In 2014 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) in Northern Ireland developed the Advanced Nursing Practice Framework. This framework defines Advanced Nursing Practice and identifies the core competencies and learning outcomes essential for the Advanced Nursing Practice role. In addition it clearly identifies distinguishing characteristics between Advanced and Specialist Nursing practice and stipulates that only those practitioners who meet the requirements of the role and who are employed as Advanced Nurse Practitioners, will be able to use the title.

In response to this a new MSc Advanced Nursing Practice course is being developed and will be delivered at Ulster University commencing in September 2016. This course is being commissioned by DHSSPSNI and will encompass the four core competencies and learning outcomes specified of Direct Clinical Practice, Leadership and Collaborative Practice, Education and Learning and Research and Evidence-Based Practice. It will have a significant emphasis on clinical expertise in the area of practice, and require over 500 hours of supervised practice. The Extended Independent and Supplementary Prescriber (NMC V300 award) will be an essential component of each programme. Currently pathways within Emergency Care, Paediatrics and General Practice are being developed.