

Programme Specification for Foundation Degree in Teaching & Learning Support

This document applies to Academic Year 2025/26 onwards

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	Halesowen College Birmingham Metropolitan College (James Watt Campus) University of Worcester (UW)
3.	Programme accredited by	n/a
4.	Final award or awards	FdA
5.	Programme title	FdA Teaching & Learning Support
6.	Pathways available and/or Linked Honours Degree progression route/s	Top up opportunities at the University of Worcester, including our BA (Hons) Teaching in Primary Education with recommendation for Qualified Teacher Status (Top Up), BA (Hons) Education Studies, BA (Hons) SENDi and BA (Hons) Integrated Working with Children and Families (Top up) programmes.
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Standard taught programme
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	2 years full time (UW, BMet and Halesowen College) or 3 years part-time (BMet and Halesowen College only).
9.	UCAS Code	X700
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	<u>QAA Characteristics Statement for Foundation Degrees (2020)</u> <u>QAA Education Studies Subject Benchmarks (2019)</u> Office for Students Sector Recognised Standards <u>Sector-recognised standards</u>
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Approved November 2024

12. Educational aims of the programme

For many young people, learning support assistants are an essential part of their educational journey. The role requires patience and integrity and brings with it considerable responsibilities and substantial rewards.

The FD in Teaching and Learning Support is designed for individuals who are currently working, volunteering or have experience within educational settings such as schools or alternative provision and wish to develop their skills in a Learning Support/Teaching Assistant role and explore routes into teaching. It aims to draw upon your existing knowledge and experience, and to support you to develop new skills and knowledge. With an emphasis on work-based assignments, your learning is orientated around your practical experience. The aim is to further your personal and professional development and open the door to possible additional study and a range of top-up options, including qualified teacher status.

The course is timetabled over a single day in each week to enable students to easily fit studying around their work commitments.

The FTLS Programme is built around four main themes:

1. Professional Studies
2. Pedagogy Curriculum and Assessment

3. Research
4. Work Based Learning

The course aims, course ILOs and modules are designed to link to these four main themes and your knowledge, skills and understanding will develop as you progress through the course. These programme themes have been specially developed to align with the QTS Primary Top-up course for those students who wish to follow a route into teaching, but will also be valuable to all those in a learning support role in a range of settings.

Course Aims

1. To further students' personal, academic and professional development in education
2. To encourage students to draw upon existing knowledge and experience supporting learners, understand the limits of their knowledge and to support them to develop new skills and knowledge relevant to the workplace.
3. To promote the role of learning support staff as an essential part of a learner's educational journey.
4. To develop skills of critical analysis, critical reflection and reflexive practice.
5. To encourage an inclusive and ethical approach that respects diversity and encourages social responsibility.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Course ILOs

On successful completion of the Foundation Degree in Teaching & Learning Support, students will be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding		Module Code/s
1.	Develop knowledge and critical understanding of the key principles related to supporting learning	FTLS2011 FTLS2014 FTLS2015
2.	Analyse and evaluate diverse contexts for supporting learning	FTLS2012 FTLS2016
3.	Critically reflect upon the role of supporting learning and how it can support positive outcomes for all learners	FTLS2011

Cognitive and Critical Thinking Skills		Module Code/s
4.	Critically analyse educational theory, policy and practice relating to supporting learning	FTLS2012
5.	Critically reflect on ways to support individual learners informed by current research	FTLS2011
6.	Develop, plan and critically evaluate relevant modes of enquiry and apply ethical techniques in practice	FTLS2016

Skills and capabilities relevant to the workplace		Module Code/s
7.	Develop reflective practice and reflect upon the knowledge and skills required for supporting learners within different environments	FTLS2011
8.	Promote and understand sustainability and the social, environmental and ethical impact of decisions in the workplace	FTLS2016
9.	Demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills and manage team work effectively	FTLS2015

Transferrable/Key Skills		Module Code/s
10.	Develop high levels of initiative, independent learning and personal responsibility to advance professional development	FTLS2015
11.	Demonstrate digital capability to communicate and collaborate effectively	FTLS2015
12.	Apply knowledge of inclusive practice, diversity, global citizenship and equal opportunities within the workplace to demonstrate social responsibility	FTLS2016

Learning, teaching and assessment

You will have an opportunity to engage with learning through a comprehensive range of learning and teaching strategies which include:

- Interactive Lectures
- Workshops
- Seminars
- Group Work
- Practical activities
- Problem-based learning
- Work Based learning

We aim to support you in being an independent learner as well as seeking out opportunities to learn from others, your peers and tutors.

Within the practice-based modules, this is achieved through work related assignments and a programme that gradually transfers responsibility for learning to you as the student. Learning occurs in a context that enables you to relate what you are learning to what you already know and to guide you through wider reading. The source material in these modules is not confined to lectures but includes a range of appropriate strategies such as independent and guided reading, video material, observation, experiential learning.

To support your learning and development on this course you will have a personal academic tutor (PAT). The role of the PAT is to provide individual support around your academic development, as well as signpost you to any personal support you may need. You will meet at least 4 occasions in the first year and three occasions in the second year of the course.

Work-based activities and assignments will enable you to engage with your own practice and to share your knowledge and expertise with others. You will also undertake a work-based study in your second year, which allows you, with tutorial support, to focus on a particular area of interest within your professional practice and undertake a small-scale practitioner-based enquiry.

Interactive Lectures enable the exploration of key theories while seminars and workshops provide a space for wider discussion and development of critical thinking and reflection. Practical activities and problem-based learning will form part of your teaching so that you can link theory to practice within the workplace to support you as a reflective practitioner now and in the future as you develop your professional career.

The University places emphasis on enabling you to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip you for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. You will benefit from mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from Student Services and Library Services. Also, the personal academic tutoring

system enables you to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will enable you to flourish and be successful.

Contact time

For those studying **full time** the course is 37 hours per week. In a typical week you will have 1 day of teaching (6 hours of lectures and seminars spread over 1 afternoon and 1 evening) plus min. 2 days on placement. The precise contact hours may vary by term. Typically the course will be structured around 37 hours per week =

- 3 hrs of lectures
- 3 hrs of seminars
- 15 hrs self-guided independent study
- 16 hrs Work Based Learning

For those studying **part time** the course is 16 hours per week. In a typical week you will have half a day of teaching (2-3 hours of lectures and seminars spread over 1 afternoon or evening) plus min. 1 day on placement. The precise contact hours may vary by term. Typically the course will be structured around 16 hours per week =

- 1.5 hrs of lectures
- 1.5 hrs of seminars
- 7.5 hrs self-guided independent study
- 8 hrs Work Based Learning

Independent self-study

In addition to the contact time, you are expected to undertake around 15 hours of self-guided independent study per week. Typically, this will involve directed study tasks, academic reading, reflection on the ideas explored in modules, and applying knowledge to your professional role.

Work-based learning is an embedded element of the course. Modules are assessed through work related learning and it is a requirement that students are employed or volunteer in a learning support or similar role for the duration of the course. You are expected to undertake this work-based learning for a minimum of 16 hours a week (FT) or 8 hours a week (PT). This enables students to relate their studies to their own setting and context.

A range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources, supports independent learning.

Teaching staff

Students will be taught by a highly experienced teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. They all have extensive expertise and experience, as well as a passion for teaching and learning support. Many of the course lecturers have a higher education teaching qualification or are Fellows or Senior Fellows of Advance HE (formerly the Higher Education Academy). Some staff also regularly publish and present on their research at national and international conferences.

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formal or 'summative' assessments, which are graded and count towards the overall module grade. We will provide you with feedback on summative assessments within 20 working days of hand-in dates.

Assessment methods include:

- Written assignments
- Individual and group presentations
- Case studies
- Reflective portfolio entries
- Problem based learning
- Learning journals / reflective journals
- Independent Research Projects
- Workplace investigations
- Self-evaluation / needs analysis
- Evaluations of workplace policies, processes and resources
- Poster/leaflet presentations /Production of workplace resources
- Literature critiques

A typical summative assessment pattern for each year of the course is:

Year 1

- 1 reflective portfolio
- 2 evaluation and annotation of an educational resource
- 3 essays
- 1 critical evaluation
- 1 reflective commentary
- 1 group presentation
- 1 workplace study plan
- 1 ethics report
- 1 poster presentation

Year 2

- 1 reflective portfolio
- 4 essays
- 1 learning journal
- 1 group presentation
- 2 reflective commentaries
- 1 professional enquiry/research project

You will receive feedback on formative assessments and on summative assessments. Feedback is intended to support learning and you are encouraged to discuss it with personal academic tutors and module tutors as appropriate.

14. Assessment strategy

The assessments encourage and promote reflection and learning that enables and encourages the students to think critically and analytically. The assessments relate specifically to module learning outcomes and encompass both formative and summative elements in line with [The University's Assessment Policy](#).

The approach to assessment takes an inclusive, universal design for learning approach with a wide range of assessment techniques and multiple means of representation (see section 13). Many modules provide two or more different types of assessment which provides a variety of authentic assessment opportunities for students. Formative assessment is available in all modules, though students are expected to be progressively more self-directed as the course

progresses from Level 4 to Level 5. The FdA Teaching & Learning Support is a pass/fail qualification and no degree classification is awarded.

The assessment structure has been developed to support student learning by providing assessment procedures that reflect the nature of the learning experience of each module, and by ensuring that the students are able to demonstrate ability in a wide range of qualities and skills appropriate to the course. The assessments have also been developed to provide students with a range of opportunities to relate to, evaluate and critically reflect upon their workplace and their role in the setting. This structure is under continuous review via course quality enhancement procedures including student feedback, comments from the external examiner and other review processes. Each assessment item is specifically linked to the Intended Learning Outcomes for the module contained with the module outline and is graded according to the relevant assessment criteria for each level of study. Assessment guidance is provided in the Course Handbook, module outlines, through taught session and tutorial support.

Appropriate support in teaching, learning and assessment for students with disabilities is provided in conjunction with the [University Disability and Dyslexia Service](#).

A grid showing assessment methods and weightings mapped to modules at each level, together with an assessment calendar of submission dates is included in the Course Handbook.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Overview of Course Programme

The course is modular in design and each module will be studied and assessed as a discrete entity. The modules are designed to create a coherent whole in which individual modules relate to and complement each other and, as the student progresses through the course, the modules will build upon and further develop knowledge and skills learned in earlier modules through a 'spiral curriculum'.

Key Skills development and acquisition are embedded within individual modules. Furthermore, [UW Graduate Attributes](#) are explicitly facilitated throughout and embedded within all modules.

The programme consists of 11 modules, with five worth 30 credits and six worth 15 credits.

Students must complete all modules at each level of the course.

The Award Map for the FdA Learning Support is available below.

Award Map for a Foundation Degree

The programme learning outcomes shown in Section 13 describe the knowledge, understanding and skills that students will have demonstrated on achievement of their intended qualification award. Students who do not complete their full programme of study may qualify for an alternative award and the approved exit awards for this programme are listed in section 20 of this Programme Specification. For a Foundation Degree, exit awards are available at Level 4 (Certificate of Higher Education).

Course Title: Foundation Degree in Teaching & Learning Support

LEVEL 4

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status (Mandatory or Optional)	Graduate Attributes
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L4	Professional Studies				
	FTLS1011	Preparing for Study	15	M	Reflective and resilient lifelong learning
	FTLS1012	Introduction to Behaviour Management	15	M	Problem solving
	FTLS1013	Understanding Inclusion: An Introduction to SEND, Diversity and Global Citizenship	15	M	Social responsibility
L4	Pedagogy, Curriculum and Assessment				
L4	FTLS1014	Introduction to Pedagogy, Curriculum and Assessment	30	M	Teamwork and effective communication
L4	Work Based Learning				
	FTLS1015	Work Based Learning	30	M	Digital Citizenship
L4	Introduction to Research				
	FTLS1016	Project Proposal & Ethics Application	15	M	Reflective and resilient lifelong learning

Requirements at Level 4

Students must take all the mandatory modules listed above. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at Level 4.

LEVEL 5

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status (Mandatory or Optional)	Graduate Attributes
L5	Professional Studies				
	FTLS2011	Reflecting on Self as practitioner and learner	15	M	Reflective and resilient lifelong learning
	FTLS2012	Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing	15	M	Problem solving
L5	Pedagogy, Curriculum and Assessment				
L5	FTLS2014	Pedagogy, Curriculum and Assessment	30	M	Teamwork and effective communication
L5	Work Based Learning				
	FTLS2015	Work Based Learning	30	M	Digital Citizenship
L5	Research				
	FTLS2016	Work Based Project (small-scale practitioner-based enquiry)	30	M	Social responsibility

Requirements at Level 5

Students must take all the mandatory modules listed above. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at Level 5.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

The Foundation Degree in Teaching & Learning Support is consistent with the QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (2020), ensuring that there is balance between practical and intellectual skills underpinned by opportunities to apply learning within the workplace. The course is designed to reflect the qualification benchmark statements which specify the distinctive

features of foundation degrees within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ 2014). This framework is reflected in the outline of skills and subject knowledge that students acquire on the course. Course learning and assessment strategies are designed to build upon vocational skills and competencies and promote the development of academic knowledge and skills.

Assessment criteria for the programme build upon the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications as appropriate to level. This award is located at level 5 of the FHEQ. The work-based project and work-related learning are all informed by the codes of practice (work placements) and the UW ethical guidance.

QAA Education Studies Subject Benchmarks (2019)

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-education-studies.pdf?sfvrsn=3ae2cb81_5

QAA Characteristics Statement for Foundation Degrees (2020)

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/foundation-degree-characteristics-statement-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=6fc5ca81_10

This award is located at Level 5 of the [OfS sector recognised standards](#).

17. Support for students

Induction

Induction will occur both on a general course basis (course induction) with the Course Leader and within individual modules (module induction).

Course Induction will cover the following elements:

- libraries, including membership and a tour of facilities;
- VLE induction;
- identification of dyslexia and disability support requirements;
- student handbooks, UW regulations and expectations;
- assignment schedules, common skills and assessment procedures;
- individual timetables;
- an introduction to the Students' Union and Welcome Week activities;
- the Course Committee structure and student representatives;
- careers and counselling support;
- Work-based learning, placements and workplace mentors

Tutorial Support

All of the tutors on the FdA in Teaching & Learning Support will provide group and individual student support. Meetings for the identification and resolution of general issues may be held on a small group basis, while students are encouraged to discuss matters of individual difficulty with their module tutor in the first instance.

Personal Academic Tutor

All students on the programme are allocated a Personal Academic Tutor in accordance with University Policy. University policy explains that the main focus of the Personal academic tutor role is to support students in relation to their course and studies as follows:

- Support all students in becoming a member of the University and making the transition to studying in higher education

- Help students to understand the requirements of their course in terms of knowledge and understanding, skills development and assessment requirements
- Support students to take responsibility for their own learning through helping them to reflect on their progress, identify their learning needs and develop appropriate strategies to achieve them
- Help students to make the most of the learning resources and other forms of learning support available to them
- Support students in academic, professional and career related planning and development, and the appropriate recording of this
- Advise and guide students on issues or difficulties arising whilst they are at the University and, where appropriate, direct them to the broader range of services provided by the University
- Support students for whom there may be particular challenges when entering higher education (e.g. students with disabilities, students leaving care, black and ethnic minority students)
- Provide a reference for students as they progress into employment or further study.

Support for Students and Their Learning

- Students on this programme will experience a wide variety of learning and teaching activities designed to facilitate development of both subject specific knowledge and skills and transferable knowledge and key skills.
- A range of assessment strategies enables students to develop academic and practice knowledge and skills and facilitate their application to practice.
- Students will receive comprehensive course handbook which will include module details and assessment methods.
- Students will be supported by the individual module tutors who will provide specific educational guidance.
- During their first year of study all students will receive one workplace visit.
- Students will be supported by a **Workplace Mentor** in their workplace/placement
- Students will be offered support and guidance in the event of a work placement breakdown. The course team do not take responsibility for providing an alternative work placement, but appropriate guidance will be offered on the basis of individual student need and may include, for example, identification of appropriate voluntary or paid employment opportunities, signposting to relevant Student Support Services etc.
- Students are provided with a progression talk at each Level of study by the Course Leader and/or Link Tutor within partner providers. Progression guidance provides students with information on routes into employment, careers and top-up provision.
- Use of Blackboard for students to access a virtual learning environment and maintain contact with tutors and peers.
- Library Services, [Student Support Services](#) including, [Disability and Dyslexia Service](#), Careers Guidance, Counselling, Programme Advisors are available to all students, including those studying at partner institutions.

<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/firstpoint/>

<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx>

<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/>

18. Admissions

Admissions policy

Entry requirements

UCAS Tariff: A minimum of 32 points

The normal minimum entry requirement for Foundation Degree courses is the possession of 4 GCSEs (Grade C/4 or above) and 1 A Level (or equivalent Level 3 qualification).

Key skills at Level 3 may be allowed to contribute to up to 20 UCAS tariff points towards meeting the condition of an offer, until they are removed from the UCAS Tariff. These Skills do not satisfy the subject knowledge requirements for courses requiring specific GCSE subjects. Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found on the University webpages. See the [University's Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications and the section below specific to recognition of prior learning.

Candidates with non-standard entry applications will be considered on the basis of relevant work experience and attainment of skills. They will be invited to a meeting with the relevant Course Leader. This is an informal discussion and applicants are invited to share their experience of working with learners. A minimum of 12 months' experience employed or working in a voluntary capacity within an appropriate educational setting is desirable.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check is required for this course. Candidates with an existing DBS check will be required to register for the Update Service or complete a new check.

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 on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University webpages or 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>

Admissions procedures

- Full-time and Part-time applicants apply through UCAS Course Code: X700
- Candidates with non-standard entry applications will be considered on the basis of relevant work experience and attainment of skills. A minimum of 12 months' experience either employed or working in a voluntary capacity on placement within an appropriate educational setting is desirable.

Admissions/selection criteria

On application and meeting of the appropriate admission requirements and regulations, applicants are offered a place on the programme.

See Section 20 of the Programme Specification for information regarding the admissions arrangements for progression to the linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s).

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.

- A student is 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.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- A student who submits course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- A student who submits work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped 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); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Progression

- A student will be permitted to progress from Level 4 to Level 5 if, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4. Outstanding Level 4 credits must normally be studied in the following academic year.
- A student who, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, has failed 90 credits or more (after exhausting all reassessment opportunities) during the academic year, will have their registration with the University terminated
- If a student has not passed at least 90 credits by the reassessment Board of Examiners, the student is not permitted to progress to the next level and will be required to either complete outstanding reassessment or retake the failed modules the following academic year. Students will be able to carry forward any passed modules.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
Cert HE	In order to be eligible for the exit award of Certificate in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 120 credits in total including the mandatory modules for level 4 of the award as specified on the award map.
Foundation Degree FdA/FdSc	120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5 as specified on the award map.

These awards are not classified.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

The FdA in Teaching and Learning Support leads into a range of potential career paths including teaching, academic support and work with students with additional needs. Our graduates have an excellent employment record, with the majority going on to work in educational settings. As well as going on to become successful teachers other students move into areas such as learning support, coaching and mentoring, family support, welfare officers or personal tutoring in the private sector.

Progression to Linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s)

A foundation degree is a nationally recognised qualification which may support progression within your current learning support role. The course provides a sound basis for further study at Bachelors degree level including progression to the BA (Hons) Teaching in Primary Education with recommendation for Qualified Teacher Status (Top Up), BA (Hons) Education Studies, BA (Hons) Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion or BA (Hons) Integrated Working with Children and Families Top-up.

Student employability

The programme aims to develop students working in learning support or similar roles who are equipped to work in a range of early years, mainstream, special and educational support services. For the duration of the course, students are required to be employed or volunteer in a learning support or similar role for a minimum of two days per week. During the course, students receive a work-place visit from a member of the course team. The purpose of the visit is to meet with a senior member of staff to outline the course and discuss the impact of the course and the demands placed upon the student. The visit also provides an opportunity to discuss course related issues, provide clarification of any aspects of the course as required and answer any questions that may arise.

The programme team work with the University Careers and Employability Service and promote opportunities to students, particularly in relation to vacancies, career pathways and applications for further study or employment. Members of the course team also promote UW events across the partnership that may be valuable and beneficial to student's wider knowledge of the sector.

Links with employers

The course has close links with employers across the region, including schools, colleges, education services, social welfare, voluntary organisation and support services. Employer representatives are invited to attend Student Staff Liaison Committees. A range of employers engage with the course, providing enhanced learning opportunities through guest lectures and educational visits within the settings. Students are also advised to discuss the course with their employers and identify a workplace mentor/critical friend within their setting who is able to provide additional support during their studies.

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 associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.