

Postgraduate Diploma in Practice Education (Social Work)
For students entering in 2008

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University Of Reading
	Faculty of Social Sciences
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Social Policy and Administration and Social Work
Programme length:	Minimum 24 months
Date of specification:	16 th February 2007
Programme Director:	Anne Smith
Programme Adviser:	Ann Quinn
Board of Studies:	Postgraduate PQ and Social Work
Accreditation:	General Social Care Council

Summary of programme aims

This specialism offers a flexible inter professional approach to preparing practitioners for their role in Practice Education at a level beyond one to one supervision. This is an innovative programme which has evolved from the formally recognised ‘practice teacher’ qualification in local health and social care organisations. The programme has been developed to promote an environment that focuses on collaboration and networking across professions. It will enable practitioners to undertake a leading role within ‘learning organisations’ in which they will be initiating educational frameworks to develop colleagues and students.

Programme Structure Diagram

Postgraduate Social Work Diploma in Practice Education <i>120 Credits</i>					
	Required Module Theories and Concepts of Adult Learning <i>20 Credits</i>	Required Module Methods/ Styles of Teaching <i>20 Credits</i>	Required Module Contemporary Social Work and Social Care <i>20 Credits</i>	Required Module Research Methods for Social Work <i>20 Credits</i>	Option from Other Specialisms Or Optional Module from Inter-Professional Perspectives on Practice Education and Training <i>20 Credits</i>
Required Module 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. The learning achieved at Specialist level will be built upon. These academic skills will be in keeping with the University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning and will include educational and research skills, collaborative working, and critical analysis. Students will also have the opportunity to further extend their key transferable skills in higher levels of communication, information management, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology. These will be key attributes that will support the lead educational role that these practitioners will adopt within their organisation.

Programme content

The programme will consist of 6 modules 2 of which will be compulsory for the pathway, 3 will be a compulsory element of the *Higher Specialist* award and 2 will be options drawn from modules from other pathways or APL from other courses (*See Appendix 1, Table 2*). 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	Specialist Practice	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ02	Contemporary Social Work and Social Care	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ03	Research Methods for Social Care	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ08	Theories and Concepts of Adult Learning and their application.	20	<i>M</i>
HCMQ09	Methods/Styles Of Teaching	20	<i>M</i>

Optional Modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
HCMQ10	Inter Professional Perspectives on Practice Education and Teaching	20	<i>M</i>

Also see modules outlined in other three specialisms

Part-time/Modular arrangements

N/A

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 options. 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 Practice Education. Academic progression to full Masters Award is available in accordance with QAA procedures.

On leaving the programme all students will be given full transcript showing modules passed and credit acquired. This will also apply to students who leave the course before completing the full award. Students enrolled on this higher specialist award, but who discontinue their study after completing 60 credits will be able to acquire the Postgraduate Certificate in Health and Social Care (Practice Education).

In keeping 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.

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.

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 a 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 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. A stimulating learning environment will be further enhanced by the regular contribution of service users to the delivery of specialist modules and the assessment of practice.

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

Assessment will be focused on the student's ability to facilitate learning in both the practice and the more formal learning environments such as the HEI. It is anticipated that the student will demonstrate developing knowledge and skills in the area of education within the organisation. At higher specialist level this is differentiated by the more strategic role they adopt rather than in the one to one working that is more appropriate at Specialist level.

The assessment tasks are varied and will reflect the different subject matter being learned in each module. Every assessment task will require students to demonstrate that they have broadened their knowledge and professional competence in their area of expertise .

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. Candidates accessing post qualifying training will be in either part time or full time employment in statutory, voluntary, private or independent sectors, or they will be self-employed. All

applicants will need to provide evidence of practice that is relevant to their chosen award.

Experienced practitioners may be able to benefit from AP[E]L opportunities outlined in *Appendix 5*.

Qualifications of applicants from abroad will be assessed on the individual basis.

Admissions Tutor: Anne Smith

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.

There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors and the Students' Union.

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.

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.

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.

This specialism focuses on the student's lead role in education within their organisation and so it will be necessary for the work place to provide opportunities for students to display their skills in the teaching and facilitation of individuals and groups. The assessment tasks provide students with the opportunity to be innovative

and dynamic in order to demonstrate their development. The work based learning should therefore enable the student to work towards these goals. For more information please see *Appendix 7*.

Educational aims of the programme

This programme is intended to develop informed and critically analytical 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 within an educational context. The programme will enable students to enhance their knowledge and skills in education and facilitation. It will focus on supporting colleagues in their role of supervising and assessing students in keeping with the GSCC Code of Ethics.

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

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Educational theories that underpin adult learning;
2. Appropriate educational models, frameworks and methods such as reflection that guide and support the learner.
3. The learning environment, and the use of placement audit;
4. The influence of culture and diversity on learning and the management of risk;
5. Legal, ethical and policy frameworks which impact on practice combined with the legal, ethical and value dilemmas that confront practitioners within social care settings;
6. The moral concepts of rights, responsibility, freedom, authority and power within the context of multidisciplinary service provision;
7. The integration of theoretical perspectives and evidence from research to inform practice teaching perspectives;
8. The factors and processes that facilitate effective inter-disciplinary, inter-professional and inter-agency collaboration and partnership;
9. Range of required social work competences mapped out in relevant NOS, GSCC code of practice and other Government's documents;
10. Range of quality assurance benchmark statements that ensure the quality of educational provision.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

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.

Assessment

Assessment is entirely by course work in order to facilitate integration of theory, values and research into social work practice.

Application to practice is also assessed within the Higher Specialist module via the *Practice Assessment Folder*.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

11. Identify and develop personal qualities and demonstrate potential for extending their role in practice education within the organisation.
12. Critically analyse and reflect on their own experience in terms of knowledge, values and skills;
13. Select, critically appraise and evaluate sources of evidence within their own field of practice;
14. demonstrate and exercise the ability to analyse and synthesise information and to demonstrate independence of thought;
15. Be sensitive to the values and interests of self and others;
16. Initiate working in partnership with services users, carers, colleagues from statutory and voluntary organisations and other professions.



Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The lecture and seminars are designed to promote evaluative and critical thinking and encourage independence of thought.

Awareness of values in action will be encouraged by facilitated group discussion and interaction

It is expected that these skills will be further perfected through guided discussions, both in the classroom and in practice settings.

Assessment

Assessment tasks are varied including academic writing and practical application of skills in teaching and facilitation. The portfolio will provide evidence of engagement with educational policies and their implementation within organisations.

C. Practical skills – able to:

17. Assess complex needs and risk; associated with the management of students in practice;
18. Facilitate and support colleagues in coaching students;
19. Demonstrate self-awareness; and promote these skills in colleagues;
20. Provide evidence of professional effectiveness;
21. Communicate effectively with service users and other professional groups;

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These practical skills will be learned within work setting as well as through sessions facilitated by tutors and practice assessors. Students will be required to demonstrate the approaches they adopt to implementing educational initiatives locally.

Assessment

Advanced levels of self-awareness are a pre-requisite when working at a higher specialist level. The portfolio will provide evidence of how this will enable the student to work more effectively within practice education. The assessment tasks will focus on the students ability to work with colleagues on supervising pre-qualifying students and implementing supportive networks to achieve this.

D. Transferable skills – able to demonstrate:

22. Advanced interpersonal and written communication skills;
23. Sophisticated problem solving skills;
24. Advanced oral presentation skills;
25. Ability to work in groups;
26. Ability to work as a part of a team;
27. Effective time management skills;
28. Career management skills;
29. Ability to critically analyse and implement research findings.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These skills will be fostered through the utilisation of a range of teaching methods such as group exercises, case study discussions and problem based learning approaches. They will be developed in all aspects of course delivery as the underlying strategy is to promote independence and self directed approaches associated with the principles of adult learning.

Assessment

These skills will be demonstrated through the variety of tasks that will be required to fulfil the assessments. ICT skills, problem solving skills, teamwork and seminar presentations will verify the student's development in these key areas.

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.