

**Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in Social Work with Children and Young People, their Families and Carers**  
**For students entering Part 3 in 2008**

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University Of Reading
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Social Policy and Administration and Social Work
Faculty:	Faculty of Social Sciences
Programme length:	Minimum 24 months
Date of specification:	28 <sup>th</sup> March 2007
Programme Director:	Lidija Godina
Programme Adviser:	Dr Steve Farnfield
Board of Studies:	Postgraduate PQ and Social Work
Accreditation:	General Social Care Council

**Summary of programme aims**

This programme aims to equip experienced social workers working with children, their families and carers with a systematic understanding of knowledge and skills needed for competent practice in an interdisciplinary arena of service provision with a particular emphasis on meeting the needs of service users associated with complex decision making and high levels of professional responsibility (*The Framework, para 20*). Drawing from the NOS for Social Work, Common Core of Skills and Knowledge, NOS for child care at PQ level and National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services practitioners will be enabled to demonstrate a substantially enhanced level of competence and management of risk whilst fostering principles outlined in the GSCC Code of Practice. Particular emphasis will be given to focusing on improving outcomes for children and young people by ensuring that they are healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being (DoH 2004).

<b>Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work with Children and Young People and their Families and Carers</b> <i>120 Credits</i>					
	<b>Required Module</b>  Forensic Work with Children and Families <i>20 Credits</i>	<b>Required Module</b>  Drug and Alcohol Abuse <i>20 Credits</i>	<b>Required Module</b>  Contemporary Social Work and Social Care <i>20 Credits</i>	<b>Required Module</b>  Research Methods for Social Work <i>20 Credits</i>	<b>Option from Other Specialisms or Optional Module from Social Work with Children Specialism</b> <i>20 Credits</i>
	<b>Required Module</b> Higher Specialist Practice – <i>20 Credits</i>				

## Transferable skills

Students will be qualified social workers with a wide range of skills and learning needs that will be individually identified and further developed to a higher level. These skills will be in keeping with the University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning and will include educational and research skills, interpersonal, leadership, collaborative working, reflection in practice and critical analysis. Students will also have the opportunity to further extend their skills to career management, written and oral communication, information management, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology. It is expected that students will be able to transfer these skills to their practice setting.

## Programme content

The programme will consist of 6 modules, 3 of which will be a compulsory element of the Higher Specialist award, 2 will be compulsory for the specialism, and 1 module will be an option drawn from the optional module offered within this specialism, or from other two specialisms, or APL from other courses. (*See Appendix 1, Table 3*). This will allow students to build their knowledge and skills according to their own chosen career pathway (*The Framework, para 65*).

The modules will be delivered over the period of two academic years. However, in keeping with the GSCC commitment to offer flexible training, the students will be able to access those modules at their own pace on condition that the whole award is completed within 5 years.

### Compulsory modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
HCMQ01	Higher Specialist Practice	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ02	Contemporary Social Work	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ03	Research Methods for Social Care	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ04	Forensic Work with Children and Families for Health and Social Care Professionals	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ05	Drug and Alcohol Misuse	20	<i>M</i>

### Optional Modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
HCMQ06	Assessment and Intervention Using an Attachment Perspective	20	<i>M</i>
HC3Q07	Infant and Young Child Observation	20	<i>M</i>
	<b>Also see modules in other specialisms.</b>	20	<i>M</i>

## Progression requirements

To complete the Award all academic modules must be passed at 50%. This will include the specified compulsory modules together with the chosen option. APL may be available and will be assessed on an individual basis. For further information see **Appendix 5**.

The expectation is that students will attend this programme on a part-time basis and complete the award in a minimum of 2 years, but no more than 5.

On successful completion of 6 modules, students are eligible to receive the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work with Children and Young People, their Families and Carers. Academic progression to full Masters Award is available in accordance with QAA procedures.

On leaving the programme all students will be given a full transcript showing modules passed and credit acquired. This will also apply to students who leave the course before completing the full award (*See Appendix 9*).

Students enrolled on the Higher Specialist Awards, but who discontinue their study after completing 60 credits will be able to acquire the *Postgraduate Certificate in Health and Social Care (Children, Young People, their Families and Carers)*.

In keeping with the GSCC rules and requirements when candidate's behaviour is confirmed to be damaging or dangerous either to service users, other candidates, or programme providers, or whose behaviour creates unacceptable risk for themselves or others the programmes will follow clearly defined procedures for termination of training. (*See Appendix 9*). Those procedures will be updated as soon as the GSCC delivers the forthcoming guidance about suitability.

### **Summary of teaching and assessment**

In order to meet the needs of experienced practitioners who have different expertise and expectations and who bring with them diverse range of skills and knowledge, the programme team is committed to selecting teaching and learning methods which will promote continuity of learning between the workplace and university. This will be achieved through a close working relationship with appropriately qualified practice assessors as well as through a wide range of teaching methods such as guided discussion, seminars, problem and enquiry based learning, workshops, simulation and role play, work and web based learning. Stimulating learning environment will be further enhanced by regular contribution of service users to the delivery of high specialist modules and assessment of practice.

Agencies will be required to countersign a Learning Contract for each candidate that includes a commitment to allow time to attend the University, study days and work based learning.

The assessment tasks are varied and will reflect the different subject matter being learnt in each module. Every assessment task will require from students to provide evidence of a systematic understanding of knowledge, critical awareness of current issues and new insights that are informed by current research. They will be also expected to demonstrate professional competence in their related area of work whilst showing self direction and originality in tackling and solving problems.

Criteria by which the postgraduate awards will be judged are as follows:

#### ***Distinction***

A weighted average mark of 70 or more over 120 credits AND no mark below 40.

OR

A weighted average mark of 66 or more over 120 credits AND a mark of 70 or more in 60 credits AND no mark below 40.

***Merit***

A weighted average mark of 60 or more over 120 credits AND no mark below 40.

OR

A weighted average mark of 58 or more over 120 credits AND a mark of 60 or more in 60 credits AND no mark below 40.

***Passed***

A weighted average mark of 50 or more over 120 credits AND no significant or absolute weakness (i.e. no mark below 40).

OR

A weighted average mark of 48 or more over 120 credits AND a mark of 50 or more in 60 credits AND no significant or absolute weakness (i.e. no mark below 40).

***Failed***

A performance which fails to fulfil the criteria for the above classifications.

**Postgraduate Certificate** will have **pass** or **fail** categories only.

***Passed***

A weighted average mark of 50 or more over 60 credits AND no significant or absolute weakness (i.e. no mark below 40)

OR

A weighted average mark of 48 or more over 60 credits AND a mark of 50 or more in 30 credits AND no significant or absolute weakness (no mark below 40).

***Failed***

A performance which fails to fulfil the criteria for the above classification.

**Admission requirements**

It will be necessary for all applicants to provide evidence of prior learning to degree level or the equivalent. Entrants to programmes at *higher specialist level* are required to have obtained a professional qualification in Social Work and will normally have completed a post-qualifying award at specialist level. For further information regarding selection procedures please see ***Appendix 6***.

Experienced practitioners may be able to benefit from AP[E]L opportunities outlined in ***Appendix 5***. Qualifications of applicants from abroad or applicants who hold different professional qualification will be assessed on an individual basis.

Service users and carers or other individuals actively involved in social care will be encouraged to access relevant modules. In the same fashion as all applicants they will be asked to provide evidence of their ability to study at M level.

Admissions Tutor: Lidija Godina

**Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. A range of appropriate professional journals are available at the Bulmershe Library.

Students will also have access to 'Blackboard', a managed learning environment, which offers a web based learning resource. This will be utilised to support learning on all modules and promote support and communication between students, and university staff. Interactive white boards are used in the classroom environment to offer innovative approaches to learning and teaching.

Personal tutors, the counselling service, the University's disability advisors, study advisors, the Students' Union and careers advisory service provide student guidance and welfare support.

### **Career prospects**

Evidence of continuing professional development is a requirement for the renewal of professional registration for qualified social workers. It is anticipated that PQ awards will provide a structured framework for ongoing professional development of social workers that will be beneficial for career progression.

Practitioners who have completed Higher Specialist Award and have the *'ability to lead the further growth and development of the social work profession, drawing on in-depth knowledge of a specialist area of work and experience of conducting research and applying research to practice'* might wish to consider continuing their professional development through Advanced PQ Award (*The Framework, para 52*).

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

There are no formal arrangements for international exchange at this moment in time.

Given that workplace learning and workplace assessment are an integral part of PQ awards all students are expected to work within the context of children, young people, their families and/or carers statutory or voluntary service provision. Building on the ongoing partnership with local agencies the programme has formalised structures that will support workplace learning. For more information please see *Appendix 7*.

### **Educational aims of the programme**

This programme is intended to develop informed and critical practitioners who will be committed to the improvement of social work standards. Continuing academic and professional development will be promoted to enable students to attain higher-level research skills combined with the knowledge required for achieving outcomes for a range of complex needs of children, young people and their families and carers with a particular focus on improving outcomes for children by ensuring that they are healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being (DoH 2004). The programme will expect students to enhance their knowledge and skills so as to enable them to initiate change and to creatively respond to increasingly complex needs of service users (*The Framework, paras 34, 51, Specialist Standards 5 para 5,-9*).

### **Subject Benchmarking**

Close attention has been given to the Social Work benchmark statement in designing the programme outcomes in such a way as to enable practitioners to have *contextual as well as analytic, explanatory and practical understanding of their work* (2000 Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, p 12).

## Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

<p><b>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. psychological, physiological and sociological perspectives of individual and social development and functioning;</li><li>2. models, frameworks and methods appropriate for assessment of complex needs of children, young people, their families and carers and complex problem solving that are informed by current research;</li><li>3. the impact of diverse life circumstances on human functioning;</li><li>4. the integration of theoretical perspectives and evidence from research in implementation of effective social work assessment and intervention;</li><li>5. social policies at global, national and local level and their impact on social work profession;</li><li>6. legal, ethical and value dilemmas that confront practitioners within social care settings;</li><li>7. the moral concepts of rights, responsibility, freedom, authority and power within the context of multidisciplinary service provision;</li><li>8. critical understanding of theoretical concepts of adult learning and professional development in practice;</li><li>9. the factors and processes that facilitate effective inter-disciplinary, inter-professional and inter-agency collaboration and partnership;</li><li>10. range of required social work competences mapped out in relevant NOS, GSCC code of practice and other Government documents;</li></ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>Students will deepen the knowledge of these through formal lectures, seminars, guided reading, group discussions and web-based learning. All theoretical knowledge is related to social work practice through discussion with personal tutors in the University and practice assessors in the place of work.</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>Assessment is entirely by course work in order to facilitate integration of theory, values and research into social work practice.</p> <p>Application to practice is also assessed within the Higher Specialist Practice module, via the <i>Practice Assessment Folder</i>.</p>
--	--

## *Skills and other attributes*

<p><b>B. Intellectual skills</b> – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>11. identify and develop personal qualities and demonstrate potential for extending their initial level of competence and developing additional competence in depth in their specified areas of practice;</li><li>12. critically analyse and reflect on their own experience in terms of knowledge, values and skills;</li><li>13. select, critically appraise and evaluate sources of evidence within their own field of practice;</li><li>14. demonstrate and exercise the ability to analyse and synthesise information and to demonstrate independence of thought;</li><li>15. be sensitive to the values and interests of self and others;</li><li>16. initiate working in partnership with services users, carers, colleagues from statutory and voluntary organisations;</li></ol>	<p>→ <b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>The lecture and seminars are designed to promote evaluative and critical thinking and encourage independence of thought. Awareness of values in action will be stimulated by the inclusion of student's own case work into teaching.</p> <p>It is expected that these skills will be further perfected through guided discussions, both in the classroom and in practice settings.</p> <p>→ <b>Assessment</b></p> <p>The individual assessment task are integrated into a <i>Practice Assessment Folder</i> in order to allow a holistic assessment of the student's professional competence.</p>
---	---



<p><b>C. Practical skills</b> – able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. assess complex needs and risk;</li> <li>18. facilitate knowledge based intervention;</li> <li>19. demonstrate self-awareness;</li> <li>20. provide evidence of professional effectiveness;</li> <li>21. communicate effectively with service users and professional groups;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>These practical skills will be learned within work setting as well as through individual sessions with tutors and practice assessors. Students will be required to be proactive in their work setting in identifying opportunities for further development of their self-awareness.</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>Advanced level of self-awareness will be required for the compilation of <i>Practice Assessment Folder</i>. The assessment of effective and meaningful involvement of service users will be included in the <i>Practice Assessment Folder</i>.</p>
--	--

<p><b>D. Transferable skills</b> – able to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. advanced interpersonal and written communication skills;</li> <li>23. sophisticated problem solving skills;</li> <li>24. advanced oral presentation skills;</li> <li>25. ability to work in groups;</li> <li>26. ability to work as a part of a team;</li> <li>27. effective time management skills;</li> <li>28. career management skills;</li> <li>29. ability to critically analyse research.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>These skills will be fostered through group exercises, case study discussions in all aspects of course delivery.</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>It is expected that these skills will be demonstrated as part of the assessment indicated above both in the university setting and in practice. The variety of tasks and formats mean that a range of skills will be examined.</p>
--	---

**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 he/she 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 description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**