

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
PGCert Leading Early Years Practice

1	Awarding institution/body University of Worcester
2	Teaching institution University of Worcester
3	Programme accredited by not applicable
4	Final award PGCert
5	Programme title PGCert Leading Early Years Practice
6	Pathways available not applicable
7	Mode and/or site of delivery University of Worcester; and/or accredited sites
8	Mode of attendance Full time and Part time
9	UCAS Code: not applicable
10	Subject Benchmark statement N/A
11	Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision December 2010

12 Educational aims of the programme

The award is part of the Postgraduate Education Programme (PEP). The programme aims to develop rigorous professional practice in ways which will have impact on the workplace and on the achievement of all learners in that context. It has been designed to provide opportunities for course participants to pursue reflective and systematic enquiry which will enable them to extend their capacity for critical analysis, reflection and autonomous action, underpinned by a high level of professional knowledge, skills and understanding.

The overall aims of the programme are to :

1. provide opportunities for critical reflection upon processes involved in developing practice in an early childhood context;
2. promote the development of skills in communicating, collaborating and working effectively with others;
3. encourage critical understanding relevant to parent partnership and multi-professional working thus enhancing the role of the professional in co-ordinating and facilitating collaborative support for children;
4. promote critical reflection and self evaluation for professional and organisational quality and improvement;
5. engage in a research-based approach to professional and organisational development recognising and promoting the relationship between theory and practice;
6. enhance professional and leadership skills by promoting knowledge and understanding in relation to the application of skills in accordance with relevant professional standards, curriculum guidance and statutory requirements.

13 Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

On completion of the course the student will be able to:

- i. articulate and review their own values, beliefs and actions in relation to early years practice in the workplace;
- ii. further develop skills in communicating, collaborating and working effectively with others in the dynamics of an early childhood environment;
- iii. engage in creative ways of thinking and apply this to challenges in practice;
- iv. critique the pedagogic model of the cyclical process of experience, reflection and analysis within the early childhood domain and benefit from the opportunity to apply their studies in a coherent and relevant manner;
- v. pursue reflective and systematic enquiry of multi-agency issues and challenge current practice where appropriate;
- vi. select, apply and evaluate research techniques to further their own professional practice and skill development and thus facilitate professional action and organisational improvement ;
- vii. evaluate and reflect upon their personal and professional responses to critical incidents thus continuing to develop as a critically reflective early childhood advocate;
- viii. demonstrate systematic understanding and knowledge relevant to practitioners leading the development of effective practice within early childhood settings.

14 Assessment Strategy

Although the PEP structure is incremental, moving from a Postgraduate Certificate through a Postgraduate Diploma to a Master's degree, all of the assessment criteria are at 'M' level. In order to ensure consistency in the high standards associated with 'M' level work this generic set of criteria is based on the dimensions of the professional models which underpin the Programme. In addition the educational aims of the Programme are supported by this strategy in as much as it enables the students to act as autonomous learners, adopting a research-based approach to personal and organisational development in order to enhance professional practice within a clear framework of the participants' own professional values.

The key features of the Postgraduate Education Programme assessment strategy are that it:

- i. enables course participants to direct their own learning efficiently and effectively towards a given purpose;
- ii. is aware that course participants have unique goals and interests and recognises that these have implications for the teaching and learning process;
- iii. acknowledges that learning occurs in a particular social, cultural and political context and that this affects what is learned and the ways in which it is learned;
- iv. has a commitment to facilitate course participant learning through an individual course participant-centred approach as well as a group-centred approach with a strong commitment to group learning, group processes, and dissemination;
- v. includes specific learning outcomes as well as a generic set of criteria for all modules;
- vi. will be systematically monitored and reviewed in relation to its principles and procedures and its effectiveness as a formative and summative function.

Course Specific Assessment Strategies

- A range of both formative and summative assessments is used in the course with

grades being awarded for performance of the latter. Summative assessments relate to the respective intended module learning outcomes and collectively to the intended course learning outcomes.

- Summative assessment methods include reflective essays linked to collaborative working, workplace experience and personal development testing academic skills and knowledge and the application of theory to practice
- The minimum pass mark is 50% for every module.
- Students must meet the assessment criteria for a pass in the three modules to achieve the full award PG Cert Early Years Practice
- A board of examiners will meet each semester.
- Students will be required to demonstrate compliance with university ethical procedures and course supplementary guidance and data collection for module assessment.

Mandatory Modules

- MEDD4157 Pedagogy, Policy and Practice in the Early Years
- MEDD4158 Communication and Collaboration in Leading Early Years Practice
- MEDD4159 Effective Early Years Practice and Pedagogy

	Pedagogy, Policy and Practice in the Early Years	Communication and Collaboration in Leading Early Years Practice	Effective Early Years Practice and Pedagogy
Course aims	1-6	1-6	1-6
Course Learning Outcomes	i-viii	i-viii	i-viii
Assessment Type	Reflective Journal 3500 words 100%	Seminar Paper 2500 words 80% Discussion of Content and responses 1,000 words 20%	Reflective Essay 3500 words 100%

15 Programme structures and requirements

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Level 7)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Prerequisites (Module Code required)
MEDD4157	Pedagogy, Policy and Practice in the Early Years	20	M	N/A
MEDD4158	Communication and Collaboration in Leading Early Years Practice	20	M	N/A

MEDD4159	Effective Early Years Practice and Pedagogy	20	M	N/A
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PG Certificate Requirements

Students undertaking the Postgraduate Certificate must successfully complete the three mandatory modules, amounting to 60 credits in total.

Within the MA Early Childhood these modules can be taken singly, with optional status.

16 Academic Infrastructure

As propounded by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), both the module specific and the generic learning outcomes of the PEP draw on the principles of 'originality in the application of knowledge' and an understanding of 'how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.' This is assured via the centrality of the practitioner researcher to the Programme. Concomitant with this the 'Sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments' demanded by FHEQ is supported by the Programme's emphasis upon experiential learning and transpersonal reflection.

Further to the above and in accordance with the FHEQ (QAA 2001), at post graduate level students will have begun to acquire:

- i. A systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights.
- ii. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.
- iii. 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.
- iv. A conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and to critically evaluate methodologies.

Approaches to learning and teaching support the achievement of the learning outcomes of the Programme through the addressing in all modules of the cyclical process of experience, reflection, analysis, and the application of principles to one's own context. Further to this and in order to develop and sustain a critical form of educational practice within the Programme, each of the modules employs learning processes through which course participants are encouraged to analyse principles and procedures as active practitioner researchers.

Newly approved QAA subject benchmarks have underpinned the course aims and Learning Outcomes

17 Support for students

- Induction for the PG Cert student occurs within the first module of the programme. There is also an induction to PEP which is offered to all students and is organised centrally by the university.
- In addition Information Learning Services (Library, Media, Print and ICT) provides induction sessions both independent of, and in conjunction with, specific modules delivered by the programme.

- All students receive individual tutor guidance when engaging in independent study work.
- Tutorial support is also provided as part of the delivery of all taught modules in the programme.
- Electronic versions of the PEP student handbook and the University of Worcester student guide are all updated annually.
- At the beginning of all modules students receive a module study guide identifying specific learning outcomes, assessment items and other relevant information pertaining to the module.
- Blackboard** provides students with electronic means of accessing course information and communicating with peers and teaching staff.
- Study skills support is available on request to all students at UW, including those engaged in postgraduate studies.
- During modules, ongoing evaluation of student experience is considered and at the end of each module formal evaluative evidence is collected and considered during the Institutional mechanism of Course Committee.
- Socrates Erasmus funding and Comenius projects provide opportunities for study in Europe. These opportunities are only available to practising teachers.

18 Admissions policy, criteria and procedures

The PGCert is open to BA Early Childhood Honours Degree Graduates, EYPS and Newly Qualified QTS Early Years and persons in a position aspiring to leadership role in Early Childhood.

This PEP programme is open to bachelor degree graduates or the equivalent who are qualified teachers, or others who carry a professional responsibility for teaching and learning 0-5 YEARS. The University will seek evidence of personal professional experiences that provide an indication of ability to meet the demands of the programme.

Normally applicants should be in-post. However, applications will be considered from those who are planning to resume their career. Such applicants will be supported in the undertaking of all necessary workplace based/focused tasks and assignments.

In the exceptional circumstance that a student is not in employment in an early years setting and need to gain access for research purposes, the established procedures for obtaining CRB clearance, letters of introduction and ethical procedures of the University will be followed.

In keeping with University policy on widening participation and diversity the programme encourages and welcomes the contribution of older learners and people from the widest range of social, economic and cultural backgrounds. The Institute is committed to developing understanding and practices that challenge stereotypes and promote equity in order to meet

the individual needs of students.

The admission of course members to the programme will be governed by the normal entry requirements for an award at M level. Course members should normally:-

- a) be the holder of a bachelor's degree or equivalent;
- b) hold an appropriate professional qualification (e.g. QTS/QTLS) or have experience which demonstrates they possess appropriate knowledge and skills.

The normal arrangements for APL apply. Advanced standing is available for those in possession of qualifications granted in the last five years.

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

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

- The annual monitoring report reviews the quality of the Programme and provides action points emerging from the analysis of data provided by students, staff and external examiners.
- External examiner reports feed into the annual monitoring report and serve as indicators for areas where staff development will be of benefit to the Programme.
- Each module provides opportunities for student evaluation.
- The PEP committee for staff and students considers feedback from all participants. It also serves as a forum for identifying important issues which are likely to impact upon the Programme.
- Appraisals of staff and peer assessment of teaching provide important means of updating and monitoring developments in teaching and learning.
- PEP staff are all involved in either research or scholarly activity which impacts upon teaching and learning issues in the Programme and ensures that teaching and learning issues at Master's level are addressed in an appropriately challenging and innovative manner.

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

Over the last three years the two external examiners representing the Postgraduate Education Programme award have confirmed that the marking of student work was comparable to standards elsewhere at this level and that the standards set for the awards are appropriate for qualifications at Master's level. One of the external examiners stressed that, 'the aims and outcomes (of PEP) are relevant to the requirements of TDA Postgraduate Professional Development and the needs of teachers.' Both of the external examiners agreed that the standard achieved by students is appropriate to the level of the award to which the programme leads and that they are commensurate with those achieved by peers on comparable courses.

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.

22 Career Opportunities & Links with Employers

The educational aims of the PEP centre on the enhancement of professional practice and provide students, where appropriate, opportunities for career moves within and beyond their organizations.

Career opportunities for successful students include them becoming; mentors for practitioners in any early years setting (0-5 years), part of the wider Local Authority Children's Services workforce contributing to the creation of a Regional Graduate Leader network and in the wider workforce for Children's Services.

The head of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) chairs a steering group consisting of teachers, LA representatives and others involved in CPD six times a year. This provides important links with the professional community and ensures that the PEP is involved in the promotion and development of significant initiatives.

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.