

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	<b>Awarding institution/body</b> University of Worcester
2	<b>Teaching institution</b> University of Worcester
3	<b>Programme accredited by NA</b>
4	<b>Final award</b> PG Cert; PG Dip; MA
5	<b>Programme title:</b> Masters in Social Work and Community Studies
6	<b>Pathways available</b> NA
7	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b> Standard semester based programme. Taught at University of Worcester
8	<b>Mode of attendance</b> Full Time
9	<b>UCAS Code</b> NA
10	<b>Subject /Professional Benchmark statements</b> QAA Subject benchmark: Social Work (2008); NOS for Social Work (Revised, Skills for Care 2006); QAA Code of Practice for Placement learning; Quality Assurance Placement Learning (GSCC 2009).
11	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision</b> November 2010/ March 2011
12	<p><b>Educational aims of the programme</b></p> <p>The Masters in Social Work and Community Studies is a flexible but coherent programme that will enable both international and home students to gain an academic award in social work related studies. It will enable practitioners to work competently in social welfare environments for which UK social work registration by the GSCC is not required.</p> <p>The programme constitutes UK social work theory and practice, plus international themes and comparisons providing a platform for critical debate. Whilst fundamentally based on a UK model of social work, this is contextualised within an international comparative framework of social work, community practice and inter-professional learning. These are hallmarks of the course.</p> <p>In addition, students will be encouraged and supported to participate in a substantial voluntary work based placement arranged in conjunction with the course team. As a result of these strategies students will be able to increase their knowledge of UK welfare provision, exchange international models of good practice and develop transferable research and practice skills.</p> <p>More specifically the aims of the programme are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To provide an opportunity for students from diverse backgrounds to succeed in achieving postgraduate qualifications through the development of advanced subject specific and transferable knowledge and skills relevant to social and community work in an international context</li> <li>2. To facilitate a critical understanding of the roles, responsibilities and approaches of the social and community worker in engaging with and supporting individuals and groups at points of transition, challenge and need.</li> <li>3. To develop a critical understanding of the interrelationship and contested nature of knowledge, theory and practice of social and community work within specific UK and international contexts</li> <li>4. To develop a critical understanding of the theory and practice of comparative international philosophies of social work.</li> <li>5. To develop the skills of engagement, interaction and reflective practice relevant to international social and community work.</li> <li>6. To promote skills of professional development, critical self awareness, accountable decision making, reflective and reflexive practice.</li> <li>7. To analyse models of community learning and development recognising the relevancy of service user and carer consultancy and participation.</li> <li>8. To consider models of well being and citizenship and their relevancy in global translations of human rights.</li> </ol>

- 9 Provide the opportunity to design and conduct a substantive study utilising an appropriate research methodology and associated research methods

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

By the end of this programme students should be able to :

1. Discuss theoretical underpinnings of social and community work practice.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of National Occupational Standards for UK Social Work
3. Reflect critically on legislative and policy frameworks which inform social and community work processes and practice
4. Critically analyse models and approaches which reflect contemporaneous responses to diverse communities.
5. Evaluate models of psycho-social relationship based practices, promoting capacity building and resilience in individuals and communities.
6. Critically compare welfare philosophies, ideologies, and codes of practice which inform social and community work in the UK and international contexts
8. Critically reflect on the challenges and advantages of service user and carer consultancy processes and aspects of participatory and collaborative practice
9. Demonstrate knowledge and critically evaluate strategies and responses to marginalisation and need in global and local contexts, including cultural marginalisation, dislocation and resettlement, political discrimination, child and vulnerable adult abuse and exploitation, domestic violence, substance misuse.
10. Demonstrate understanding of processes of reflective and reflexive practice both to develop critical self awareness and to enhance the professional persona.
11. Critically reflect on comparative epistemologies and methodologies relevant to social welfare research and their use and relevance in an international context.

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

- The construction of a coherent and mandatory programme with a number of interdisciplinary modules shared with the MA in Youth Work, the MSc in Advancing Practice, and the PG Cert in Domestic Violence
- A programme of structured lectures, seminars, workshop programme, group work, presentations, group and individual tutorials with e.learning support
- The researching and writing of a variety of assignments and the subsequent written and oral feedback
- Self-directed research and project work with tutorial guidance and discussion
- Consistent approach to theory as related to practice
- Case study analysis
- Contributions to teaching by service users and practitioners
- Opportunities for shared learning reflecting and acknowledging diversity in the student's knowledge and experience

***Cognitive and intellectual skills:***

- Critical thinking, analysis and synthesis in the use of established and emergent theory, and concepts, to critically analyse the theory and practice of social and community work
- Creative, imaginative and flexible

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

- The presentation, discussion and analysis of competing philosophical, political, theoretical and ideological concepts and their analysis
- The engagement of learners in discussion and analysis of key issues

<p>approaches to problem solving in relation to social and individual needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The construction of coherent and reasoned arguments and conclusions</li> <li>• Reflexive and evidence based approaches to data collection and information concerning social and community work outcomes and interventions and their impact on service users and carers.</li> <li>• Sensitivity to the values and interests of diverse others</li> </ul>	<p>and concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consistent application of UW LO policy to encourage the growth of critical analytic skills such as the ability to evaluate evidence and arguments and to recognise underpinning assumptions and judgements</li> <li>• Module assessments providing the opportunity to reflect on individual and observed practice</li> <li>• Formative and summative case study work</li> <li>• Role play and its analysis</li> <li>• The promotion of reflexivity in research and in social and community practice</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Practical skills relevant to employment:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A positive attitude to personal development through critical reflection, self evaluation, self care, and supervised practice</li> <li>• Communicate effectively through a variety of mediums and in a range of contexts</li> <li>• Interpersonal and team working skills employed to effectively collaborate with others in a range of social and community contexts</li> <li>• A reflexive practitioner approach</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills for practice taught within modules</li> <li>• The application of theory to practice, critical reflection and self evaluation in the assessments</li> <li>• The use of discussion and presentations both formatively and summatively</li> <li>• Critical analysis and reflection on own practice</li> <li>• The sharing of information in small groups and in the class through presentations and discussion</li> <li>• The use of case study material and research based assessments</li> <li>• Voluntary practice component</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Transferable/key skills:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced oral and written communication using appropriate academic conventions</li> <li>• Negotiation and interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Independence in learning, planning and time management</li> <li>• Empathy, ethical principles and practice</li> <li>• Effective use of information technology</li> <li>• Data analysis and numeracy</li> <li>• Personal reflection, self assessment and action planning</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The embedding of advanced study skills within the programme</li> <li>• The embedding of research based skills within the programme</li> <li>• Written assessment in a variety of formats including analytic and reflective essays, portfolio construction, and research based skills</li> <li>• Self management skills are developed through the meeting of assignment deadlines, contributing to group work, working with others, work experience, individualised assessments where students choose the focus and application, and the advanced independent study</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral skills are developed by peer and whole group discussion, group and individual presentations</li> <li>• Interpersonal and empathic skills, ethical principles and practice, negotiation and problem solving are embedded within the programme both as individual modules and within module assessment content</li> <li>• Information technology is used to support the programme and student learning</li> <li>• Reflective and reflexive practitioner approaches</li> </ul>
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#### 14. Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy for the course is designed to enable students to demonstrate the development of their own knowledge, skills and attitudes underpinning practice in the field of social work and to demonstrate how these can be used to underpin, and develop practice in the wider welfare context. Assessment is designed to develop reflexive practitioners who are competent to select, utilise and evaluate theoretical concepts and models and apply these creatively to analyse and solve problems in a wide variety of contexts.

A number of the assignments ask students to reflect on work based learning. Students who take up the offer of a voluntary placement will be able to reflect upon, analyse and contextualise their experience in the appropriate assignments. Alternatively, students who have experience in the field may wish to draw on this for the same purpose.

The programme does not employ e-learning as a dedicated assessment strategy. However, it is used to support student progress and enrich the learning environment. Blackboard and email are consistently used by staff to support student activities and to provide materials, on line discussion, feedback and contact. Students with additional needs find these modes of contact particularly useful.

#### *Assessment Methods mapped to Modules*

The table below shows the full range of assessment items used within the subject, by module and also shows the relative weightings of each item.

Module	Essay	Oral /poster presentati on Seminar/ Seminar paper	Report/ Case study Practical Assessm ent	Portfolio	Research Proposal and Dissertation
Percentage Weighting of Assessment					
SOWK4001	75		25 (exam)		
SOWK4002		40	60		
SOWK4003	100				
SOWK4004	100				
SOWK4008	50	10		40	

SOWK4009					100
MDVM4001	70	30		Formative learning journal	
MASH4101	100				
MSYW4006	75	25 (peer reviewed)			
Formative Placement					

### 15. Programme structures and requirements

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)
<b>Post Graduate Certificate</b>			
SOWK4002	Theories, principles and approaches in Social Work Interventions	20	M
SOWK4003	Philosophy, Values And Practice	20	M
SOWK4004	Professional Practice in Welfare Organisations	20	M
<b>Postgraduate Diploma Modules in PG Certificate Plus</b>			
SOWK4008	Transformative Social Work in International Contexts	40	M
<b>Plus one option module from following list</b>			
SOWK4001	Applied Law and Policy for Social Workers	20	O
MASH4101	Leading and Managing People	20	O
MSYW4006	Writing from Practice	20	O
MDVM4001	Theoretical Perspectives on Gender, Violence and Interpersonal Relationships	20	O
<b>MA 120 credits from above plus</b>			
Plus SOWK 4009	Dissertation	60	Mandatory

### 16. QAA Academic Infrastructure

The MA in Social Work and Community Studies is modular and part of the University of Worcester's Postgraduate Regulatory Framework. The programme is aligned to of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) at Masters level.

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
- where applicable, originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - a) to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
  - b) to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;

- a) decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
- b) the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

In addition the programme embraces the principles of good practice within the:

- The QAA Code of Practice on Placement Learning
- National Occupational Standards for Social Work
- The Subject Benchmarks for Social Work

## **17. Support for students**

Course based activities and documents:

- Two week induction programme
- Pre-course reading list
- Course handbook
- Placement Handbook
- Module outlines for each module including module code, title, level, learning outcomes, teaching activities, timetable, attendance requirements, assessments criteria and reading lists

- Opportunities for Placement
- A placement mentor
- An Applied Social Sciences Safeguarding Workshop prior to commencement of voluntary placements
- A personal tutor responsible for pastoral and academic support and guidance
- A module tutor as a first reference point for academic queries
- An 'open door' policy for access to programme manager
- Student representation on the Course Committee
- A timetabled workshop programme

Central support from university services:

***A full range of support for students is available within the University, see [www.2.worc.ac.uk/student-services](http://www.2.worc.ac.uk/student-services)***

### **18 Admissions policy, criteria and procedures**

The university is committed to widening participation to candidates from diverse backgrounds, abilities and ages.

#### **Entry Requirements:**

- An honours degree (normally a minimum of lower second class) preferably in an associated subject or relevant professional qualifications
- International students must hold a qualification equivalent to a UK first or second class honours degree
- All international students for whom English is not their first language are required to achieve IELTS 6.5 or equivalency

Candidates will normally be expected to have at least 6 months practical experience in the broad field of social and community work. Candidates who do not meet this requirement will be required to take advantage of the voluntary placement scheme which is open to all students on the programme.

Many placements will require students to have a current enhanced CRB irrespective of their client group. International equivalents will be accepted. In either case students are responsible for funding their CRB check.

Given that social and community work is emotionally as well as intellectually demanding, it is professionally and ethically important that due consideration is awarded to the readiness of the applicant to undertake these demands, candidates will be required to obtain satisfactory health clearance. Where appropriate, candidates will be invited to interview.

Students with additional needs will be provided with relevant and appropriate support and where necessary, extra support will be assessed and provided with assistance from the University's Disability and Dyslexia Service.

#### **Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L):**

Students may seek APL in accordance with the University and IHS APL procedures and within the parameters set out within the University Postgraduate Regulatory Framework  
See the APEL section of the University website: [www.worc.ac.uk/courses/4216.html](http://www.worc.ac.uk/courses/4216.html)

Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

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

- Student feedback:

- Mid and end of module evaluations
- Practice learning evaluation
- External Examiner Reports
- Student representation on course committee
- Personal tutor and module feedback
- Student Forums
- Feedback from other sources:
  - External Examiner reports
  - Annual Course Evaluation Reports
  - Periodic review and external scrutiny
  - Peer observation
  - Staff annual appraisal
  - Moderation and second marking
  - QAA and UW validation documentation
- IHS committees responsible for monitoring and evaluating quality standards:
  - Course Committee
  - Ethics Committee
  - Institute Quality Committee
  - Learning and Teaching Committee
  - Research Committee
- UW committees:
  - Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee
  - Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee

## 20 Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the [Postgraduate Regulatory Framework](#) (.pdf) which sets out the full regulations for passing modules, grading of modules, retrieving failed modules and other requirements for awards.

You will be assessed by a combination of course work, within module tests and examinations. The minimum pass mark is 50% for each module.

Institute Examination Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Scheme Examination Board considers candidates' mark profiles to make decisions about progression, awards and degree classifications as appropriate.

How your work is assessed

Each assessment item has published specific marking criteria contained in the module outline given to students at the beginning of the module. These are based on the generic assessment criteria contained within the [UW Student Handbook](#).

### 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 50% 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.
- Some modules have attendance requirements
- 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 50% 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.
- Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module, which will incur payment of the module fee.
- For full details of submission regulations see PRF.

#### **Retrieval of failure**

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance or non-submission.
- Reassessment takes place during the following semester or during the summer reassessment period at the end of the academic year.
- If following reassessment the module has been passed, the module grade will be capped at 50%.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they will have one further and final reassessment opportunity.
- A student who fails 40 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

#### **Requirements for Awards**

<b>Award</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7 SWOK 4002, 4003, 4004
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7 SWOK 4008 and 1 of the following MASH 4101, MSYW 4006, MDVM4001, SOWK 4001
Masters	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including the Dissertation

The awards of PG Cert, PG Dip or Masters may be made with Merit or Distinction.

### **21 Indicators of quality and standards**

In November 2005, the University was audited by the Quality Assurance Agency. The audit confirmed confidence in the University's management of the quality of its academic programmes and the standards of its awards. The QAA particularly commended the University's supportive ethos and range of departmental and central services provided to students and staff in support of its mission to deliver an excellent inclusive higher education. The University will be audited next in 2011.

### **22 Employability and graduate destinations**

- This course prepares individuals to work in a range of social welfare, and community occupations and contexts across the statutory, private and voluntary sectors this may include social work in some countries, however, this award does not qualify students to become 'Registered Social Workers' in the UK. The incorporation of the NOS in Social Work and practice elements within the programme will provide students with the

opportunity to work in a UK context but not as registered social workers in the statutory or voluntary sectors.

- Regular meetings are held with employers, placement providers and supervisors to ensure that student learning is relevant and appropriate to a range of occupations in the welfare sector, both in the UK and Internationally

**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 the module outlines and Section 3 of the course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.