The Open University in Wales
Flexible Route Pre-registration Nursing Degree (BSc Hons) programme

Year 2

Annual report September 2019-2020

Staff Tutors
Linda Walker
Majella Kavanagh

December 2020
We are delighted to be able to share with you the progress our students have made two years on from the Open University’s flexible route pre-registration nursing degree (BSc Hons) going live in Wales.

**Background**

Since 2018, the Open University has delivered a highly successful work-based pre-registration nursing programme in partnership with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) and healthcare employers in Wales. The Open University’s mission is to be open to people, places, methods and ideas and open access to higher education for all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential. This has been clearly demonstrated through the very challenging time of Covid-19 in 2020. Our nursing students have risen to the challenge positively and have contributed significantly to the workplace and communities they serve, as well as personally continue to succeed in their ambition to become a registered nurse.

**The Open University**

In Autumn 2020, The Open University launched its exciting Future Nurse Curriculum. This was designed to meet the new standards for nursing education published by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC, 2018). All four fields of practice are offered namely, Adult, Child, Mental Health and Learning Disability Nursing, which will normally take four years three months to complete.

Students will study flexibly alongside work, with a balance of theory and practice delivered through a combination of work-based, face-to-face and distance learning. Enquiry-based learning will be one of the approaches used to facilitate this learning. Alongside the academic requirement of the programme students will be required to complete the practice proficiencies as set out by the NMC.

The delivery of the programme is carried out with the students successfully completing a set number of modules in each of the 3 stages of their pre-registration education. Each module is stand alone and has a combination of practice and academic elements to it.

**The Wales context**

The Open University in Wales has worked collaboratively with both HEIW, employer organisations and other universities to develop the all Wales Practice Assessment Documentation (PAD) for all four fields of nursing in order that any nursing student
working in Wales, no matter which University they are studying with will have identical documentation and which will ensure consistency in practice.

The Open University has since 2018 put in place a robust curriculum support network around its flexible route pre-registration nursing degree students, which is very much Wales centric. Two years on, the programme remains very successful in Wales with The Open University having recruited fully to the HEIW commissioned numbers with a current retention figure of 96% (please see table 1 below).

As part of the HEIW commissioning process in 2020 we were delighted to welcome student nurses onto the programme who work in the independent nursing home sector. This student group has brought a diverse range of experience with them and they have opened up an exciting opportunity for new placement experiences.

The Open University has commenced its consultation on Midwifery education which has included Wales. The aim is to launch the new curriculum in 2022 to meet the NMC (2019) My Future; My Midwife standards.

1. Student cohorts

Students commencing year 1 of their studies in Sept 2018 (First cohort)

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<td>Adult</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Mental Health</td>
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<td><strong>Total number commissioned</strong></td>
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Students commencing year 1 of their studies in Feb 2019 (Second cohort)

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<td>11</td>
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<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td><strong>Total number commissioned</strong></td>
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Students commencing year 1 of their studies in Sept 2019 (Third cohort)

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<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td><strong>Total number commissioned</strong></td>
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Students commencing year 1 of their studies in Feb 2020 (Fourth cohort)

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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Total number commissioned</td>
<td>39</td>
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Students commencing year 1 of their studies in Oct 2020 (Fifth cohort)

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<td>Adult</td>
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<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number commissioned</td>
<td>26</td>
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Recruitment and interviews are currently underway for the February 2021 intake.

**Retention**

Overall, the retention rate of the Open University BSc (Hons) nursing degree programme is 96% which we are immensely proud of and is a testament to the commitment of the students, their employers, mentors, Practice Tutors and academic tutors.

**Table 1: Summary of initial cohort numbers and subsequent number of students remaining on the programme**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student numbers</th>
<th>Commenced</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>Cohort 4</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort 5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>126</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
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2. The curriculum

Since 2018, The Open University has delivered a highly successful work-based pre-registration nursing programme in partnership with HEIW and healthcare employers in Wales. The Open University nursing programme targets a different student population than that which is traditionally seen. Students joining the Open University’s flexible route pre-registration nursing degree (BSc Hons) programme are currently employed in Wales by Health care providers such as Health Boards, Trusts and from February 2020 this has included independent nursing home providers.

During their training, Open University nursing students are released from their substantive Health Care Support Worker role and are given protected paid time away from the workplace to complete the academic and practice elements of the programme.

In Autumn 2020, we launched our exciting Future Nurse Curriculum and now offer four fields of practice; Adult, Child, Mental Health and Learning Disability Nursing. Our very first children’s nurse commenced their studies in October 2020. With several more recruited for February 2021, along with our first learning disability student nurses. All students whatever their field of practice, study programme stages 1 and 2 and half of stage 3 together, with focused field practice placements. The theory module of stage one is studied by several interdisciplinary students enabling our nursing students to meet and work with other students from other disciplines.

3. Our students

Our focus is partnership working and ‘growing our own’. Our focus has very much been on facilitating students to develop in becoming registered nurses in the communities in which they live. Our partnership with the independent sector has really allowed us to demonstrate that we are able to get into the heart of the community as explained by our students Amy and Jess.

Amy talks about her nursing degree course and training to become a clinical care practitioner. “I’m really enjoying The Open University course and look forward to getting my degree in four years’ time. My week is basically 16-hours of placement work which is all paid, an eight-hour study day at home which is also paid and then a 12-hour shift doing my normal work. I then have three days off. It works brilliantly and I’m learning and earning and getting the best of both worlds…. [my employer] as a care organisation just have it right.”
Please follow these links for the full stories of the journey Amy and Jess have experienced as Open University students who work for independent sector nursing homes.


Our NHS based students have also been very active. Harriet an Open University student based in Hywel Dda UHB spoke at a Nursing and Midwifery Live Event held in October 2020 and shared her experiences of being an Open University student.

**Our students’ success**

We have 122 active nursing students in Wales and are proud of our 97% retention rate. This is incredible given our students have been very much on the front line during the Covid-19 pandemic. This success is all credit to the students who have been supported fully by their employers, Practice Tutors and our Associate Lecturers.

We will see our very first registered Nurse (Mental Health field) complete in May 2021. This student successfully credit transferred 120 credits from another Wales university after requiring a break from their course and joined an existing cohort at stage 2. The process of credit transfer is in keeping with our regulator the NMC, which permits the maximum transfer of 180 credits (dependent on evidence) towards our BSc (Hons) degree.

Our first qualified nurse graduating from the Open University in Wales will be quickly followed by 10 adult field nurses and 3 mental health field nurses, who have recently commenced on the last stage of their 4-year journey, with their final modules underway and the results expected in October 2021.

**The challenges of the Covid pandemic**

Our students are the focus for what we do. Even through the difficult times of the Covid pandemic in 2020 we are still celebrating what our students have been doing.

**Katie** joined us in Feb 19 as a Mental Health student nurse whose base is Cardiff and Vale UHB. Katie tells us;
'I am an open university student which means I can study and continue with my band 4 role at liaison psychiatry for older people.

I began my journey 5 years ago as a support worker on a general ward, I then secured a job as a band 3 in my current role and within 6 months I was promoted to a band 4 and a student nurse. At my age I did not think this was possible nor could I have afforded it without working. I feel extremely privileged to have this opportunity.

Since joining the open university, I have felt immense support from my wonderful Practice Tutor Jayne Foley, every mentor that I have had and of course our academic tutors, who I don’t get to see personally but are extremely supportive with my studies.

During my time as a student I have spoken at the health care support worker conference where I shared my journey to other support workers. I have also created a project to improve patient care within my area of work which is now a part of the Health Board and I have also written an article with the help and guidance from Jayne, which is in its final drafting stage.

Covid-19 proved challenging and it is something that I never thought I would ever see especially during my training, the support I received from the Open University made me feel valued and at present I feel much stronger and resilient than ever. I am more determined to complete my degree and become a qualified Mental Health nurse.'

Nursing practice placements altered considerably during the Covid-19 pandemic and the students responded to this positively. Due to flexibility in our programme we were able to release the stage one students from their two-day student nurse role and convert them into HCSW hours for the duration of that stage of their studies without any detrimental effect on their progress through stage one. AL Practice Tutors increased student contact using skype, during the initial Covid-19 response and we have worked closely with employers maintaining communications, resulting in students reporting they have felt well supported.

We have continued to recruit candidates interested in our nursing programme. In conjunction with the employers we have conducted interviews successfully in an online environment which has provided us with an alternative format to use for future candidate interviews, especially those who live in isolated communities.
4. Our Staff

**Practice Tutors (Interface between the university and the clinical areas)**

The practice element of the module is carried out in clinical practice with the student nurses being supported by an employer’s supervisors/assessors in the traditional way. In addition, the student and workplace supervisors/assessors are given support by Open University employed Practice Tutors (PTs) who are skilled practitioners, in the area of practice the student is training. (Please see Appendix 1 for the biographies of the Practice Tutors currently employed by The Open University who are working in Wales). The Practice Tutors work together with the student and the students’ workplace supervisors and assessors to ensure the students meet the practice elements of the programme. The Practice Tutors are line managed by Staff Tutors based in the Wales office in Cardiff. (See Appendix 2 for the biographies of the Staff Tutors). These Practice Tutors, as part of the Future Nurse Curriculum requirements, will be undertaking the Academic Assessor role and its commensurate responsibilities.

**The challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic on clinical practice**

The Practice Tutors (PTs) carried out significant work during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure that student nurses completing The Open Universities nursing degree programme were not only safe, but that they were able to contribute fully to the workplace, whilst also continuing to complete their academic studies.

The additional work it created was significant. The Practice Tutors had to completely change the way they worked with students and employers and took on this workload unselfishly. This involved (and this is in no way an exhaustive list of activities):

- Change in ways of working with the previously hardcopy portfolio to managing an electronic version. There was additional work for the PTs to engage with the new process to ensure they had a good understanding of the new processes within very tight timescales.
- Learn new technology in a very short space of time in order to be able to carry out all meetings virtually (PTs normally carry out all meetings face-to-face) and sign off the students’ work to the required standards.
- PTs needed to support both students and workplace assessors to ensure they were fully engaged and were also able to manage this change to the documentation. This resulted in many more meetings than would be normal.
- Undertaking additional workplace audits to try and expand placement capacity to protect the student’s chances of successfully completing their practice
competencies. They had to be very creative and this would not have been possible had they not had an excellent relationship with the employer partners (NHS and independent nursing homes) to make it happen.

- The very heavy burden of pastoral support to students on the front line who were frightened for themselves and their families; along with the added pressure of placement changes and meeting the requirements of the practical components of their studies.
- PTs have delivered supervisor/assessor training for Health Boards/Trust/independent sector. This was done at very short notice in response to the nursing regulator the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) emergency rules put in place in response to the Covid pandemic.

The selfless work and dedication of these Practice Tutors was inspirational. Giving up countless hours of their own time to keep the student nurses on their nurse pre-registration nursing programme is exemplified by the number of students who successfully passed their practice modules. Not one Open University student nurse has had to give up their studies as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, the Practice Tutors have not only supported our students academically, psychologically and socially but they also made scrub suits for the NHS. This picture is an example of some which were made and donated by Karen one of our PTs who donated them to both Ewa’s ward in Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board and community nurses with embroidered messages on the tunic pockets to brighten their day!
What our students say about our Practice Tutors

Dear Natalie
I just wanted to drop you a quick email to thank you for all the support you’ve given me over the past 18 months. I know I’ve been a bit of a nag on times but you’ve been so supportive all the way through; I was so apprehensive about doing my training through the OU because I worried I’d feel isolated but I have never felt more supported through my studies so I just wanted to thank you for that.

I’m sad I won’t get to continue working with you!

Thank you for everything

The Academic Tutor role (Associate Lecturers)

This is a UK wide provision. Running alongside clinical practice there are the academic components of the module that need to be satisfied. The student is allocated a Module Tutor who is employed specifically for that module. This tutor can be based anywhere in the United Kingdom, but all are registered with the NMC. This tutor supports the student with developing their academic knowledge and academic skills so that they meet the
academic requirements of the module being studied. As a result of Covid-19 there were changes that needed to be made to some modules in terms of the end of module assessment. These were managed well, and no student was disadvantaged as a result of this.

**Regional Academics (Staff Tutors)**

The role of the Staff Tutor is to line manage the Practice Tutors and oversee the progression of the Wales’ nursing students. They also have academic responsibilities and work with central academics on module teams to ensure the voice of Wales is captured in the curriculum and other activities such as promotional materials.

Astudiwch am BSc mewn Nyrsio gyda’r Brifysgol Agored: [https://youtu.be/xrp7vKcwQoo](https://youtu.be/xrp7vKcwQoo)

Study for a BSc in Nursing at the Open University in Wales [https://youtu.be/uDx-Ee27hnQ](https://youtu.be/uDx-Ee27hnQ)

Staff Tutors also work very closely with the employers who have Open University pre-registration nursing students and work collaboratively with other organisations such as Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), Council of Deans and other Wales Education Institutions.

Due to the significant increase in commissioned student nursing numbers for 2019-2020 there was a requirement to increase the dedicated Wales staff tutor nursing resource. Appointment of a further 1.0 wte Staff Tutor (2 x 0.5 wte posts) in addition to the resource that have been provided to support the increase in student numbers in previous years has been approved along with 0.5 wte Welsh Language Development [nursing] Tutor which is currently out to advert. It is anticipated the new post holders will be in place early 2021.

**Partnership working across Wales**

We have been working in collaboration with all higher education colleagues and employer partners across Wales with the work facilitated by HEIW in response to the NMC emergency rules, that were implemented in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

We sent links to our free OpenLearn resources ([https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue](https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue)) to Health Education Improvement Wales to support those returning to work for the NHS during the crisis.
We are working on a webinar with a West Wales charity Connecting Youth, Children and Adults CYCA (https://cycaonline.org/) which is an independent charity providing different support services to children, young people and families. We have been involved with facilitating a meeting between the charity and Hywel Dda University Health Board whose very successful apprenticeships scheme has grown into an apprenticeship’s academy, with the two organisations now working together on volunteering and facilitating work experience.

We have been working with our internal OU TUC trade union link and internal partnership team to provide free development sessions for unison members and non-members promoting Open Learn free courses as a link to lifelong learning. We are in discussions about developing an advocacy theme.

**Action plan for 2020-21**

Development of a Nursing in Wales web site on the Open University pages so as we can share our news as close to real time as possible.

Working internally to meet the requirements of the current HEIW tendering process for the educational provision in Wales.

**Recommendations**

Key stakeholders are asked to **note** the content of this report and the success of The Open University’s flexible route pre-registration nursing degree (BSc Hons) programme in second year of delivery.
Appendix 1 – Practice Tutor Biographies

Sally Britton

Sally is a Practice Tutor and an Associate Lecturer with the Open University. Sally enjoys a variety of other engagements including, holding a bank contract with a local UHB to work as a COVID-19 vaccinator, Assessment Associate for Pearson Education (currently working on EPA and Tech awards for Health/Social Care and Allied HCPs) Assessment Associate for Alpha Plus (currently working on NMC assessments for overseas nurses and Associate Practitioners in England). Sally has previously been an External Examiner for Health and Social Care courses levels 4-6 at Wolverhampton University and Canterbury Christchurch University.

Following time working as a medical nurse, Sally gained her degree in Community Health Studies in 1997 and a PGD in District Nursing in 1998. Sally completed her PGCE in 2004 and remains a registered Lecturer/Practitioner/Educator with the NMC. Sally enjoyed a career in Community Nursing and Specialist Nurse in a variety of locations in Wales, before moving into a managerial role in corporate Education and Development at a Welsh Health Board. Sally moved into full time Nurse Education in 2010, where she started her teaching career in HEI teaching a range of Health and Social Care subjects (levels 4-7), whilst developing a now well recognised Foundation Degree in Community Health and Wellbeing at USW. Sally was also instrumental in developing and delivering work-based learning modules as part of the UHOVI Welsh Government initiative. Sally completed her MA Education (Leadership and Management) with distinction in 2012 and is a Senior Fellow of the HEA. Over the past 10 years Sally has taught across a range of programmes in Nursing, including post registration MA Education (Health Promotion).

Sally has carried out many different activities related to her Education role over the years, advising on curriculum development, working with Welsh Government to develop an Educational Framework for the unregistered Healthcare Workforce in Wales and being a HE advisor to Qualifications Wales. Clinically, Sally was part of the pilot team of five practitioners accredited with setting up an Acute Community Assessment Team in Torfaen, which has now become a well-established Reablement.

Sally continues to support students in all aspects of their academic and practical development and progression.
Jayne Foley

Jayne is a Practice Tutor and an Associate Lecturer with the Open University and has recently been appointed to WELS Faculty Learning and Teaching Group representative at Board of Studies. Jayne enjoys a variety of other engagements including, a member of a team of professionals and lay people inspecting facilities where NHS care is provided for the older person by HIW, teaching pre-registration nursing students at another HEI in the South West as well as holding a bank contract with a local UHB to work as a district nurse and a Chief External Examiner for another Welsh University. Jayne gained her degree in District Nursing in 1996, followed by her PGCE and then MSc in Nursing. Jayne enjoyed a career in Community Nursing in a variety of locations across the UK before moving into Nurse Education in 2002, where she started her teaching career in FE-access to nursing, followed this as a Lecturer in HEI teaching pre-registration nursing students both Complex Health Care and Leadership and Management modules and then as a Lecturer in Primary Care and Public Health. Over the past 15 years Jayne has taught across all programmes in Nursing, including post registration BSc/MSc Community Health Studies, MSc Advanced Practice and Return to Practice.

Jayne has carried out many different activities related to her Lecturer role over the years, curriculum development, working across HEI in developing academic integrity tools and resources, projects with commissioners and other Stakeholders, most recently relating to the Safer Staffing Bill at Welsh Government and the “key principles for District Nursing”.

Jayne has delighted in supporting a year 1 student to prepare a paper for publication, following an RCN award nomination, that aimed to help promote health and wellbeing of patients in hospital with dementia by introducing “Natural waking”.

Jayne is a member of the editorial board for Quality in Ageing and a Queen’s Nurse (co-chair of Wales regional Group), has enjoyed promoting community nursing both at home and in the East Pacific Rim, and continues to support the education and development of her students.

Rhiain Lewis

Rhiain is a Practice Tutor with the Open University and a Practice Educator within the Healthcare Support Worker Development Programme for Cardiff and Vale University
Health Board. Rhiain’s first career was as a lecturer, specialising in qualification development and quality assurance. After undertaking a Post Graduate diploma in Special Educational Needs, she chose to retrain as a Mental Health Nurse. Rhiain graduated from Cardiff University in 2015. Her clinical experience is in a variety of areas including Dementia Assessment, rehabilitation, specialist female personality disorder service and forensics (low and medium secure).

Rhiain has extensive teaching experience and teaches at up to post-graduate level and currently supports students in Stage 1 of their nursing degrees.

**Helen O’Mahoney:**

Helen began her training in 1983 with the West Glamorgan School of Nursing. Other than a brief spell in Elderly Care her time as a nurse has been spent in Critical Care, working in Theatres in all areas, with a special interest in Anaesthetics and Recovery, and has worked in Coronary Care, High Dependency and Intensive Care.

Helen’s education specific career change came about in 2012 with the role of Practice Education Facilitator (PEF) in ABMU LHB. During her time as a PEF Helen completed her PGCE and Masters in Education for Health & Social Care Professionals. In 2018 Helen joined the OU in the role of Practice Tutor to the first group of flexible route Bachelor of Nursing degree students in Wales.

Helen currently works as Professional Nurse Educator with Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTM UHB) and has a particular interest in supporting and developing new registrants and is education lead for CTM UHB International Recruitment which successfully prepares international nurses to attain NMC registration.

Helen’s professional development, in line with her passion for lifelong learning led her to become a facilitator, training with the Kings Fund Point of Care for Schwartz Rounds. ABMU was the first HB in Wales to embrace this opportunity to bring staff together in such a forum, during this time Helen was an active programme developer and participant. Helen has been a Wellbeing Champion and facilitator for ABMU LHB “Lighten Up” programme. Recognising the importance of effective leadership in healthcare Helen is an accredited 360 facilitator for the NHS Leadership Academy and a mentor/coach on the Council of Deans Student Leadership Programme. Helen holds a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy qualification.
Lynda Pearce

Lynda is a Registered Nurse with clinical experience across both the NHS and the private sector currently working part-time for a local care home to maintain her clinical skills. Lynda started working within the education sector in 2003 initially with Work Based Learning students but more recently as a Clinical Skills Trainer for a local health board.

Lynda is studying towards a Master's degree in Education with the Open University.

Diane Powles

Diane qualified as a nurse in 1988 from the Welsh School of Medicine in Cardiff and has held many clinical, managerial and education positions both in the NHS and in Higher Education. Two of her key areas of interest, involvement and responsibility are education and leadership development. She is a great believer in engaging, enabling, empowering and energising people to reach their full potential.

During her career Diane has completed several diplomas and degrees, including a Masters in Education and a PGCE, as well as various leadership and coaching courses; she also has a keen interest in research. Her passion for education led her to work for Cardiff and Newport Universities before moving to the Nursing Department at the University of Glamorgan (now the University of South Wales) where she held various roles including Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer and Associate Head of School; she is also a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. One of her other areas of interest and responsibility was working with international students and nurses. Diane acknowledges that we live in a transient global society and recognises and embraces the diversity and richness that international nurses bring to the care arena.

Diane joined the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) in Wales in 2016 as Education and Lifelong Learning Advisor. Within her current role, she has led on two significant projects: The RCN Nurse of the Year Wales Alumni Network and the RCN Prince of Wales Nursing Cadet Scheme. The RCN Wales Alumni Network was developed to capitalise on the success of the RCN Wales Nurse of the Year finalists by creating a hub of excellence within which to share knowledge, expertise and exemplars of good practice. There are approximately 250 alumni members who actively contribute to the development of nursing practice, management, leadership education and research across Wales, the UK and internationally. The Alumni was launched in 2017.
The RCN Prince of Wales Nursing Cadet Nursing scheme was developed to widen access to nursing and to provide employment skills for young people who may not be on the usual career trajectory. The scheme which is supported by HRH The Prince of Wales has been developed to ensure young people in Wales aged between 16 to 25 have an opportunity to appreciate the values of nursing such as kindness, care, and compassion, combined with acquiring skills in citizen engagement, communication, leadership skills and self-development. Cadets will also have practical experience within the NHS and the independent sector. This was a collaborative approach across Wales which included the RCN, Army Cadet Forces Association Wales, NHS Wales, and several Further and Higher Education institutions. The scheme has been supported by many public bodies and organisations including Welsh Government and the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales. The scheme was launched in Wales in July 2019 and is now being rolled out across the UK.

Valuing widening access, in October 2019 she accepted a part time contract working with Open University Wales supporting students through the pre-registration nursing programme. In May 2020 she was offered the post of Associate Director Nursing, Policy and Practice RCN Wales having responsibility for leading a multi-professional team.

Diane believes the nursing workforce deserves support and development to deliver high standards of health and social care and this can only happen through creative education and lifelong learning. Diane holds a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy qualification.

Natalie Prosser

Natalie has been a Practice Tutor with the Open University since 2018; she is also a Professional & Practice Development Nurse for Mental Health services in Wales. Natalie gained her degree in 2010 and is currently completing her MSc dissertation.

Natalie currently supports students in Stage 1 and Stage 2 of their nursing degrees and teaches at undergraduate level.

She is also an active member of the Royal College of Psychiatry’s AIMS review process, undertaking reviews as a lead reviewer and sitting on the advisory panel.

Rachel Rushforth

Rachel is a Practice Tutor with the Open University and a specialist psychiatric liaison nurse at the University Hospital in Wales. Rachel graduated Cardiff University with a
first-class honours degree in 2012 and completed an accelerated development programme following registration with the NMC allowing for clinical experience in a variety of areas including neuropsychiatry, rehabilitation, older adult and crisis assessment. Following this, Rachel gained experience in a management role in older adult services before completed her PGCert in Healthcare Education and gained a role as the HCSW Development Manager in Cardiff and Vale UHB. During her time in the role, Rachel supported the integration of the Open University nursing degree within the UHB and represented HCSW development on a local and national level. Rachel returned to clinical practice in 2018 and graduated from Cardiff University with an MSc in Advance Practice in 2019 and is completing her Fellow of the Higher Education Academy qualification.

Karen Vipond

Karen is a Practice Tutor and an Associate Lecturer with the Open University and an NMC registered Nurse, Health Visitor, Prescriber and Nurse Tutor. Karen has had over 20 years of healthcare tutoring experiences in different universities and has also had experiences of teaching the sciences at secondary school level. Karen’s first degree was in Biology, and after graduating, progressed into the world of nursing, gaining her first registration as a general nurse. Karen has been a graduate of both Oxford Brookes and Oxford University and holds two degrees as well as a PGCE and a Masters qualification. Her nursing career has been a very varied one including trauma nursing, district nursing and health visiting as well as being a medical research coordinator for the University of Oxford. Karen is also a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Karen’s main interest in healthcare lies within the field of genetics and how this threads through all health issues. Karen has published textbooks on Genetics in healthcare for healthcare students and played a role in the construction of the genetic competencies for healthcare professionals.

Appendix 2 – Staff Tutor biographies

Majella Kavanagh

Majella commenced her nursing career in South London, in 1983 undertaking Enrolled Nurse training. She soon progressed via the conversion course to RGN status, followed by a move back to Wales. Then undertook, with South Bank University her first distance learning course - the Diploma, then BSc in professional practice at USW. Having reached Ward Sister by this point Majella took the route into education as a directorate CPD Lead, quickly followed by a Practice Facilitator role. It was in this role that Majella’s
career took a decisive turn, undertaking initially her PGCE proceeding to MSc in Education with USW. Majella first joined the OU as a Practice Tutor and upon retiring from the NHS successfully applied for the Staff Tutor role at the OU in Wales. Majella is the professional lead for OU Nursing in Wales. She has successfully worked with employers in Wales utilising the commissioned places from HEIW to widen the access to the Nursing degree. Majella’s nursing practice has been varied, including medical, surgery, orthopaedic, dentistry and haematology and her last years in practice were in elderly care where she started her nursing practice.

Majella is an ambassador for Welsh Women’s Aid and supports their work by sharing resources via social media; she also supports charities with a group of friends crafting blankets for use by people in disadvantaged groups.

Majella is currently pursuing her HEA application to Fellowship via the Open University.

**Linda Walker**

Linda commenced her nursing career by completing her Orthopaedic nurse training at The Prince of Wales Hospital (colloquially known as Rhydlafar) in 1982 and commence her Enrolled Nurse training in 1984. On registration in 1986 Linda commenced her first Open University module in science, completing her degree and the EN to RGN conversion course.

Linda’s nursing career has been varied but mainly surgical, with her passion and expertise being in operating theatre nursing. Linda completed a year-long full time Operating Theatre course along with completing many teaching qualifications including gaining an MA in Education and Management from Caerleon college. Linda was privileged to hold a joint post between Cardiff University and The University Hospital of Wales as a lecturer practitioner for operating theatre nursing for 5 years. During this time her interest in nursing management was nurtured by her mentors and was to be her career choice for the next 20 years. Linda worked in both England and Wales holding Head of Nursing/Director of Nursing for Surgery posts. During this time, she completed her Doctorate in Education with the Open University which was titled ‘A clash of cultures: A model for supporting adaptation nurses’, along with obtaining Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

Linda’s love of teaching others was continued during these years in her role as Associate Lecturer (Tutor) with the Open University, a position she has held for 25 years. Linda currently tutors students studying modules in Health and Social Care including those students completing the flexible route nursing degree. Linda has carried
out many different activities related to her Associate Lecturer role such as writing module materials, monitoring and mentoring new tutors as well as being a member of several different faculty sub-groups. Linda is elected to the Associate Lecturer Assembly and the Associate Lecturer Executive and represents Wales and Health and Social Care Associate Lecturers. Linda also has voting rights on Senate.

Linda has participated as a clinical reviewer for several NCEPOD reports and was a Professional Advisor to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. Linda retired from the NHS in 2019 and joined the Open University as a Staff Tutor for nursing. Linda currently sits on the editorial board of the British Journal of Peri-operative Practice and is an External Examiner for two Welsh Universities. Linda is currently working with a module team researching student confidence and understanding of module materials.

References
