

**Programme Specification for**  
**FdA Collaborative Working with Children, Young People and Families**

<b>This document applies to students who commence the programme in or after September 2017</b>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>1.</b>	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of Worcester
<b>2.</b>	<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Worcester
<b>3.</b>	<b>Programme accredited by</b>	N/A
<b>4.</b>	<b>Final award or awards</b>	FdA
<b>5.</b>	<b>Programme title</b>	FdA Collaborative Working with Children, Young People and Families
<b>6.</b>	<b>Pathways available and/or Linked Honours Degree progression route/s</b>	The BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families (IWCF) is the identified progression route to full honours for this programme.
<b>7.</b>	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b>	Taught as a flexible and distributed, on-line learning programme which incorporates Saturday face-to-face teaching.
<b>8.</b>	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	Full Time and Part Time  FT and PT Students will attend eight Saturdays during each academic year.
<b>9.</b>	<b>UCAS Code</b>	L591
<b>10.</b>	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	<a href="#">Early Childhood</a> (QAA, 2014) <a href="#">Education Studies</a> (QAA, 2015) <a href="#">Youth and Community Work</a> (2009)*  * (A draft for consultation was circulated to UK higher education providers and other professional, statutory and regulatory bodies in April 2016)
<b>11.</b>	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision</b>	April 2016 August 2017 - AQU amendments

## 12. Educational aims of the programme

This course prepares students to engage effectively and sensitively with children, young people and their families at all levels of early intervention. It is designed to offer a breadth of experience in collaborating with children, young people and families, through academic activity and on-placement practice opportunities.

The course will consider educational, health, social justice and other aspects of the lives of children, young people and families while also delving deeply into current key debates and critical practice issues at the frontline. It recognises and responds to government initiatives on the provision of child care and early intervention strategies for children, young people and families.

Unique to the University of Worcester, this course is designed in partnership with national employers within children's services. The programme will support undergraduates to enter a range of service roles that support vulnerable children, young people and families.

The course is run Full Time and Part Time and is therefore suitable for students who are employed or volunteering and would like to gain a qualification for their role or for those leaving Further Education who have chosen to support settings who interface with children, young people and families. Further information on entry criteria is stated in section 18 below.

The programme aims to:

1. Provide the appropriate knowledge and understanding required for the support, care and education of children, young people and their families;
2. Develop students as independent reflective practitioners, with a sound understanding of the wider issues relating to children and young people and their development;
3. Develop students as effective advocates for the rights of children, young people and their families;
4. Develop students' understanding of the regulatory and legislative frameworks impacting on children, young people and their families, and the effect that these frameworks have on them;
5. Enable students to develop appropriate pedagogical approaches to working inclusively with children, young people and families, exploring theory in practice within their settings;
6. Develop students' personal and transferable skills, including communication, IT, team working and leadership, study skills, safeguarding and problem solving;
7. Provide a suitable basis for progression to further academic study or professional qualifications.

### 13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:

#### Knowledge and Understanding

Learning Outcome	Module Code
a) Know and critically understand the well-established principles of care and education of children and young people and the way in which those principles have developed.	FDCF 1501 and FDCF 2501
b) Know the main methods of enquiry in the subject, and be able to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in care and education of children and young people. To then be able to apply these when working with professionals in human welfare services and other organisations.	FDCF 1502 and FDCF 2504

#### Cognitive and intellectual skills

Learning Outcome	Module Code
c) Employ independent learning and research skills to analyse, evaluate and challenge contemporary research, policy and literature in the sector.	FDCF 1504 and FDCF 2504
d) Employ academic skills, including the ability to engage in and reflect upon practice/ work-based enquiry and responding to a diverse range of course assessment.	FDCF 1503 and FDCF 2501

#### Practical skills relevant to employment

Learning Outcome	Module Code
e) Implement skills learnt on the course within the workplace to develop and implement an early intervention approach that promotes the education and wellbeing of children and young people in order to help them achieve, safeguard their welfare and promote equality.	FDCF 1501, FDCF 2501 and FDCF 2502
f) Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis in the field of early years care and education and in a work context.	FDCF 2503 AND FDCF 2504
g) Undertake further training, develop existing skills, and acquire new competences that will enable students to assume responsibility within organisations.	FDCF 1501 and FDCF 2501

#### Transferable/key skills

Learning Outcome	Module Code
h) Apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, and the application of those principles in a work context.	FDCF 1501, FDCF 2501 and FDCF 2503
i) Recognise the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge in the fields of care and education and in a work context.	FDCF 1504 and FDCF 2504

j) Effectively communicate information, arguments, and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences and deploy key techniques of the discipline, when working with professionals in human welfare services and other organisations.	FDCF 1503, FDCF 2501 and FDCF 2503
k) Demonstrate qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment and progression to other qualifications requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.	FDCF 1501 and FDCF 2501
l) Utilise opportunities for lifelong learning.	FDCF 2504
m) Use ICT skills effectively.	All modules.

Flexible and Distributed Learning is an assessment for learning strategy. This comprises the integration of flexible-and-distributed learning opportunities, incorporating eight face-to-face (F2F) teaching sessions on Saturdays, attendance and engagement in two annual course-specific conferences, work-based learning (WBL) and ten online learning activities (OLAs) in Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) across both semesters.

Students will access teaching and learning opportunities through:

- Tutor led information via lecture format
- Self-directed independent study
- Workshops - whole, small group, paired work and discussion
- Content analysis of relevant materials - audio visual and text based sources
- Self-directed and tutor led exercises/tasks designed to develop and extend skills in evaluation/reflection on personal professional development and study
- Peer learning group activities
- Use of visual, auditory, and physical technologies and support mechanisms

The following table shows how students are formatively supported by tutors from active induction to self-organised independent learners in an FDL structure.

	OLA	F2F	PBL	GIS
Active induction	1	1	PBL1	Essential reading
	2	2		
Guided exploration	3	3		
Self-organising learning	4			
Self-organised learner	5	4		
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT (30%)				
Guided exploration	6	5	PBL2	Essential reading
	7	6		
Self-organising learning	8	7		
	9			
Self-organised learner	10	8		
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT (70%)				
OLA = online learning activity				
F2F = Saturday face-to-face sessions				
PBL = practice-based learning tasks (module specific)				
GIS = guided independent study				

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

**Learning and teaching**

The Centre for Children and Families (CCF) team is committed to continually improving the quality and standards of learning and teaching. We will ensure that teaching staff use a range of innovative teaching and assessment methods which effectively engage and support a diverse student body. We will work hard to ensure that all students have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Our strategies for learning and teaching will encourage lifelong learning. We will encourage practice and research to keep teaching relevant, exciting and fully up to date.

A range of learning and teaching strategies are used to engage students in the learning process and to support student achievement of the learning outcomes, including:

- Practice Based Learning
- Problem-Based Learning
- Whole group lectures
- Workshops
- Seminars
- Presentations/displays
- 'Fishbowl' exercises

- Tutorials
- Directed study
- Directed reading
- Peer group study
- Independent learning
- E-learning i.e. Blackboard

The programme assesses the ability to reflect and theorise practice thereby supporting professional development through academic study and practice-based learning. Competence in practice is evaluated by a named placement mentor using a Red Amber Green (RAG) system. Student reflection on at least six practice-based learning tasks comprises part of the reflective essay assessment for FDCF1501. These tasks are negotiated between students and module tutors.

A range of assessment strategies contribute to the assessment of the overall course learning outcomes and module learning outcomes. Formative and summative assessment strategies are used to support personal and professional development, which underpins but also goes beyond the achievement of specific learning outcomes.

Formative assessment is provided through responses to academic and practice-based learning activities including reflective journal entries. Interactive face to face and online learning and teaching approaches including student evaluation of learning, provides further opportunity for timely formative assessment.

The form of summative assessment for each module is determined by its appropriateness in allowing the student to demonstrate they have understood and can meet the learning outcomes with potential for achievement across the full range of grades. Assessment strategies are embedded within the learning and teaching experience. Some forms of assessment require forms of representation that facilitate the assessment of theory in practice and incorporate practice based study.

There are two summative assessments per module (with the exception of FDCF2504), supported by formal formative assessments. The formative assessments will be used to provide students with feedback to inform their summative submission.

14. Assessment strategy

LEVEL 4

WORK-BASED LEARNING					
PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING (PBL)		PBL		PBL	
Flexible-and-distributed learning (FDL) including online learning activities (OLAs)					
SUMMATIVE (SEM1) – 30%			SUMMATIVE (SEM2) – 70%		
Summer School Induction Welcome Week	FDCF1501	formative learning activity	JOURNAL (1500 WORDS)	formative learning activity	REFLECTIVE ESSAY (3000 words)
	FDCF1502		REPORT (1500 words)		INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION (2000 word equivalence) + WRITTEN SUMMARY (1000 words)
	FDCF1503		REPORT (1500 words)		REFLECTIVE LEARNING LOG (2000 words)
	FDCF1504		GROUP PRESENTATION + POSTER		INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION (2000 word equivalence) + WRITTEN SUMMARY (1000 words)

**LEVEL 5**

WORK-BASED LEARNING					
PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING (PBL)		PBL		PBL	
Flexible-and-distributed learning (FDL) including online learning activities (OLAs)					
SUMMATIVE (SEM1) – 30%			SUMMATIVE (SEM2) – 70%		
<b>Summer School Induction</b> <b>Welcome Week</b>	<i>Formative learning activity</i>	<b>FDCF2501</b> <b>INDIVIDUAL POSTER PRESENTATION</b> (2000 words equivalence)	<i>Formative learning activity</i>	<b>REFLECTIVE ESSAY</b> (2500 words)	
		<b>FDCF2502</b> <b>GROUP PRESENTATION + POSTER</b> (2500 words equivalence)		<b>REFLECTIVE ESSAY</b> (2500 words)	
		<b>FDCF2503</b> <b>REPORT</b> (2000 words)		<b>INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION + WRITTEN SUMMARY</b> (2000 words equivalence + 1000 words)	
		<b>FDCF2504</b> <b>N/A</b>		<b>ANALYTIC REPORT (LONG STUDY)</b> (7000 words)	

## **Assessment:**

All assessments:

- are a maximum of 4,000 words or equivalent (NOTE: the exception is FDCF2504 Long Study, which is 7,000 words in length)
- include formative and summative elements
- are aligned with subject, course, module outcomes and learning and teaching methods
- summatively assess all module learning outcomes
- include different assessment points and split assessments within modules where this approach is deemed to be beneficial to the students' achievement of course and module learning outcomes
- provide opportunity for achievement of all grades
- provide opportunity for choice/negotiation where appropriate to the module content, learning outcomes and level of study
- include a range of assessment methods that enable students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes and the transferable skills inherent within them

Further information on how the assessment methods at each level are mapped to modules is included in the Student Handbook.

Generic assessment criteria (developed from the University of Worcester criteria) apply to and are developed within all modules to ensure assessment criteria account for the specific requirements of each module. Module learning outcomes are relevant to the appropriate level of study as identified in QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2008) and provide the focus for the assessment of student achievement. Module outlines identify learning outcomes and those being assessed for each summative assessment task.

## **Practice-based learning**

Practice-based learning forms a significant proportion of the Foundation Degree, with practice-based learning activities incorporated into taught modules. Learning in practice is supported through a mixture of practice-based learning activities, face-to-face delivery, e-learning, directed tasks, a reflective diary and a reflective journal.

All practice-based learning complies with university policy and risk assessments and audits are carried out annually for each programme which have elements of practice-based learning.

Practice-based learning will usually take place either in a service that has been commissioned within the last five years by a local authority to provide services to children, young people or families, in an Ofsted registered setting deemed good or outstanding OR in a setting deemed good or outstanding by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Consideration will be given to paid employees in settings which do not meet these requirements; experience in different settings will be a requirement in these cases.

If the Ofsted or CQC grade changes from good or outstanding after students have registered on the programme, they must notify the Course Leader and the Practice-based learning Administrator in order that experience in a different setting can be negotiated and Personal Academic Tutors can be notified of your situation. This allows Personal Academic Tutors to offer the focused support students will need.

All students are required to be in employment or working voluntarily in a setting supporting children and young people and their families for the duration of their studies.

Students are required to be in employment or working voluntarily in a setting for a minimum of 600 hours over the duration of the course. This will comprise 300 hours per level of study for full time and part time Students and equates to 300 hours per year for full time students and 200 hours per year for part time students – details below.

Students who are employed within settings are likely to exceed this requirement in their own setting. However, during the course of their studies, they will need to negotiate a period of professional practice experience in a different setting. The Practice-based learning tutor will provide guidance as required.

Students studying full-time are expected to be in practice for a minimum of two days (10 hours) per week for 40 days per year in the same setting (serial placement) and 20 days in two blocks of 10 days (block placement). This equates to a minimum of 300 hours per level of study / academic year.

Students studying part-time are expected to be in practice for a minimum of one day (5 hours) per week for 20 days per year in the same setting (serial placement) and 10 days in two blocks of 5 days (block placement). This equates to a minimum of 300 hours at each level of study. Full-time students will complete 300 hours at Level 4 and 300 hours at Level 5. Part-time students will complete 200 hours in each of the three years of study.

### Evaluation of practice

Completion of hours and competence in practice is signed off within a Practice Portfolio within FDCF1501 (Level 4) and FDCF 2501 (Level 5) FDCF2503 (Level 5). The Practice Portfolio contains the evidence collected from Practice Based Learning Activities within each module. Reflection on this evidence forms the basis of the summative assessment in each of the modules above. Integral to each module are practice-based learning activities which are reflected upon within summative assessments. Evidence from experience in practice is essential to all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment and stimulates individual and peer learning in modules and will be used by students as a source of data in assessments.

## 15. Programme structures and requirements

*Requirements at Level 4 Students must take the four mandatory modules and successfully complete 120 credits in total*

Module code	Module title	Credits Number	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Pre-requisites	Co-requisites/exclusions and other notes*
FDCF1501	Transition to Higher Education and Transformation of Practice	30	M	None	None
FDCF1502	The Nature and Culture of Childhood and Adulthood	30	M	None	None
FDCF1503	21 <sup>st</sup> -Century Family: Diversity Support	30	M	None	None
FDCF1504	Children's Welfare in Political Landscapes	30	M	None	None

*Requirements at Level 5 Students must take the four mandatory modules and successfully complete 120 credits in total*

FDCF2501	Adapting Professional Practice: Child-Centred Interventions	30	M	None	None
FDCF2502	Safeguarding Children's Rights In Family Contexts	30	M	None	None
FDCF2503	Employability in Landscapes of Current Child Welfare Practice	30	M	None	None
FDCF2504	Long Study	30	M	None	None

### **FdA in Early Years Flexible and Distributed Learning (FDL) and ICT Competence**

This programme recognises the importance of accessing a delivery mode which meets the needs of the learner in relation to the expectations of Higher Education. A significant amount of study time will be online, in the Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard (BB) which is designed to facilitate collaborative and independent learning. In addition to face to face and practice-based learning experience, this mode of study requires considerable commitment to on-going engagement with on-line learning opportunities. Practice-based learning in OFSTED or CQC registered settings which are deemed good or outstanding is a requirement of this FdA programme.

### **16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality**

This award is located at level 5 of the FHEQ.

The QAA Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark Statement (2010 2nd ed.), Early Childhood Studies Subject Benchmark Statements (October 2014); Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2014) have been used as a framework within which this programme has been developed, and within which it will be implemented and monitored.

The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2014) highlights that foundation degrees integrate academic and work-based learning through close collaboration between employers and higher education providers. They build upon a long history of design and delivery of vocational qualifications in higher education, and are intended to equip learners with the skills and knowledge relevant to employment, so satisfying the needs of employees and employers. Many foundation degree programmes are designed to meet the needs of the local employment market. Feedback from external examiners facilitates on-going evaluation of the expectations placed on students and the extent of their attainment.

Both Ofsted ratings and Care Quality Commission ratings are used where appropriate when allocating practice/work based learning opportunities to students studying within this programme.

### **17. Support for students**

Students are supported by a Personal Academic Tutor, Module Tutors, Course Leader, a Professional Partner in the setting and Practice-based learning Tutor. A peer learning support

system is integral to the course design and organisation. A student handbook and module outlines provide relevant information and guidance.

**Individual support:** A named Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) will be available so that a learning relationship can quickly be established. Tutors are accessible by telephone, e-mail or in person by appointment. However online and distance learning tutor support will also be available through Pebble Pad and the use of the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment.

**Personal Academic Tutor (PAT):** Informed, intellectual discussion with academic staff and fellow students lies at the heart of the University learning experience. It is important and valuable to take an overview of academic development at regular points throughout the student's study. As a new undergraduate student, students are provided with an appointed Personal Academic Tutor (usually one of the people teaching on the course and who will remain with the student throughout their undergraduate studies). This system provides continuity for students, as they get to know one member of academic staff who will be their key regular point of contact within the University.

The three key roles of your Personal Academic Tutor are to:

- Support academic development
- Act as a first point of call if students are experiencing difficulties arising whilst at University
- Provide an official University reference

**Curriculum design:** The programme has been designed to support student's achievement through an emphasis on reflective practice which supports personal and professional development, theorisation of practice and its impact on quality improvement within a range of settings which support children, young people and their families. Competence in practice is developed and assessed throughout the course.

As students progress through the programme and gain confidence, the module content will require more independence. The learning outcomes of the programme reflect a student-centred approach enabling students from diverse but relevant educational backgrounds to build on previous learning and experience.

**Student Conferences:** The conferences are always designed to support the modules currently being undertaken at all levels in a purposeful, accessible manner. The conferences also provide a forum for learning about progression and career opportunities. Twice per academic year, once in each semester, the Foundation Degree community is able to meet at the University of Worcester and be part of a dynamic and growing national and international community. They provide opportunity for collaborative research to be shared and allows attendees to be informed by other practitioners, Local Authority and eminent speakers identified as leaders in their field, reinforcing our ethos of collaborative communities of practice. This course plans to develop subject and professional benchmarks for collaborative family support as well as opportunities to develop student employability.

**Study skills:** Study skills are identified and embedded within all modules. Practice-based learning forms a significant proportion of the Foundation Degree. It is incorporated into taught modules and allocated a percentage grade within the summative assessments of three of these modules. It is supported through a mixture of face-to-face (Saturday) delivery, e-learning, directed tasks, a reflective diary and a reflective journal. Deadlines will be set for the completion of tasks. Students have responsibility for organising their own time to meet deadlines.

**Support in the workplace:** Practice-based learning requires as much support as traditional learning. The structure consists of appropriate support from the setting through a designated Professional Partner. The Professional Partner will be a colleague within the student's setting. This person is someone with whom they can chat informally and from whom they can gain day-to-day advice and feedback. Further support will be available from the Practice-based learning

coordinator (IoE), Practice-based learning coordinator (CCF), Practice-based learning Tutor (FDL), the Course Leader, module tutors and the CCF practice administrator. The CCF operate a series of databases to track student attendance at settings. The database recognises areas of practice; that health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out and that both employers and students are aware of each other's needs. This database hosts over 500 settings and offers students opportunity to filter for setting types and travel distances should students want to use it in this way. Employers are contacted regularly to ensure that both the student and setting have a valuable experience. Practice-based learning handbooks for student and provider offer further guidance and support.

Should a student find themselves unemployed or for any reason suddenly need to find an alternative placement then the rigorous structures and tutor support system detailed above will ensure a swift and positive transition into a new setting. Personal Academic Tutors, module tutors, practice based learning coordinators and the practice administrator will all support transitions both in the setting and within studies which may be affected by the move. Management of these transitions will be on an individual basis.

All placements are audited for risk management. The course will advise and expect students to undertake placements only where evidence of public liability insurance cover can be provided by the placement provider.

All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the challenges and learning opportunities available in each placement is appropriate to the safety and learning needs of the student placed there. The Course Leader and Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator will endeavour to ensure a consistently good match between each student's learning needs and the necessary challenge of placement-based learning. It is expected that students would be placed in settings that present more complex challenges to family support practice in the second year if their studies (and also the third, where appropriate). Level 4 students with limited prior experience would be placed, instead, in setting that are considered low risk. Challenges include working collaboratively with children, young people and families experiencing acute difficulties, in locations where lone-working is considered risky, where conflicts may be verbally volatile and sensitive issues discussed with young people, their families and other professionals in a confidential working environment.

**Peer Group Support:** Learning groups will be established with a central membership of peers and will meet for informal but regular discussions based on personal and professional development. Learning groups will also be utilised within module group work where appropriate. Other methods of peer group support include e-mail communication and online conferencing, described above.

**Progression:** Upon completion this FdA offers 240 credits which allow students to access study at honours degree level. The BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families (IWCF) is the identified progression route to full honours for this programme. However the broad age range and contexts within this degree make it suitable for progression into other care, health or education top up programmes. Due to the range of continuing opportunities students should seek support from their PAT tutor in the first instance.

**StARs – Student Academic Representatives: Students are able to influence and shape the courses they study and improve the learning experience for current and future students. With the support of Course Leaders, the aim is to have at least two Student Academic Representatives for every year of every course.**

Transition on to this programme is supported via induction, student handbooks, leaflets, Course Management Committee, Student Conference, Blackboard (VLE) and e mails.

UW provides other support through:

An Induction Programme at the beginning of each academic year for new entrants Student Services Specialist support for disabled students via the Disability and Dyslexia Service Student representatives.

Careers Learning Resources: Library, Media and IT (supported by visits to UW and visits to partner colleges by ILS staff) Student union, Sports & Leisure facilities, Student conferences.

Links to Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service are included below:

<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/index.htm>

<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/disability-and-dyslexia.htm>

## 18. Admissions

### Admissions policy

The course seeks to recruit students from a range of educational and experiential backgrounds, including those with significant experience of working in settings, which support children and young people and families, as well as those who are progressing from vocational or academic courses at college or school and others who may be seeking a new challenge or career change.

A lack of formal qualifications is not necessarily a barrier to joining the course if students have relevant experience and commitment to learning. The course is committed to widening participation. University of Worcester equal opportunity policies apply in relation to course admissions processes and selection criteria. Previous professional experience in professional support of children, young people and adults or in a voluntary capacity is not a requirement. The experience, however, is a significant and useful resource for students to draw upon and reflect upon throughout their course of study.

We welcome applicants who hold alternative qualifications/experience different to those shown in this section who can demonstrate the ability to benefit from the course and show their potential to complete the course successfully.

Although recent preparatory study at an appropriate level (e.g. Access to HE Diploma) is recommended, students may be considered on the basis of prior evidenced professional/work experience and/or other assessment procedures, and the assessment of personal suitability. University Admissions office staff will be able to offer information, advice and guidance on this process.

Students with relevant previous study at HND or degree level or extensive experience may be considered eligible for Accreditation of Prior Learning. Entry may be possible to Year Two of the course, depending upon the qualifications or experience gained.

Applications from prospective International students will be considered and processed consistently with Home/EU applications. Please see this webpage for useful information:

<http://www.worc.ac.uk/community/international-prospective-students.html>

Our International Office should be contacted in the first instance:

Worcester International  
[international@worc.ac.uk](mailto:international@worc.ac.uk)  
+44(0)1905 542640

### Entry Requirements, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and ICT requirements:

The normal minimum entry requirement for Foundation Degree courses is the possession of 4 GCSEs (Grade C/4 or above) and 1 A Level (or equivalent Level 3 qualification - for example, but not exclusively, a CACHE Diploma or EdExcel BTEC National Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development).

The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW website <https://www.worc.ac.uk/journey/a-z-of-courses.html>.

Course leaders will consider non-standard entry routes also. See [Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications.

A current Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required and all applicants who are working or undertaking voluntary work placements with children, young people and families will be required to provide:

- a statement of support from your current employer or voluntary placement to provide the time, opportunity and provision of support for work-based learning;
- requirements and release to attend university-based study, when appropriate;
- a testimony or reference from an appropriately qualified referee.

Access to practice-based learning in an OFSTED or CQC registered setting deemed good or outstanding is a course requirement. For some applicants who may be employed support can be given to enable them to continue to work outside of the good or outstanding requirement. However this will require discussion with the Course Leader.

This mode of study requires some ICT competence in order to learn effectively in the course's virtual learning environment (VLE). Consequently, an audit of ICT skills may be undertaken as part of any admissions interview. The course supports students to enhance existing ICT skills and acquire new ones in order to learn effectively within the VLE. Initial engagement with the VLE is embedded within the formal induction to the course.

Further information on hardware and software access is detailed below.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University web pages. Information on eligibility for accreditation of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University web pages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111). Information can be found in the prospectus or on the University web pages, available via this link: <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/journey/how-to-apply-entry-requirements.html>.

Applicants who do not hold the above qualifications will be considered on the basis of prior professional experience and the criteria indicated above. An interview with the course leader may be necessary to establish the extent to which an applicant's prior experiential learning satisfies the intended learning outcomes of any particular module. In an instance of prior certificated learning, the course leader may request a copy of the applicant's written work that was submitted for academic assessment and which received a pass mark. The course leader will evaluate the extent to which this piece of work satisfies the intended learning outcomes of any particular module that the applicant wishes 'to RPL'. It may be that the applicant is asked to submit further written work to satisfy these learning outcomes fully but which nevertheless allows the applicant to avoid taking the whole module.

All students need clearance to work with young children (DBS); a reference that supports the student's commitment and suitability for the course.

Further information or guidance is available from Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111) or from <http://www.worc.ac.uk/courses/howtoapply/476.html>

### **Admissions procedures:**

- Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (UCAS Course Code: L591)
- Part-time applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW)

Applications normally made through UCAS will be reviewed by the course leader. Places will be offered to those students who meet the entry requirements. In those cases where the entry requirements are only partially met, applicants may be invited either:

- To submit a 500-word piece of writing to the course leader detailing their reasons for applying for this particular course; or,
- To submit a 500-word piece of writing to the course leader detailing their ability to manage the FDL requirements of the course; and/or,
- Attend an interview with the course leader to establish the applicant's suitability for the course in terms of ICT competence, practice experience and academic ability.

### **Admissions/selection criteria:**

Selection criteria for all modes of study and delivery:

- commitment to working with and for children young people and their families;
- commitment to personal development as evidenced in different ways such as work experience, previous study, and/or training courses, portfolio of professional achievements, performance assessments, personal interests, etc.;
- suitability for working with young people, children and their families;
- suitability for working as part of a team within settings that support children, young people and families;
- literacy skills in relation to how these will enable them to fulfil the requirements of the course.

Offers of places are usually made on the basis of the application and an interview with representatives from the course team.

See Section 22 of the Programme Specification for information regarding the admissions arrangements for progression to the linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s).

**Flexible and Distributed Programme:** To support your successful engagement and achievement on the programme an audit of IT skills will be conducted at the interview to identify your strengths and weaknesses and how these can be supported. Details of this audit will be sent to students on confirmation of your interview at the University of Worcester.

### **ICT Competence Requirements**

Minimum hardware and software:

At the University, we now use Office 2012 as standard. This means that the following are compatible: Office 2012, Office Live (cloud based service for students only – comes free with student SkyDrive), Office 2007, Office 2008 for Mac, Office 2011 for Mac, Pages for Mac.

## **19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

- The course is monitored at a local level by student evaluation of modules and student representation at course committees.
- An Annual Evaluation Report is produced to aid the development of the course. The Head of Centre for Children and Families has overall lead on the on-going development and delivery of the programme.

- There are regular cross-moderation and standardisation events for the whole course team to ensure quality and standards are consistent across partner institutions. This process is further strengthened by external examiners who verify academic standards and feedback on quality issues.
- Conference days at UW provide staff with further opportunities for CPD, collaborative working and peer assessment. An FdA Management Committee oversees the programme and student progress.
- Regular FdA team meetings are essential to the delivery and development of the programme.

## 20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates within the University's [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#).

### Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

### Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

### Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resubmission opportunities in the event of failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.

### Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

### Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
CertHE	120 credits at Level 4 or higher
Foundation Degree FdA/FdSc	120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5

These awards are not classified.

Institute-level Assessment Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Board of Examiners considers students' mark profiles to make decisions about progression, awards and degree classifications as appropriate.

## 21. Indicators of quality and standards

External examiner reports not only confirm that FdA standards within the CCF (in relation to our other foundation degree, Early Years FdA) are appropriate for study at Level 4/5 and are in line with standards experienced elsewhere, they have also identified that our Flexible and Distributed Learning provision, including degrees awarded Foundation Degree, BA (Hons) and MA, is 'innovative and cutting edge' (February 2013).

Foundation Degrees within the CCF remain a sought after qualification for those wishing to progress in areas of work with children, young people and their families. An increasing number of CCF FdA students are progressing on to UW's BA (Hons) in Integrated Early Childhood Studies Top-up which has also received praiseworthy reports from external examiners.

The team at the University value the opinions and views of all students. At regular intervals throughout the course, students will be invited to feedback on their level of satisfaction with their study experience and the extent to which their learning needs are being met. Should students have any concerns they are asked to talk to their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) in the first instance. The mechanisms used for student evaluation include the following:

**Module evaluation:** At any point during the module students will have the opportunity to feedback to module tutors. At the end of the module students will be asked to formally feedback their comments on a module evaluation form. This information will be used within the course annual evaluation. [http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Module\\_Evaluation\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Module_Evaluation_Policy.pdf)

**Practice-based learning evaluation:** Students are expected to take responsibility for the on-going evaluation of their practice-based learning. Within professional and ethical constraints this will take the form of: professional discussion with their Professional Partner, peers and tutors; recording on-going evaluation of experience on the Evaluation of Practice-Based Learning Record (see PBL Handbook); developing a reflective diary.

The university will complete an audit and risk assessment annually led by the Partnership Development Lead for Practice-based Learning. They will establish and apply appropriate processes to evaluate the quality of the learning environment. They will: develop and maintain a data base of placements which have been graded as good or outstanding and where possible work in collaboration with Local Authorities to establish the quality of the student learning environment. This data base will be updated following evaluation; verify evidence that the setting has been graded as good or outstanding; provide opportunities for professional dialogue with peers and tutors; respond to concerns students or the setting may raise regarding the quality of your experience or professionalism in practice.

**Student Academic Representatives (StARs):** Students will elect (by secret ballot) student representatives from their group at the beginning of the course. Their role is to gather student opinions about learning experiences and the learning resources available to students and to feed these back to tutors, external examiners and assessors, if required. The StARs represent students at course clinics and Course Management Committee.

<http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/stars/>

**Course Clinics:** These are held on a regular basis in order that any on-going issues can be resolved expediently.

**Course Management Committees (CMC):** These take place once per semester. The committee comprises the student representatives from each cohort and mode of study (full-time

and part-time), the course leader and course tutors. Whilst the Course clinics deal with on-going issues, the Course Management Committee is engaged in course development of a more strategic nature. An agenda is issued in advance so that representatives can reflect on peer feedback and be in a position to contribute to the discussions regarding course management and development.

A summary should be fed back (e.g. via minutes on Blackboard) by the student representatives, to the course group. This feedback will inform on going and annual course evaluation and development. Points for action are noted within the minutes of the meeting and responses fed back at subsequent course committee meetings.

**Student Satisfaction Survey:** Students will be asked to participate in the University Student survey. Final year students on the Foundation Degree will be invited to participate in the National Student Satisfaction Survey. Students are strongly encouraged to participate. The outcomes of this survey are used to inform Partner and the UW Partnership Annual Evaluation Reports and action plans.

**Ad hoc surveys** - Surveys are sometimes conducted at induction (see section 6 below), at the end of each academic year and on completion of your studies. Their purpose is to track levels of satisfaction as students progress through their course.

**Module Tutors and Course Leaders:** If students have specific issues relating to academic matters, students should raise these, in the first instance with the relevant module leader and/or Programme Leader.

**Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) System:** The Personal Academic Tutor is the students' main point of feedback for views on pastoral and personal development issues. In some cases, particularly when there are relatively small numbers on the course, the role of course leader and the PAT will be performed by the same person.

**Annual Evaluation Report (AER):** This report includes all evaluative data including statistics for recruitment, retention and student achievement. This report is presented at the first CMC of the academic year (usually in Semester 1); an updated action plan is presented at the second CMC of the academic year (usually in Semester 2). All of these reports are considered and approved by the Head of Centre for Children and Families and Institute / UW Quality Committees

**External Examiners;** Every degree programme is required to have External Examiners who confirm that the programmes at the university are of a standard which is required by FHEQ (2008) policy and also that it is comparable with other universities who may run similar programmes. External examiner reports not only confirm that FdA standards within the CCF are appropriate for study at Level 4/5 and are in line with standards experienced elsewhere, they have also identified that the current CCF Flexible and Distributed Learning FdA programme is 'innovative and cutting edge' (February 2013).

## **22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers**

**Student employability:** The FdA prepares students for employment in a variety of settings which support children and young people and their families. The degree also provides opportunities for progression on to further study and qualifications. It provides opportunities for practice-based experience and learning and the development of relevant transferable skills and attributes which provide a strong foundation for a range of professional roles in the sector and beyond. The Student Conferences provide opportunities for students to receive advice on careers and progression and to benefit from participation within the wider community of practitioners and employers.

**Graduate destinations:** The FdA in Children, Young People and Families will support students in pursuing careers in human welfare services areas including but not restricted to leadership and management within settings, social welfare services, including children's and adult services,

family support work, children's charities, playwork, working in custodial settings and refuges, early years' education, teaching or teaching assistant, daycare provision, and so on. **N.B. Further study may be necessary for some of these and further advice is available during the course and from UW Careers Advisors.**

**Links with Employers:** The FdA opens up opportunities for career progression for students who are already in employment, working voluntarily in the sector or progressing from Level 3 study. Employers from a range of sectors such as education, care and Early Intervention advocates were involved in the design of the course, its on-going delivery and review. An FdA Partnership Forum which includes representatives from Early Years LA Services across the region supports collaborative working with UW and FE providers.

### **Progression to Linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s)**

On completion of the Foundation Degree, students are eligible to continue to relevant study at Level 6, including a top-up to full BA (Hons) Degree.

The BA (Hons) Top Up in Integrated Working with Children and Families (IWCF) is one identified progression route to full honours for this programme. Transition on to this programme is supported by information and support for students from the IWCF Course Leader and via induction, student handbooks, leaflets, Course Management Committee, Student Conference, Blackboard (VLE) and email. Students interested in progressing through this route must first apply for a place on this course through normal application routes.

UW provides other support through an induction programme at the beginning of each academic year for new entrants to the Top Up; e.g. Student Services (including specialist support for disabled students via the Disability and Dyslexia Service), StARs, the Careers and Employability Service, Library Services, the Student Union, Sports & Leisure facilities and student conferences.

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme 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. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.