

## BA (Hons) Youth and Community Work

1	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of Worcester
2	<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Worcester
3	<b>Programme accredited by</b>	The National Youth Agency
4	<b>Final award</b>	BA (Hons)
5	<b>Programme title</b>	BA (Hons) Youth and Community Work
6	<b>Pathways available</b>	Single Honours
7	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery.</b>	Taught and Work-Based Learning Programme
8	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	Full-time, Part-time
9	<b>UCAS Code</b>	L590
10	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	Guidance has been sought from: National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (LSIS 2010) Subject Benchmark Statement: Youth and Community Work (QAA 2009) Professional Validation: Guidance and Requirements (NYA, 2010) Guidance also taken from: Common Core Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (DfES 2005)
11	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision</b>	Updated June 2014 as approved at June IQC HW August and October 2014 (Regulations)

### 12. Educational Aims of the Programme

This course aims to offer a rich educational experience to support professional formation of nationally recognised youth and community work practitioners. The course is delivered on campus and in the workplace. The applied nature is reflected in course educational aims and learning outcomes.

The course aims:

1. To develop competent practitioners and practice managers for entry into or progression within the children and young people's workforce; securing professional qualification in youth work.
2. To build on students existing experience and knowledge; providing opportunity to develop specific knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that enhance and enrich professional practice and demonstrate competence in National Occupational Standards for Youth Work.

3. To debate contemporary work with young people; providing opportunity to evaluate and critically reflect on professional practice within complex, multi-dimensional settings.
4. To critically engage students in contested moral, ethical, spiritual, cultural, social, economic and political debates that frame contemporary practice.
5. To enable students to evaluate their professional role in relation achieving positive outcomes for and with young people, their families and the wider community.
6. To analyse processes of assessment, strategy formation, planned intervention, evaluation, policy development and research.
7. To enhance student ability to make sound professional judgements based on knowledge of factors that influence young people's development and life choices.
8. To develop an analytical and critical approach to problem solving to promote evidence based and reflective practice.
9. To develop graduate and transferable skills promoting autonomous learning and an enjoyment and commitment to continuous professional development.

### **13. Intended Learning Outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods**

[\[R>Course\]](#)

This is a vocationally focused course with classroom, work based and self-directed learning requirements. It is designed to enhance and develop a range of key transferable skills together with specific knowledge, skills and attitudes required of professional youth and community work practitioners. The learning outcomes for the course reflect the eclectic nature of youth work theory and practice. These outcomes inform and govern the module and work based learning outcomes presented in course Module Guides and Work Based Learning Workbooks.

#### **Knowledge and Understanding:**

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Appraise young people's needs, rights, responsibilities and aspirations
2. Discuss how the status of young people affects the validity with which their opinions are viewed
3. Debate the contribution ethical and anti-oppressive practice make to the development of young people's self-esteem and self-efficacy,
4. Explain professional youth work practice with reference to relevant theories, models and frameworks
5. Interpret and apply theory relating to the personal and social development of young people
6. Formulate and evaluate experiential, informal and social education opportunities
7. Discuss the nature of groups and synthesise relevant theories and models to explain practice.
8. Critically debate the nature of community and society
9. Recognise the role of assessment in achieving positive outcomes for young people
10. Evaluate the contribution made by a range of professional disciplines in achieving positive outcomes for young people
11. Identify and evaluate the influence of policy on the lives of young people

12. Debate the influence evidence based practice and practitioner research can have on policy and strategy development

### **Cognitive and Intellectual Skills:**

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Analyse and evaluate the nature of relationships built with young people
2. Investigate processes of oppression and social exclusion
3. Manage and influence processes of learning and change
4. Critically evaluate the impact of groups on the lives of young people
5. Critically analyse the dynamics between young people their families and the state
6. Distinguish and compare formal and informal assessment processes and frameworks
7. Critically analyse the role consultation, evaluation and analysis play in governing change processes,
8. Analyse factors that influence the recording, use and sharing of information;
9. Evaluate the role community plays in enhancing or restricting the opportunities and life chances of young people

### **Practical Skills Relevant to Employment:**

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to demonstrate ability to:

1. Build, maintain and close effective professional relationships.
2. Support young people through processes of learning and change
3. Initiate, lead and influence group work activity.
4. Support and initiate active involvement and citizenship activities.
5. Formulate rights-based and other enabling approaches to work with young people that take account of parental rights and responsibilities.
6. Support young people's community action
7. Apply assessment techniques and strategies within practice
8. Assess and manage risk.
9. Exercise responsibilities in relation to the health, wellbeing, and safety of young people
10. Make informed decisions in order to affect positive outcomes for and with young people
11. Recognise and challenge discrimination and inequality.
12. Advocate on behalf of young people

### **Transferable / Key Skills:**

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to demonstrate ability to:

1. Reflect on experiences
2. Learn independently
3. Manage and present information and data
4. Communicate the implications and applications of knowledge

5. Communicate theories, ideas and strategies through essay and report writing, presentations, discussions and debates.
6. Utilise basic computer technologies – word processing, email, internet and database access
7. Undertake research
8. Effectively self-manage
9. Effectively contribute to, manage and lead teams
10. Build mutually respectful relationships within the context of the multi-professional workplace
11. Evaluate and apply approaches to, and techniques for, project planning and development

Learning, teaching in the programme is designed to develop, specialist knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to practitioners working with young people. Additionally, students will be provided with opportunity to develop academic and transferable skills, which will contribute to their development as independent and autonomous lifelong learners.

Knowledge, skills and attitudes will be developed through a variety of learning strategies on campus and in the work place including: lead lectures, group work, case study analysis, role-play, practice analysis, development of reflective practice skills, experiential learning, work-based learning, e-learning incorporating the use of Blackboard and Pebble Pad, tutorial support and participation within a learning group or action learning set.

Reflective practice is a key element within the learning and teaching strategy and facilitates the integration of theory and practice. Reflection provides students with the opportunity to examine their personal progress and development and to devise strategies for creating further development opportunities. In addition, reflective practice provides students with the opportunity to critically analyse theory, research and other evidence and reflect on this in the light of their own work with young people.

This is a vocationally based programme so the importance of Personal Development Planning (PDP) is acknowledged and incorporated throughout. The University of Worcester Policy and Quality Standards for supporting PDP is implemented by providing:

- Opportunity to engage in PDP in tutorial groups and during work based supervision
- Accessible support mechanisms for engagement in PDP both within the course structure and through careers and other support offered by Student Services
- Opportunity to build a record of their learning achievements through portfolio work
- Opportunity to discuss their PDP with a tutor or advisor

In general PDP activity is captured in the student's WBL Portfolio. All information relating to building and maintaining a portfolio is found in the course WBL Handbook. Work based learning requirements conform to the university's [Policy on the Management of Work-based and Placement Learning](#) (2012). Full details of all aspects of the programme's work-based learning requirements can be found in the course WBL Handbook.

## 14. Assessment Strategy

Assessments are designed to assess specific knowledge, attitudes and intellectual and practical skills that underpin practice when working with young people. The programme will also assess evidence of student's competence against National Occupational Standards. Students will, therefore, participate in a range of assessment activities; written assignments, presentations, role-plays, group work activities, work-based activities, portfolio building and practice observations (a full Assessment Matrix can be found in the Course Handbook Appendix 1).

The assessment strategy is designed to enable students to demonstrate their achievement of the course aims and outcomes through meeting the assessed learning outcomes presented in course Module Guides and WBL Workbooks. The strategy is designed to assist students with their personal and professional development by enabling them to identify and build upon their strengths and to identify and address areas for improvement. This will be achieved by formative and summative assessment of both theory and practice and by acquisition of the skills and discipline required of a reflective practitioner.

Assessment and moderation strategies are designed to meet the requirements of the [University's Assessment Policy](#) and the Institute of Health & Society Moderation and Assessment Policy.

The course assessment strategy takes account of the fact that students gain in confidence and skills during the period of study. Formative assessments that do not contribute to the students grades are used to help focus the student on themes, knowledge and skills of particular importance to their development. Generally students receive a gradual decrease in the level of support and guidance offered for summative assessments as they progress through the programme. This both assumes and encourages increased student independence and greater learner autonomy and is reflected in the construction of module learning outcomes.

Assessment of work based learning is essential in order to demonstrating that students have achieved the necessary practice skills and disciplines. Students who fail to meet minimum practice requirements and/or the required WBL Outcomes will be given opportunity to re-sit practice assessments. The first retake will take place within four weeks of the start of the following semester. If a pass is achieved the student will progress to the next WBL Module without penalty. If the student fails reassessment they will not progress and will be required to retake the module.

Students are afforded the opportunity to retake all failed assessments unless due to non-submission in which case the student will automatically be required to retake the module. Modules can be retaken once. This allows the student 4 attempts to provide evidence of having met the learning requirements of the course. Failure of the final reassessment will result in procedures to withdraw the student from the course and the university.

Where student assessment raises serious concerns advice and guidance will be offered, however if the cooperation of the student cannot be secured, or urgent action be required, procedures under the University's Fitness to Practice Policy with a recommendation that the student's place on the course be terminated can be initiated.

## 15. Programme Structures and Requirements.

The course is single honours, modular and is designed to be studied, full or part-time.

Students must undertake a 30 credit work based learning modules at Level 4, 5 and 6 and a 30 credit Independent Study (dissertation) during their final. To gain the award 120 credits (or equivalence) at Level 4, 120 credits at Level 5 and 120 credits at Level 6 are required.

Work based learning (WBL) is an important aspect of your award. Vocationally focused courses are designed to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes for a specific sector. Therefore, the programme has a component of WBL. In the light of this, the course has been designed in consultation with key employers from across the sector and effort has been made to involve employers at every stage of course development. These links are maintained through representation on the Course Committee coordinated by the Course Leader and through a WBL Forum coordinated by the WBL Coordinator to ensure continued course currency and relevance. Given the importance of practitioner insight when working with young people, practitioners have contributed to course development and curriculum design and experienced practitioners contribute specialist knowledge and individual perspectives as valued members of the teaching team.

Students are responsible for securing a suitable work based learning placement.

Assistance and introductions are facilitated by the WBL Coordinator who has access to a diverse range of placement opportunities. The available support is intended to help students gain access to work based experiences that enhance learning and employability. However, it remains the responsibility of the student to present for placement in a disciplined and convincing manner. Failure to secure a placement will prevent a student's progress on the course.

A minimum of 888 hours must be spent in a relevant work environment during the course (which will include both main and alternative placements), with no less than 180 hours achieved by the end of Level 4, 530 hours achieved by end of Level 5 and 888 hours achieved by end of Level 6. A minimum of 180 must be spent in a relevant work based learning environment during each level of study. Fifty per cent of the minimum practice hours must involve face to face work with young people. Employment in a related workplace may be used as the students main work based learning environment provided that it is assessed by the WBL Coordinator as meeting necessary requirements. An alternative placement for a minimum of 222 hours during Level 5 and/or Level 6 work based learning modules must be undertaken. A minimum of 111 practice hours within the alternative placement must involve face to face work with young people. Further details of all aspects of the work-based requirements for the course can be found in the course WBL Handbook.

All modules are identified as mandatory (M) or optional (O). All mandatory modules are made available and must be completed successfully in order to achieve the award. Optional modules will be subject to demand. Advice on module availability will be made available prior to module selection. University [Electives](#) are option modules that are available to all students.

The modules for the Youth and Community Services BA (Hons) degree are presented in the table below:

## Award Maps for Levels 4, 5 and 6

<b>Level 4</b>					
<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits (Number)</b>	<b>Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))</b>	<b>Pre-requisites (Code of Module required)</b>	<b>Co-requisites/ exclusions and other notes*</b>
YACS1003	Reflective & Evidence Based Practice	30	M	None	None
YACS1004	Young People in Context: Learning and Change	30	M	None	None
YACS1007	Professional Formation 1: Practice with Individual Young People	30	M	None	None
YACS1011	Work with Young People: Policy, Approach & Practice	30	O	None	None
CRMN1001	Introduction to Criminology and Criminal Justice	30	O	None	None
APHS1006	Utopias and Dystopias	15	O	None	None
APHS1008	Contextualising the Family: Theory, Culture and Diversity	15	O	None	None

### **Single Honours Requirements at Level 4**

Single Honours students must take 120 credits in total, 90 of which must be drawn from the table above to include YACS1003, YACS1004 & YACS1007 plus 30 credits from optional modules.

Single Honours students may also choose to take elective modules to the value of 30 credits from the listing of elective modules provided for undergraduate degree programmes.

<b>Level 5</b>					
<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits (Number)</b>	<b>Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))</b>	<b>Pre-requisites (Code of Module required)</b>	<b>Co-requisites/ exclusions and other notes*</b>
APHS2003	Applied Research in Practice	30	M	None	None
YACS2007	Professional Formation 2: Practice with Groups & Projects	30	M	YACS1007	None
YACS2011	Young People in Context: Equalities	30	M	None	None
YACS2012	Designing and Developing Provision for Young People	30	O	None	None
APHS2005	Understanding & Responding to Family Based Violence and Abuse	30	O	None	None
CRMN2104	Delivering Rehabilitation	15	O	None	None
APHS2010	Children's Rights	15	O	None	None

### **Single Honours Requirements at Level 5**

Single Honours students must take 120 credits in total to include APHS2003, YACS2007 & YACS2011 plus 30 credits from optional modules.

Single Honours students may also choose to take elective modules to the value of 30 credits from the listing of elective modules provided for undergraduate degree programmes.



<b>Level 6</b>					
<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits (Number)</b>	<b>Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))</b>	<b>Pre-requisites (Code of Module required)</b>	<b>Co-requisites/ exclusions and other notes*</b>
APHS3001 or APHS3002	Independent Study [30 credits semester 1]  Independent Study [30 credits semester 1 & 2]	30	M	APHS2003	None
YACS3004	Work with Communities: Policy, Approach & Practice	30	M	None	None
YACS3007	Professional Formation 3: Practice with Communities & Issues	30	M	YACS2007	None
YACS3015	Team Work and Leadership in Multi-Professional Contexts	30	M	None	None

### **Single Honours Requirements at Level 5**

Single Honours students must take 120 credits. All modules are mandatory at Level 6.

Students who successfully achieve course requirements will be awarded the BA (Hons) Youth and Community Work.

Students completing the full requirements of the award will be conferred with professionally qualified status for Youth Workers in England under the terms and conditions of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Workers. Award certification for professionally qualifying students will clearly identify the award as a professional qualification conferring youth work professionally qualified status. Professionally qualifying students will be formally notified by the university that their award is recognised by the NYA and JNC as conferring professionally qualified youth worker status in England.

## 16. QAA & Professional Academic Standards & Quality

The award is located at level 6 of the FHEQ and is constructed to enable students to demonstrate knowledge and competencies required to meet [National Occupational Standards for Youth Work](#) (LSIS, 2010) and complies with the standards identified within the [Subject Benchmark Statement: Youth and Community Work](#) (QAA 2009).

In the drafting of this course guidance was also sought from the *Education Studies Subject Benchmark Statement* and the *Social Policy and Administration Subject Benchmark Statement*. Although no longer a focus of government policy the Common Core Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (DfES 2005) was also consulted.

Work-based learning aspects of the course are informed by [Making it work: a guidebook exploring work-based learning](#) (QAA2010) and incorporate [The University of Worcester Quality Standards for Management of Work-based and Placement Learning](#) (2012).

The course is designed to meet the requirements set out in [The Quality Code: The UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) (QAA 2012) and professional body validation requirements set out by the National Youth Agency in the document [Professional Validation: Guidance and Requirements](#) (NYA 2010)

## 17. Support for Students

To enhance the student experience and to ensure that students are aware and have access to the full range of academic and welfare support available a comprehensive range of measures are in place.

### **Within the course support includes:**

- Students will be issued with a comprehensive Student Handbook, a Course Handbook and WBL Handbook. Handbooks are reviewed annually.
- All students will be allocated a personal tutor on commencement of the course. In addition, module tutors will provide specific educational guidance.
- Work based learning opportunities will be facilitated by a WBL Coordinator and WBL Supervisor working alongside a nominated workplace WBL Mentor; providing both support and guidance (full details can be found in the WBL Handbook).
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) will be facilitated within action learning sets or learning groups operating in conjunction with work based learning supervision and support. Specific knowledge and skills for PDP will be introduced in YACS1003.
- Students will develop a personal development record in which they will record and reflect on their personal development through learning activities and assignments and through the use of a reflective learning journal and practice recordings.
- With support from tutors, WBL Supervisors and WBL Mentors students will identify learning and development needs and develop action plans to address the personal needs identified.
- Students will be supported by module tutors responsible for individual modules. Critical reflection and application of theory to practice will be an essential component of all modules.

- Blackboard a feature of the university's eLearning provision will be useful for students off campus to access a virtual learning environment and maintain contact with tutors and peers.

**Beyond the course support includes:**

- Students will be eligible to join the [Student's Union](#) at the University of Worcester.
- [Information and Learning Support](#) services are available to all students attending courses at the University or Worcester providing a range of information, IT, and media support services and a dedicated subject based librarian.
- [Student Services](#) including Disability & Dyslexia Service, careers guidance, counselling and Programme Advisors are available.

## 18. Admissions

### Admissions Policy

The University of Worcester seeks to admit students who have the capacity to benefit from study at higher education level, and Admissions Tutors seek to identify applicants who can demonstrate their potential to succeed at this level.

The admission of students is based on the reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to fulfil the objectives and achieve the standard required for the award for which they are registered.

The University is committed to widening access to and participation in HE by raising awareness and expectations in the pre-university community in order to increase the pool of qualified candidates who can benefit from the provision on offer.

No student will be subjected to less favourable treatment on grounds of race, ethnic or national origins, colour, gender, sexuality, parental status, marital status, disability status, creed, political belief or social or economic background.

Support for disabled students can be negotiated through the Disability Co-ordinator who works from the Disability & Dyslexia Service. Early contact is advisable to ensure appropriate levels of support from the outset of the student's course.

The University recognises the importance of the provision of accurate and appropriate pre-entry information and support to prospective students in order to ensure that all applicants are given every opportunity to choose courses in an informed manner and to be admitted to a suitable course.

### Entry Requirements

The University's standard minimum entry requirements apply: 4 GCSEs (Grade C or above) plus 280 Tariff points from minimum of 2 and maximum of 3½ A Levels or equivalent Level 3 qualifications. See [UW Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications. The current requirements are published in the university prospectus and on the university website.

### Admissions Procedures

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS

### **Admissions/Selection Criteria**

The University of Worcester welcomes applications from candidates from all social and ethnic backgrounds and is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities for all.

Applicants with limited or no formal qualifications will be considered for Mature Student Entry Routes. Candidates are encouraged to apply if they feel they can benefit from the programme. Candidates with non-standard entry applications will be considered on the basis of relevant work experience and attainment of skills, which demonstrate an ability to study at this level. Students with non-standard qualifications may be asked to complete a learning needs assessment.

All suitable applicants will be invited for interview. They will be expected to demonstrate some understanding of the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for work with young people. The interview will consist of group exercises and an individual interview.

Applicants may be required to provide evidence of a minimum of 530 hours experience of work with young people (with at least 265 hours direct contact) in a paid or voluntary capacity. Typically applicants will provide evidence of having achieved the minimum required practice experience within the two years prior to application and have a minimum of twelve months experience working with young people.

A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and occupational health check will be required prior to commencement of the course.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University web pages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

### **Induction**

The Induction week for BA (Hons) Applied Health & Social Science degree will introduce students to course requirements and the range of facilities and support available to enable students to meet course demands; information sharing about student services, library resources, use of computer facilities, timetabling and access to teaching staff will form part of the induction process.

## **19. Methods for Evaluating & Improving Quality & Standards of Teaching & Learning**

The course will be subjected to the University of Worcester Quality Assurance Processes. The quality of course learning and teaching will be monitored continually. Performance data will be collected through a number of mechanisms to provide evidence against prescribed quality standards.

### **Evaluation Mechanisms will include:**

- Annual review of the quality of the course (Annual Evaluation Reports – AER)
- External Examiner reports
- Each module provides opportunities for student evaluation
- Cross moderation of assessment
- Course Management Committee considers student feedback

- Module Moderating
- New staff mentoring system
- Academic Development and Practice Unit promote learning and teaching across the institution.
- Peer observation of teaching by staff
- Academic staff annual appraisal

**Quality and Standards Committees:**

- Institute of Health and Society Quality Committee
- Course Management Committee
- Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee
- Institute of Health and Society and University Ethics Committees

**Mechanisms for gaining student feedback:**

- Module feedback questionnaires
- Feedback from Student Academic Representatives (StARs)
- Feedback from Practice Based Learning opportunities
- Meetings with module tutors and Academic Tutor
- National Students Survey
- Induction, exit and other ad hoc surveys

**20. Regulation of Assessment**

The course operates under the [University's Undergraduate Regulatory Framework](#)

**Requirements to pass modules**

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the course Module Guides.
- The minimum pass mark is D- 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. Specific requirements are made clear to the students in their Module Guides.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the Module Guides.

**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 D- 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.
- For full details of submission regulations see [Undergraduate Regulatory Framework](#).

**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.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

### Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4.
- Students at Level 5 may be permitted to progress to Level 6 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 5.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

### Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
CertHE	Passed 120 credits at Level 4 or higher
DipHE	Passed a minimum of 240 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher
Degree (non-honours)	Passed a minimum of 300 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6
Degree with honours	Passed a minimum of 360 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6

The honours classification will be determined by whichever of the following two methods results in the higher classification:

Classification determined on the profile of the best grades from 60 credits attained at Level 5 and the best grades from 120 credits at Level 6. Level 5 and Level 6 grades count equally in the profile.

Classification determined on the profile of the best grades from 120 credits attained at Level 6 only.

For further information on honours degree classification, see the [Undergraduate Regulatory Framework](#).

Students will provide evidence of achieving the minimum practice experience requirement for each work based learning module through completion of the WBL Workbook. WBL Mentors will be required to sign-off student WBL learning practice hours to ensure minimum practice requirements are met.

## 21. Indicators of Quality Standards

The University underwent a QAA Institutional Audit in March 2011. The audit confirmed that confidence can be placed in the soundness of the institution's current and likely future management of the academic standards of its awards and the quality of the learning opportunities available to students. The audit team highlighted several aspects of good practice, including the student academic representative (StARs) initiative, the proactive approach which supports the student experience for disabled students, the comprehensiveness of the student online environment (SOLE), the wide range of opportunities afforded to students to enhance their employability, the institution's commitment to enhancement, and the inclusive approach to working with its collaborative partners.

'The standard of teaching – and learning – is high. The relationship between staff and students is excellent. Staff are very approachable

and supportive but maintain appropriate professional boundaries. This models the way in which workers would be expected to relate to young people and is based on sound youth and community principles and practices including co-operative learning, participation and a commitment to equality.'

External Examiner Report 2012

## **22. Graduate Destinations, Employability & Links with Employers**

The sector working with young people has undergone a sustained period of change initially in response to the Children's Act 2004 and the Every Child Matters Change for Children Agenda and more recently as a consequence of political and economic constraint. Employers have increasingly required skilled competent staff to work flexibly, cope with uncertainty and yet maintain professional integrity and discipline; complexity, fragmentation and uncertainty have tended to dominate.

Throughout this period students graduating from this course have been equipped to frame practice independently of operational and organisational structures and despite uncertainty in the workplace have managed to make a valuable contribution to meeting the needs, rights, responsibilities and aspirations of young people.

### **Graduate Destinations**

Graduates are working in statutory, voluntary and commercial organisations and a small number of enterprising graduates have started their own businesses. Examples of the types of paid employment entered into by students and graduates include:

- Youth and community work with individuals and groups.
- Advice and guidance services to young people
- Advocacy services
- Personal coaching
- Social enterprise
- Alternative curriculum and non-formal education
- Preventative health and wellbeing services targeting young people
- Housing support services targeting young people
- Youth justice and crime prevention work with young people

### **Student Employability**

Graduate employment is high (above 90% of students graduating secured employment working with young people or communities within the first twelve months of completing the course). Student employability remains a high priority which reflects both university aspirations and the vocational nature of the course. The course is constantly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose and capable of equipping students to meet employment challenges.

Work based elements within the course combined with the participation of practitioners and practice managers within the delivery of taught modules help students locate their knowledge and skills within a practice context. This significantly enhances student employability and better prepares students for the workplace.

Conditions in practice are difficult but evidence suggests that students graduating from this programme are competing favourably for employment and that a wider range of employers than ever before are recognising the contribution that effectively trained and knowledgeable youth workers can make to the achievement of their aims and goals.

Graduate employability is tracked and monitored although data at this time is limited due to the relatively small number of graduating students since the course ran for the first time in September 2008.

### **Links to Employers**

A range of service providers have supported the development of this course. Colleagues from the statutory, voluntary and independent sector have kept the course team informed of the changing conditions in practice and this combined with research and feedback from students has resulted in a significant revision of the course curriculum and structure. We continue to consult widely and invest heavily in maintaining and building the work based learning infrastructure for the course to ensure the best possible experience for all students. We also encourage students to seek out placement opportunities best suited to their future career aspirations.

Students and graduates of this course benefit from the strong links to practice already established with experienced practitioners and service managers contributing to both taught aspects of the course and to a range of on-going quality assurance arrangements including the appointment of an External Fieldwork Examiner in accordance with the requirement of professional validation.

‘As someone who as an employer requires modern youth work skills I am continually impressed in the way the University is responding to the changing environment and adjusting the course to meet demands and provide potential employees with the skills that are needed. This is not at the expense of good youth work principles.’

Hugh Disley – Field Examiners Report 2012

**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 the course handbook provided to all students at the start of the course. 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](#).