic) will be exempted from MSc APP core unit **Professional Clinical Practice** (20 credits at level 7), on the basis of a demonstrated mapping between the learning outcomes for this unit and the PGCert core unit **Autonomous Reflective Practice** (20 credits at level 7). This arrangement will apply within the time-limit specified in the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy which can be found from the [Latest Policies webpage](#).

#### Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

AECC University College has a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy which can be found from the [Latest Policies webpage](#). The time limits for recognition or RPL are set out in this policy and are applicable to this course.

### 2. Aims of the course

The aims of the course are to enable students to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding in focused areas in neuroscience relevant to the management of musculoskeletal conditions in the primary care setting
- advance professional practice through critical evaluation and critical reflection on documentary (practice) and empirical (research) evidence
- develop reasoned arguments in topics in neuroscience and arrive at evidence-based conclusions to potentially change and improve the management of musculoskeletal conditions
- plan and conduct an in-depth scientific investigation in a topic area relevant to neuroscience
- adopt self-directed learning and continuous professional development strategies

### 3. Intended Learning Outcomes

#### Level 7 (PgCert (one of A1-A3)/PgDIP):

##### Subject Knowledge and Understanding

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- A1 topics in neurological pathology and pathophysiology relevant to the MSK practitioner
- A2 advances in focused areas of neuroscience related to diagnosis relevant to the MSK practitioner
- A3 advances in focused areas of neuroscience in therapeutics relevant to the MSK practitioner
- A4 reflective and evidence-based practice models in neuroscience

##### Intellectual Skills

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to:

- B1 engage in reflective practice, identifying and meeting learning needs to change and improve practice
- B2 critically evaluate and apply empirical evidence

### 3. Intended Learning Outcomes

B3 critically evaluate and apply experiential (documentary) evidence

B4 develop reasoned arguments and formulate evidence-based conclusions

#### Practical Skills

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to:

C1 demonstrate evidence of application of knowledge to potentially change and improve professional practice

#### Transferable skills

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to:

D1 reflect on professional practice and think and write critically

D2 make reasoned judgements and draw conclusions based on a range of evidence sources

D3 acquire the ability to learn independently necessary for continuing professional development

#### Level 7 (MSc):

##### Subject Knowledge and Understanding

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

A1 topics in neurological pathology and pathophysiology relevant to the MSK practitioner

A2 advances in focused areas of neuroscience related to diagnosis relevant to the MSK practitioner

A3 advances in focused areas of neuroscience in therapeutics relevant to the MSK practitioner

A4 reflective and evidence-based practice models

A5 research/audit methodology and methods including design, data collection and data analysis

A6 a selected topic in neuroscience studied in depth as a scientific investigation

##### Intellectual Skills

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to:

B1 engage in reflective practice, identifying and meeting learning needs to change and improve practice

B2 critically evaluate and apply empirical evidence

B3 critically evaluate and apply experiential (documentary) evidence

B4 develop reasoned arguments and formulate evidence-based conclusions

B5 conceive a research/audit question and plan an in-depth scientific investigation

B6 disseminate and effectively communicate findings from a scientific investigation

##### Practical Skills

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to:

C1 demonstrate evidence of application of knowledge to potentially change and improve professional practice

C2 conduct an in-depth scientific investigation including collection and analysis of empirical observations

### 3. Intended Learning Outcomes

#### Transferable skills

Having successfully completed this course students will be able to:

- D1 reflect on professional practice and think and write critically
- D2 make reasoned judgements and draw conclusions based on a range of evidence sources
- D3 acquire the ability to learn independently necessary for continuing professional development

## Course Structure

### 4. Outline of course content

There is no prescriptive content; course content cannot be described in terms of a defined knowledge base to be transferred and learnt by the student. Instead, course content is described in terms of knowledge in focused areas of neuroscience relevant to the individual student's clinical practice and derived from a range of sources including the propositional or theoretical knowledge base, empirical evidence and experiential evidence. Content will thus be derived through a range of sources in a specific topic identified by the student based on his/her own learning needs emerging from the neurological management of musculoskeletal patients in the primary care setting.

This is a level 7 course requiring reflective and critical thinking skills evidenced in critical written assignments.

### 5. Placements, work-based learning or other special features of the course

This course centres on the workplace setting of the student as the principal learning environment. Therefore, students must normally be in practice and managing patients where topics in neuroscience can be applied, and where relevant learning needs can emerge. All applications are approved (or not) by the Programme Leader on the basis that the student's workplace enables the student to successfully complete the programme.

### 6. Course structure, levels, units credit and award

The level of study, units and credits required for the course and for final and exit awards are set out in the **course diagram** provided as [Appendix 1](#).

The **learning outcomes mapping document** at [Appendix 2](#) shows the relationship between ILOs for units and the overarching ILOs of the course.

## Learning, Teaching and Assessment

### 7. Learning and teaching strategies and methods

Students learn predominantly in their own workplace and related professional settings. This work-based approach to learning reflects the conceptual nature of this course and the Framework in which it lies, in that it is the professional setting where health practitioners learn most effectively. Learning needs emerging from the professional setting are both individualised and relevant to the practitioner (B1), and it is in this setting that learned outcomes can be applied so as to potentially change and improve practice (C1). The course focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in neurological pathology and pathophysiology (A1), neuroscience related to diagnosis (A2) and neuroscience in therapeutics (A3) in specific areas relevant to the individual MSK practitioner working in the primary care setting. Students will acquire knowledge and understanding of reflective and evidence-based models of practice (A4), and use these models to demonstrate critical intellectual skills (B1-B4) in topic areas relevant to neuroscience.

## 7. Learning and teaching strategies and methods

This is a blended learning model in which students learn in a variety of ways including by reading in the theoretical and empirical knowledge bases (A1-A3), critically evaluating empirical evidence from the peer-reviewed literature (B2), reflecting on documentary evidence from the workplace setting (for example, experiential evidence in the form of case files, case studies, case series, practice observations, practice audits, meetings with peers and colleagues, observations of other health practitioners, working in teams with other health practitioners) (B3) and from attending professional seminars, conferences and CPD events. This blended learning approach, in which students source and access their own learning opportunities, keeps attendance at taught seminars on campus to a minimum, and provides a flexible course that can be tailored by the student to their own personal and professional needs. Underpinning this blended learning model are the concepts of self-directed study, independent learning and continuing professional development, enabling the student the opportunity to acquire the transferable skills (D1-D3) to succeed on the course as well as to sustain them as a continual learner throughout their professional lives.

For the MSc stage, the student will acquire in-depth knowledge and understanding of the process of scientific investigation (A5) and apply this in planning and conducting a scientific investigation (B5, C2). This stage includes a taught seminar in research and audit methods (A5) delivered on campus, as well as one-to-one supervision so that students can successfully plan and conduct their own investigation (A6) and communicate their scientific findings effectively in a written piece of work (B6).

## 8. Assessment strategies and methods

All ILOs (A1-6, B1-6, C1, C2, D1-3) are summatively assessed by coursework through written, critical accounts. For the MSc stage, coursework takes the form of research/audit protocols and a research dissertation or clinical audit.

All written work is graded and students receive written feedback from assessors. This provides the student with individualised and transparent feedback specific to his/her work. As well as summative assessment, students can access formative feedback from academic staff (Unit Leaders) by phone or email, and are encouraged to make appointments for face to face meetings whenever possible.

## 9. Learning hours

AECC University College courses are composed of units of study, which are assigned a credit value indicating the amount of learning undertaken. The minimum credit value of a unit is normally 20 credits, but half-units are permitted. 20 credits is the equivalent of 200 student study hours, including lectures, seminars, assessment and independent study. 20 University credits are equivalent to 10 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits.

## 10. Staff delivering the course

Some (but not all) units in this course include taught seminars, which will be delivered by AECC University College academic staff. All unit leaders are AECC University College staff who are available to advise and support students.

## 11. Progression and assessment regulations

The regulations for this course are the University College's Standard Assessment Regulations which may be found from the [Latest Policies webpage](#). Please refer to section 18 of these regulations.



## 12. Additional costs

Additional costs are mandatory, or optional costs which students will need to meet in order to fully participate in and complete their course. Students will need to budget for these costs separately as they are not included in the overall Tuition Fee they are charged. Information about additional costs applying to students on this course can be found in the document **Important information to take into account when choosing your course** available from the [Latest Policies webpage](#)

Taught postgraduate seminars attached to some units are included in the tuition fee. However, travel and accommodation costs are NOT included and are at the student's own expense. Costs for attending any CPD events (either at AECC University College or at another provider) are NOT included in the tuition fee. Students will be charged at the reduced student rate for CPD events held at AECC University College.

## 13. Methods for evaluating the quality of learning and teaching

Students have the opportunity to engage in the quality assurance and enhancement of their courses in a number of ways, which may include:

- Completing student surveys annually to give feedback on individual units and on the course as a whole
- Seeking nomination as a Student Union representative OR engaging with these elected student representatives
- Serving as a student representative on Evaluation panels for course approval/review
- Taking part in course approval or professional body meetings by joining a group of students to meet with the panel
- Taking part in meetings with the external examiner(s) for the course (such meetings may take place virtually where courses are part-time)

The ways in which the quality of the University College's course are monitored and assured checked, both inside and outside the University College, are:

- Annual monitoring of units and course
- Periodic course review, at least every six years
- External examiners, who produce an annual report
- Oversight by Academic Development and Quality Committee (which includes student representation), reporting to Academic Board
- External Quality Assurance Reviews and annual monitoring.

## 14. Inclusivity statement

AECC University College is committed to being an institution where students and staff from all backgrounds can flourish. AECC University College recognises the importance of equality of opportunity and promoting diversity, in accordance with our Dignity Diversity and Equality Policy. We are committed to a working and learning environment that is free from physical, verbal and non-verbal harassment and bullying of individuals on any grounds, and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, within a positive and satisfying learning and working environment.

AECC University College seeks to ensure that all students admitted to our courses have the opportunity to fulfil their educational potential. The interests of students with protected characteristics will be taken into consideration and reasonable adjustments will be made provided that these do not compromise academic or professional standards as expressed through the learning outcomes.



#### **15. Reference points including QAA Benchmark statements**

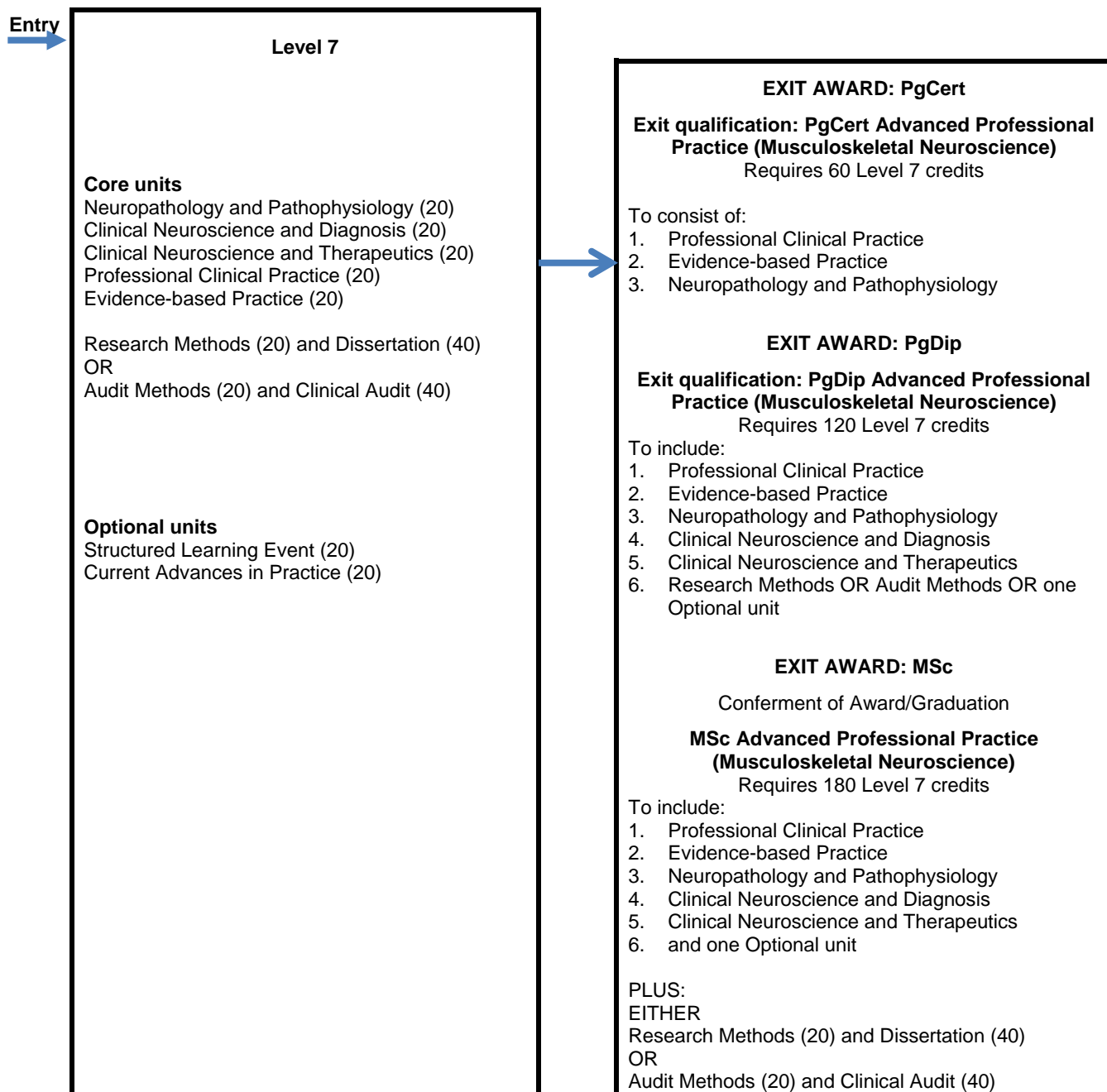
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards).
- QAA Characteristics Statement: Master's Degree (September 2015)

There are no QAA subject benchmarks and no professional standards.

#### **16. Regulatory & policy framework**

The course conforms fully with the University College's Academic Regulations and Policies for Taught Courses.

## Appendix 1: Course Diagram MSc Advanced Professional Practice (Musculoskeletal Neuroscience)



All units should normally be based in an area of clinical neuroscience.

Students who have successfully completed the Postgraduate Certificate Professional Development (Chiropractic) will be exempted from MSc APP core unit **Professional Clinical Practice** (20 credits at level 7), on the basis of a demonstrated mapping between the learning outcomes for this unit and the PGCert core unit **Autonomous Reflective Practice** (20 credits at level 7).

## Appendix 2: Learning outcomes mapping document template **Course summary**

**This table shows where a learning outcome referenced in the course specification may be demonstrated by successful completion of a unit.**

Unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	D1	D2	D3
Professional Clinical Practice				*			*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*
Neuropathology and Pathophysiology	*			*			*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*
Clinical Neuroscience and Diagnosis		*		*			*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*
Clinical Neuroscience and Therapeutics			*	*			*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*
Structured Learning Event (optional)	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*
Current Advances in Practice (optional)	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*
Evidence-based Practice	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*
Research Methods	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*			*	*	*	*
Audit Methods	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*			*	*	*	*
Dissertation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*
Clinical Audit	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*

<p><b>A- Subject Knowledge and Understanding</b></p> <p>A1 topics in neurological pathology and pathophysiology relevant to the MSK practitioner</p> <p>A2 advances in focused areas of neuroscience related to diagnosis relevant to the MSK practitioner</p> <p>A3 advances in focused areas of neuroscience in therapeutics relevant to the MSK practitioner</p> <p>A4 reflective and evidence-based practice models</p> <p>A5 research/audit methodology and methods including design, data collection and data analysis</p> <p>A6 a selected topic in neuroscience studied in depth as a scientific investigation</p>	<p><b>B - Intellectual Skills</b></p> <p>B1 engage in reflective practice, identifying and meeting learning needs to change and improve practice</p> <p>B2 critically evaluate and apply empirical evidence</p> <p>B3 critically evaluate and apply experiential (documentary) evidence</p> <p>B4 develop reasoned arguments and formulate evidence-based conclusions</p> <p>B5 conceive a research/audit question and plan an in-depth scientific investigation</p> <p>B6 disseminate and effectively communicate findings from a scientific investigation</p>
<p><b>C - Subject Specific Skills</b></p> <p>C1 demonstrate evidence of change and improvement in professional practice</p> <p>C2 conduct an in-depth scientific investigation including collection and analysis of empirical observations</p>	<p><b>D - Transferable Skills</b></p> <p>D1 reflect on professional practice and think and write critically</p> <p>D2 make reasoned judgements and draw conclusions based on a range of evidence sources</p> <p>D3 acquire the ability to learn independently necessary for continuing professional development</p>