

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE COURSES

1	Awarding institution/body University of Worcester
2	Teaching institution University of Worcester
3	Programme accredited by N/A
4	Final awards MA, PG Dip, PG Cert
5	Programme titles: Systemic Youth Work
6	Pathways available N/A
7	Mode and/or site of delivery <i>Taught programme/ UW- St John's Campus</i>
8	<p>Mode of attendance: MA/PG Dip minimum two years part time. Each module will be programmed into a 5 day block study session (3 per year part time). PG Cert minimum 1 years part time (3 modules in block study sessions).</p>
9	UCAS Code N/A
10	<p>Subject /Professional Benchmark statements QAA Youth and Community Work (2009) QAA Masters degrees in Business and Management. (2007)</p>
11	<p>Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision November 2009/updated Jan 2011</p>
12	<p>Educational aims of the programme</p> <p>The MA in Systemic Youth Work will enable experienced practitioners engaged in the management and delivery of services to gain the specialised knowledge and understanding required for leading complex inter-professional work with young people and their communities.</p> <p>Systemic Youth Work is an integrated approach to working with young people being developed by the youth and community work team at the University of Worcester.</p> <p><u>Basic Philosophy</u></p> <p>A systemic perspective gives attention to the web of relationships in which young people's lives are embedded – personal, cultural, political and economic. A systemic approach to work with young people develops within the context of their families and communities and is concerned for young people's relationship to the wider social and global environment. These are the contexts that impact on young people's lives and which in turn young people's activities have consequence. Systemic Youth Work explores how the core principles and methodologies of traditional Youth Work practices can be adapted to respond to the demands made by current social policy agendas and emerging issues such as globalisation and climate change. Core systemic ideas of connectivity, reciprocity, diversity and sustainability will inform the development of professional practice that enhances young people's confidence, resilience and adaptability and enables them to meet current and emerging challenges.</p>

The aim of this programme is to develop the regional workforce by providing the range of multi-dimensional skills and knowledge that workers need in order to offer professional leadership in work with young people within an inter-disciplinary context. It will provide space for workers to reflect and think about the changes taking place in children and young people's services and what it means for them.

More specifically the programme aims to enable students to:

1. Develop a critical understanding of systemic ideas and use them to promote the distinctive principles and methodologies of Youth Work within inter-professional working contexts.
2. Enhance their personal and professional development so as to be able to work with self direction and originality; contributing to improved quality of professional leadership in young people's services.
3. Develop skills as reflective and reflexive practitioners; advancing understanding of the impact they have in their personal and professional relationships.
4. Facilitate collective engagement with issues of social justice and create open and inclusive spaces for supporting change and development in young people
5. Develop a strong sense of professional identity and enhance the role of professional leadership in work with young people.
6. Contribute new knowledge to the field through research and the development of evidence based practice

13 Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Advanced subject specific knowledge and understanding

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

1. Conceptualise systemic youth work as a means of building resilience and adaptability in young people and their communities
2. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the links between personal, local and global issues.
3. Assess the impact of current social policy discourses on the development of professional practice with young people.
4. Apply key systemic concepts in defining a holistic approach to working with and managing services for young people and their communities.
5. Integrate theories of power in relation to establishing inclusive responses to the needs, rights, responsibilities and aspirations of young people.

Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

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

1. Reflect critically on how issues of social justice and sustainability are promoted within their work with young people and their communities.
2. Make informed judgements on complex ethical and professional issues in relation to the contested nature of Youth Work and act appropriately.
3. Design creative and innovative interventions across a range of practice settings in response to the identified needs of young people and their communities.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking in the analysis and interpretation of data from research and secondary sources.
5. Develop reflexivity and the ability to use their knowledge and understanding critically to locate and justify a personal position on a contested subject.

Practical Skills

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

1. Communicate effectively to articulate the distinctive contribution of a Youth Work approach to a specialist and non-specialist audience using written, visual, electronic and oral media.
2. Build and sustain effective alliances and diverse communities of practice.
3. Design strategies to support personal and professional change and development in self and others.
4. Demonstrate leadership and management skills in the context of working with multi-professional teams.
5. Interpret knowledge emerging from practice and disseminate to different audiences using appropriate style and conventions.

Transferable skills

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

1. Demonstrate scholarship in constructing reasoned and coherent arguments on the basis of evidence and experience of practice and research.
2. Demonstrate an ability to conduct a substantive study utilising appropriate research methodology to collect and analyse and interpret data generated from research.
3. Show substantial autonomy and self direction in their learning and in the

planning and implementation of tasks in their professional practice.

4. Be creative in the use of information and communication technologies to retrieve, communicate and evaluate information.
5. Develop a positive attitude and commitment to continuing personal and professional development.

Teaching and Assessment methods

The learning outcomes outlined above, define the masters award. On completion of the PG Dip, students will meet all the specified learning outcomes but will not be expected to demonstrate the level of research competencies, independent study skills or subject specialism that would be gained from completing the dissertation module. The PG cert is geared to facilitating personal and professional development of students. Students will demonstrate the subject specific knowledge needed to apply a systemic framework in their practice and will develop the level of skills in other areas required to prepare them for further study at masters level.

The teaching, learning and assessment strategy aims to be consistent with the systemic underpinning of the programme in that it seeks to adopt a strengths based approach which values and affirms the experience that participants bring. In this way it communicates a clear intention to make students true participants in the learning and teaching process and to promote the systemic values of curiosity, connectivity, reciprocity and diversity. Furthermore, it is designed to offer a challenging learning experience within an independent learning culture. It aims to develop practitioners who are able to reflect on current and prior experience to integrate theory and practice. There will be opportunity for participants to reflect on and share their knowledge, experience and practice through facilitated interaction with their peers.

An integrated teaching and assessment strategy will be adopted which combines taught elements with inquiry based assessments. The taught elements will be timetabled in intensive teaching blocks where each module will be delivered over a one week period – Monday to Friday. Consequently, students will attend three study blocks a year over a two year period. The programme offers a flexible learning option which allows students a maximum of six years part-time to complete their study. This structure for delivery was chosen as a result of feedback from workers in the field who indicated that it was the most accessible format. The intensive block design for delivery of the taught element of the programme enhances opportunities for widening participation; it does however present a challenge in terms of pacing and allowing time for the integration of theory and practice. Assessments have therefore been designed to complement the taught element, with extensive use made of inquiry based, reflective and reflexive summative assessments which maximise the use of different media and communication technologies for example, use of pebblepad e-portfolio.

The taught part of the course will primarily consist of short lecture inputs, experiential workshops, cases studies and discussion which will be tutor led. Students will be expected to contribute to teaching and learning through paper presentations and seminars. Both tutor and student led inputs will be complemented by guest/ visiting speakers who will offer additional expertise from the field.

Formative assessment will be structured to give feedback to students from module tutors. Further structures for formal and formative assessment will include

opportunities for peer feedback and review.

Students will be able to prepare for each teaching block through essential reading identified in module guides in advance of the start of the module, with further selected reading available through pebblepad.

Each student will be allocated a personal tutor who will be available to offer learning support within individual tutorials and a supervisor will be allocated to students to support them in their dissertation.

A detailed mapping of the learning outcomes for the programme against the modules and the examples of teaching, learning and assessment methods used is included in the course handbook.

14 Assessment Strategy

Assessment will be consistent with the systemic principles which are central to the programme in adopting a holistic approach which values the personal and professional experiences of students. It will reflect the range of advanced practical skills required by practitioners whilst promoting the reflection, reflexivity and critical thinking needed for academic study at masters level. The assessment strategy is geared towards enhancing the student experience and will be aligned to the [University's Assessment Policy](#) in the following ways :

- Provision of a range of assessment methods – including essays, reports, reflective journals, e-portfolios, research projects, individual and group presentations. (a grid showing how assessment methods are mapped to modules is included in the course handbook)
- High quality feedback will be provided to provide support for performance enhancement
- All stated learning outcomes for the module and the programme will be summatively assessed against published UW M level grade descriptors which will be included in the module guides.
- Each module will have a balance of formative and summative assessments appropriate to the module and designed to measure the full range of competencies required.
- Marking will be anonymous where possible
- Internal and external moderation will be consistent with policies guidelines

The assessment activity will be appropriate for the learning outcomes to be tested. Every module will be assessed through one or more assessment activity and where appropriate, in keeping with good practice, formative activities in the module prepare students for the summative assessments.

Course teams are encouraged to employ a variety of different and innovative assessment activities. Staff are mindful of the need to embrace equal opportunities

and make every effort to ensure that assessment activities do not unnecessarily disadvantage some students.

In modules where there is more than one assessment item, marks will normally be awarded by aggregating marks to gain a weighted average grade. Students will pass the module if they have gained a pass in the module assessments overall. The module outline will include details of the individual assessment types, weighting, length and the learning outcomes assessed by each activity. Deadlines for submission will be clearly stated. Assessment criteria for each item will indicate to students the methods used to determine final grades for individual assessments.

Wherever appropriate the anonymity of students is maintained for marking and moderating purposes, however on a vocationally focused programme it is often important to address concerns raised by assignment responses with the student concerned.

A variety of methods of assessment are used, both formative and summative, that enable students to demonstrate competence in a range of skills required both in higher education and in the workplace, including simulated practice, videos, case studies, individual and group presentations, intervention plans, personal development plans and various other written assessments including essays, reflective writing, reports. The assessments selected promote reflection and learning that is not simply reliant on memory and recall of information. The assessments relate specifically to identified learning outcomes for modules (UW Learning Outcomes Guidance, 2007).

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](#).

15 Programme structures and requirements

AWARD MAP FOR A POSTGRADUATE AWARD

Title: MA Systemic Youth Work

Year: 2009/10

Last Updated: Nov 2009

	LEVEL 7		Status(M) Mandatory, (O) Optional (X) not available		
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	MA	DG Dip	PG Cert
MSYW 4001	Transformative Learning	20	M	M	M
MSYW 4002	Inter-professional Management and Leadership	20	M	M	M
MSYW 4003	Action Research	20	M	M	O
MSYW 4004	Managing Diversity	20	M	M	O
MSYW 4005	Writing From Practice	20	O	O	O
MYSW 4006	Supervision	20	O	O	O
MYSW 4007	Sustainable Futures	20	M	M	O
MYSW 4008	Dissertation	60	M	X	X

Requirements at Level 7

For the MA Award

Students must take the five Mandatory modules and the 60 credit Dissertation Module **plus** one Optional module from those listed above.

For The PG Dip Award

Students must take the five 20 credit Mandatory modules **plus** one Optional module from those listed above.

For the PG Cert Award

Students must take the two 20 credit Mandatory modules **plus** one Optional module from those listed above

16 QAA Academic Infrastructure

The programme is aligned with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ 2008). It meets the HE qualifications descriptors at level 7 and the generic statement of outcomes.

A number of key documents have been used as a source of reference to inform his programme:

1. The QAA draft consultation document 'Masters Degree Characteristics'
2. QAA Youth And Community Benchmark Statement (2009)
3. QAA Masters degrees in Business and Management Benchmark statements (2007)
4. University of Worcester curriculum design policy

The Benchmark Statement for Youth and Community Work (2009) was used as a source of reference to articulate the subject specific and generic learning outcomes for the programme. The Benchmark Statement is primarily designed for the undergraduate subject area and qualifications; it does however offer some guidance on integrated masters awards.

The Subject Benchmark Statements were also used to reflect on the defining principles of the subject area identified in section two. These principles have been incorporated into the programme, in particular :

- A focus on work with young people in the context of wider social networks
- The diverse and contested nature of Youth Work
- A commitment to informal and collaborative learning
- Awareness of professional practice in the context of unequal power relationships
- The demand for strong ethical standings.

The QAA Benchmark statements for masters degrees in Business and Management (2007) were used to describe the professional leadership aspects of the programme. The statements define generalist (type 3) masters degrees where skills in business and management are used to enhance the employability of the first discipline. For example :

Graduates will have been able to ground their new knowledge within the base of their professional experience. They will be able to reflect on and learn from that prior experience and thus be able to integrate new knowledge with past experience and apply it to new situations. They will be able to challenge preconceptions and to remove subject and functional boundaries so as to handle complex situations holistically. (pg 4)

The Youth and Community benchmark statements were used to articulate the attributes and capabilities students require in relation to the subject area. The masters degree Benchmark Statement in Business and Management were used to locate working with young people in the context of management and professional leadership.

17 Support for students

The University of Worcester is fully committed to ensuring equal opportunities. The university has an Equal Opportunities Policy, together with equality schemes and action plans promoting equality in relation to race, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation. Progress in implementation is monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee.

The University is committed to opening up learning opportunities to all sections of the community. The University will work to increase the opportunities for mature students, particularly working adults, and for those without traditional entry qualifications. It recognises that the provision of equal opportunity must also encompass learning and teaching, curriculum issues and the manner in which staff and students are treated inside the institution. The programme is structure accordingly to enable access and thus widen participation.

All students will be given appropriate support needed for them to get the most out of their study. A full day induction is provide at the start of Years one and two to familiarise students with the university and its IT and learning support facilities and virtual learning environments. The Department of Information and Learning Services (ILS) supports students and staff using library, IT and media services. Advisors are available to provide training and instruction for individuals and groups. In addition each student will have access to:

- an identified personal tutor who will offer individual tutorials for personal and academic support.
- a research supervisor for their dissertations.
- group tutorials for course review..
- course handbook and module guides which will clarify regulations and course requirements.
- Pebblepad as a virtual learning environment.

18 Admissions policy, criteria and procedures

This course is seeking to recruit experienced and qualified practitioners who work in or manage services for young people and their communities. We encourage applications from students with a diverse range of backgrounds and professional disciplines –including Youth and Community Work, Playwork, Connexions, Youth Offending, Social Work, Health and Education - who are keen to develop an inter-professional dialogue.

The course team is committed to the widening participation agenda and strives to provide equal opportunities to all students and to respond to specific need when appropriate. All students are encouraged to declare any individual learning needs in order that appropriate support can be identified at both course and institutional level.

University Of Worcester and Students with Disabilities

University Of Worcester aims to create an environment which enables students with disabilities to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of student life. Policies and

initiatives are in place, which aim to foster equal opportunities in all areas of University life. A flexible approach to teaching, learning and assessment, assists this process.

Students who are diagnosed with dyslexia or a similar condition, may be eligible to receive a Disability Support Allowance. Information is available from the Disability Support Service in Woodbury. The service will also advise about software support, study skills and allowance should be made for dyslexia. In the first instance, students should make an enquiry at the Information Desk in Student Services, although if you indicated at the application stage that you have a disability, the Disability Support Service should have already been in touch.

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

Entry requirements

1. A good (first or second class) honours degree in a relevant subject or a B.Phil plus at least one year's professional experience in working with young people – for example in Youth and Community Work, Education, Connexions, Social Work, Youth Offending, Play Work or Health Promotion

Or

2. At least three years experience in working with young people in a youth work related field and a relevant professional qualification (for example JNC, GSCC, PCEP (YJ), QTS) and evidence of ongoing professional development.

All international students whose first language is not English are required to achieve IELTS 6.5 or equivalent.

Admissions procedures

All applicants who meet the entry criteria will be invited for interview. The interview process will be a combination of individual and group interview as appropriate. Overseas candidates who cannot attend interview will be offered a telephone interview.

Admissions/selection criteria

This programme does not require a work based placement but due to its applied nature, applicants will need to demonstrate current or recent active involvement in working in or managing services for young people. Additionally, applicants will be expected to demonstrate an ability to complete a programme of study at M level, which will include a reflective understanding of the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for work with young people and an ability to articulate a professional identity in relation to working with young people. Access to PC and broadband will be a requirement of the course.

Mature Students

UW values diversity in its student body and students over the age of 21 are very welcome. If you fulfil the standard entry requirements as detailed above, please apply through the Registry Admissions Office. 01905 855111

Accreditation of Prior Learning.

Students may be admitted with advanced standing through the recognition of credit, or the accreditation of experiential or certificated learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for accreditation of prior learning where there is evidence of a close match between previous learning and the learning outcomes and content of the modules which exemption is claimed against.

Further information can be found in the [University Policy on APL and APEL \(.doc\)](#)

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

Annual monitoring report

Annual monitoring provides the institution and the Institute with the evidence it requires to enable it to discharge its responsibility for the standard of each award made in its name, and to be assured that the quality of education provided for students is at least satisfactory or better.

External examiner report

External examiners have an important role within the quality assurance mechanisms in assuring comparability of academic standards outside and within the University and ensuring the fairness of the operation and assessment of courses. Opportunities will be provided for External Examiners to meet with students to gain insight into student views and experience.

Student evaluation of modules

At any point during the module you will have the opportunity to feedback to your module tutors. At the end of the module you will be asked to formally feedback your comments (usually via a questionnaire). This feedback is anonymous and is intended to give your tutors an insight into how to make improvements in the future to that module or their individual 'teaching' style. The detail of your comments is read only by your tutor, who then reports your views, in general terms to the Course Manager.

Course committees

The committee comprises the student representatives, course tutors and ILS staff from the University of Worcester. Meetings take place once per semester. An agenda will be issued in advance so that representatives can canvass opinion. The record of the meeting will be kept and will feed into the annual monitoring process, so that your views are fed up through the University of Worcester to Academic Board.

Staff scholarly activity

Staff Participation in research informed teaching and learning, scholarly activity and staff development – All staff within the Institute engage with scholarly activity as a means to increase their knowledge in his/her discipline or related disciplines. This is done in order to inform and enlighten the tutors' teaching but also adds to the body of knowledge within the wider academic community.

Peer observation of teaching

Peer observation of teaching is used within the institute to encourage the sharing of good practice and as a developmental tool to enhance the quality of teaching and learning

20 Regulation of assessment

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

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7
Masters (MA/MSc/MBA/MTL)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including a minimum of 40 credits from 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 institution 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.

Youth Work is a new area of study within the Institute. This masters programme builds on the undergraduate programmes in youth and community services which have been successfully introduced and positively reviewed as evidenced by external examiners reports and student evaluations.

Further indicators of quality are:

- The diverse professional experience of the programme staff team who are research active
- The programme has been developed in consultation with fieldworkers and employers

22 Career Opportunities & Links with Employers

This programme has been developed in consultation with workers and employers from the field. The Consultative Committee is in place to ensure that the programme remains relevant in a changing environment. The Committee will comprise of staff and student representatives of the programme and include nominated fieldworkers, training officers and employers who represent groups from which students are drawn.

The sector working with young people is undergoing a sustained period of change in response to the Children's Act 2004 and the Every Child Matters Change for Children Agenda. Employers increasingly require skilled competent staff able to work flexibly while maintaining professional integrity and discipline. At the same time interdisciplinary and inter-agency working has become more prevalent.

This programme will enhance employability by:

1. Preparing workers for management of young people's services and the

changing context in which they operate by providing the advanced interdisciplinary and professional leadership skills needed in the current context.

2. Providing post graduate qualification for experienced workers to maintain academic differentiation.
3. Preparing students for research or further study in the area.
4. Offering access to modules for CPD.

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 study guide and 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.

Key sources of information about the Course can be found in:
Course Handbook

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