

### Programme Specification for FdSc Learning Disability

1.	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of Worcester
2.	<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Worcester
3.	<b>Programme accredited by</b>	N/A
4.	<b>Final award</b>	FdSc
5.	<b>Programme title</b>	FdSc Learning Disability
6.	<b>Pathways available Linked Honours Degree progression route/s</b>	BA Hons Applied Health & Social Sciences
7.	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b>	Taught and Work-Based Learning Programme
8.	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	Full time one day a week Part time half a day a week Minimum 200 hours of work based learning
9.	<b>UCAS Code</b>	L512
10.	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	<a href="#">Benchmark for Foundation Degrees</a> (QAA 2010)  <a href="#">National Occupational Standards (NOS) Health and Social Care</a> (Skills for Care 2012)  <a href="#">Code of Conduct and National Minimum Training Standards for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England</a> Skills for Health (2013)
11.	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision</b>	March 2014 August and October 2014 (Regulations)

#### 12. Educational aims of the programme

The Learning Disability arena is a rapidly changing, complex and multi-dimensional area in terms of study and practice, this course aims to support new students wanting to access Learning Disability support work. Equally, it is designed to support the career development of those currently practicing in the field and looking for promotion to higher levels of responsibility. Groups of students are taught together offering a rich learning environment. Students will be supported to look critically at the current discourses shaping provision in the Twenty First century. The value placed on Mental Health, Learning Disability and Social Care issues is shaped by the diversity of people's beliefs, experiences and expectations and students are encouraged to analyse factors that have the potential to increase or diminish concerns in a wide range of contexts. Learning Disability will be studied from a variety of perspectives, including individual, community, societal and global. Awareness of the individual, organisational, social, cultural, political and technological

influences are essential to the exploration and understanding of excellent support delivery. Understanding of these issues also requires an appreciation of the inter-relationship of a number of theoretical perspectives including those arising from the disciplines of social sciences, humanities and the life sciences and these are reflected in the modules students will study. Foundation degree study must also offer authentic and innovative work-based learning as an integral part of its design. It should enable learners to gain employment through the opportunity to learn and apply skills and knowledge acquired as an integrated element of the programme. It must involve higher-level learning in the context of the institution and transferred to the workplace. This two-way process, where the learning in one environment is applied in the other underpins the educational aims of this course (QAA 2010). Students are expected to develop an enquiring, knowledgeable and critical application of their learning and to bring this to the context of their practice.

This course has also become a recognised route into careers within the NHS, such as Adult Branch Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy for students who did not meet the initial entry criteria and students are supported to achieve their potential.

The course aims to:

1. Provide students with the opportunity to develop specific knowledge, skills and value base relevant to working and effectively meet the needs of people with a learning disability.
2. Provide opportunities for students to develop key skills and the academic base required to prepare for employment and lifelong learning and/or further study.
3. Develop students' knowledge and application of the core values and principles of good practice in supporting people with learning disabilities.
4. Broaden the student's knowledge and understanding of appropriate and recognised intervention strategies to support people with learning disabilities.
5. To enhance students' own learning and understanding of roles and responsibilities in the workplace through critical reflection and reflective practice.
6. Enable students to identify and acknowledge personal professional development needs and implement appropriate development strategies.
7. Engage students in the current debate related to the social, cultural, moral, ethical, legal and current policy and research related to people with learning disabilities.
8. Enable students to assess, plan, implement, evaluate and make sound judgements in care delivery in accordance with the core values and principles underpinning work with people with learning disabilities.
9. Develop students' interpersonal, team working and communication skills by communicating relevant information effectively.
10. Develop skills and strategies necessary for partnership working with a range of service users, services, professionals and other groups across learning disability services.

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

#### Knowledge and understanding

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

1. Demonstrate and critically reflect on the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to work effectively with individuals with a learning disability.
2. Respect the rights, and promote the interests, dignity and independence of all individuals with a learning disability whilst protecting them from danger or harm.

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- A programme of structured lectures, interactive seminars, group work sessions, individual tutorials and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) support
- The planning, researching and writing of assignments and subsequent oral and written feedback is fully supported by the use of formative [preparatory] assessment
- Work-based scenarios and variety of settings, roles and responsibilities in crisis work for sexual violence settings experienced via case studies, guest speaker inputs, contribution of 'Experts by Experience', work placement and work-related learning
- Practical, work-based and work-related assignments – e.g. Video and practice of communication and interpersonal skills and group work, intervention plans, case studies, health promotion posters
- Use of VLE to encourage discussion, shared learning and development and assessment of attitudes and values
- A variety of assessment strategies including essays, oral presentations, reports, group work, critiques, gallery style poster presentations, evidencing practice and research related tasks
- The Work-Based Independent Project requires students, in negotiation with supervisors and work-based mentors to select, research and relate theory to an agreed work-based initiative.

#### Cognitive and intellectual skills:

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

1. Critically evaluate relevant theoretical frameworks and concepts and apply these to your practice in learning disability services.
2. Establish and maintain trust and confidence of users of services, carers and the public by demonstrating accountability for the quality of your work and taking responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills while working within the parameters of your role.
3. Respect difference and diversity and demonstrate anti-oppressive and inclusive practice.
4. Evaluate and locate appropriate evidence and research to underpin practice and decision making in health and social care

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- All modules encourage learners to engage in discussion and application of key concepts to a work-based context
- Higher order independent learning and critical skills (e.g. the ability to evaluate evidence, arguments and assumptions to reach sound judgements) will be developed and encouraged at levels 4 and 5 (with additional tutor support in line with UW's Learning Outcomes policy)
- Reflection in and on practice and case study work offers students the opportunity to engage in problem solving and decision making and demonstrate awareness of own strengths, limitations, responsibility and accountability
- Evidence-based practice and research informed knowledge, understanding and critical appreciation is assessed through the Independent Work Based study

#### Practical skills relevant to employment:

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

1. Effectively support and assist individuals with learning disabilities to identify their needs by selecting, planning and implementing appropriate care strategies.
2. Work in collaboration and partnership with others across a range of different agencies and disciplines within the care sector

3. Empower individuals with a learning disability as active participants in the care process.
4. Engage in, and disengage from, professional relationships using appropriate and sensitive communication and interpersonal skills
5. Use information technology applied to the needs of users of services. Use reflective practice to develop knowledge and skills for care practice within work environments.

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- Practical and group work sessions to develop assessment, communication and interpersonal skills
- Involvement of stakeholders as experts by experience to with support formatively and summatively assess student work/presentations.
- Use of case studies and work-based scenarios
- Reflective papers and summaries on self-development of knowledge, skills and attributes
- Use of VLE to encourage discussion, shared learning and development and assessment of attitudes and values
- Subject librarian contributes to study skills sessions on accessing and searching for information sources, using databases and web-based sources
- All modules are focussed on learning for and from the workplace and include opportunities for group discussions and sharing experiences. Some modules include group assessments.

#### Transferable/key skills:

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

1. Use reflective practice to develop knowledge and skills for care practice within work environments
2. Recognise own learning needs, draw up personal action plans and take responsibility for personal development and learning.
3. Effectively manage self (time, planning, motivation, and initiative) and prioritise own work
4. Use of Word processing, e-mail, spreadsheets and databases

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- Development of skills for critical reflective practice in the Effective Communication and Ethical Practice module and through work-based assignments in a number of modules
- Opportunities in modules and additional support sessions to develop skills in using PowerPoint, word processing, e-mailing.
- Develop portfolio and Personal / Professional Development Planning (PDP)
- Use of VLE to encourage discussion, shared learning and development and assessment of attitudes and values
- Completion of a range of different assessment items throughout the course to develop written, oral and other communication skills

## **14. Assessment Strategy**

The Institute of Health and Society Moderation and Assessment Strategy is based on the following principles:

The modules and their assessment strategies are designed to enable students to demonstrate their achievement of the course aims and outcomes and key skills development. Assessment criteria and grade descriptors are provided for each item of assessment. Work based learning and reflective practice are essential components of the learning in this programme, are integral to the

achievement of the programme aims and learning outcomes and encourage and promote learning that enables and encourages the students to think critically and analytically.

A variety of methods of assessment are used, both formative and summative, that enable students to demonstrate competence in a range of skills required both in higher education and in the workplace, including simulated practice, videos, case studies, individual and group presentations, intervention plans, care planning and various other written assessments including essays, reflective writing, and reports. The assessments selected promote the reflection and learning that is essential to work-based practice and not simply reliant on memory and recall of information. The assessments relate specifically to identified learning outcomes for modules.

It is recognised that using experiences from work environments in learning and assessment strategies can raise ethical issues, e.g. confidentiality, questioning of work practices, etc. Given the nature of reflective practice and work-based and placement learning, the Institute of Health and Society has specific guidance regarding Confidentiality (See handbook appendix 1).

## 15. Programme structures and requirements

### AWARD MAP FOUNDATION DEGREE AWARD

#### Title: Foundation Degree Learning Disabilities

<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>Prerequisites (Code of Module required)</b>
FDHS 1209 (C)	Effective Communication and Ethical Practice	30	Mandatory	None
FDDL 1210 (Sp)	Understanding Experiences of and Practices in Learning Disability	30	Mandatory	None
FDDL 1211 (Sp)	Learning Disabilities: Legislation, Policy and Best Practice	30	Mandatory	None
FDDL 1205 (Sp)	Learning Disability: Personal and Professional Development in the Work Place	30	Mandatory	None

#### Requirements at level 4

Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 4.

<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>Prerequisites (Code of Module required)</b>
FDHS 2003 (C)	Applied Research and Evidence Based Practice	15	Mandatory	None
FDHS 2004 (Sh)	Team Working and Empowerment	15	Mandatory	None
FDDL 2205 (Sp)	Learning Disability Awareness: Causes, Symptoms & Support	30	Mandatory	None

FDHS 2005 (Sp)	Applied Human Biology and Managing Health Conditions	30	Optional	None
FDDL 2203 (Sp)	Learning Disability: Individual Project in the Work Place	30	Mandatory	None
FDDL 2204 (Sp)	Reviewing Academic Literature in Learning Disability	30	Optional	None

### Requirements at level 5

Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 5.

### Attendance Requirement

Students are expected to attend all sessions on taught modules. Where a session is missed, the student will be required to discuss with the module leader how to facilitate the required learning. Where a student misses more than two sessions without mitigating circumstances, they will automatically be awarded a fail grade (NA) for the module. This provides the student with no resubmission opportunity. This will require students to pay to retake the whole module at the next running of it and all UW regulations for retaking modules will apply

### Work Based Learning Modules and Minimum Practice Requirements

The timing of practice based learning will allow for some flexibility, although it is essential that certain parameters are met to ensure opportunities to link university based learning to practice, facilitate reflection on work based learning and ensure that assessment deadlines can be met.

**For the full-time student, the 200 hours required for the module must normally be achieved in a minimum of fifteen working weeks and a maximum of 35 working weeks. This equates to completing 13 hours per week to achieve the target of 200 hours in 15 weeks and just under 6 hours per week spread over 35 weeks. The course team recommend 1 day in practice for the duration of the placement throughout the academic year in order to complement your studies and relate theory to and with practice.**

For the part-time student, an individual learning contract will be negotiated to enable the requirements for practice learning to be fulfilled. Work based learning will be shaped by the learning outcomes for the modules, assessment requirements and objectives arising from students' personal development plans.

## 16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

The award is located at level 5 of the FHEQ and is constructed to enable students to demonstrate knowledge and competencies as detailed in the [Foundation Degree Benchmark Statement](#) (QAA 2010).

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 also designed to meet requirements of the [Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education](#) (QAA 2010) with particular reference to Part 2 Collaborative Provision and Flexible and Distributed Learning (including e-learning).

The following key documents have informed the development of this programme:

- QAA Benchmark for Foundation Degrees (2010)
- National Occupational Standards (NOS) Health and Social Care (Skills for Care 2012)

- Common Induction Standards (CIS) (Skills for Care 2013)
- Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England (2013)
- National Minimum Training Standards for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England (2013)

## 17. Support for students

The University has an Equal Opportunities Policy, together with equality schemes and action plans promoting equality in relation to race, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation. Progress in implementation is monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee. The Disability Service within Student Services provides specialist academic and other support on a one to one basis, makes recommendations for reasonable adjustments to teaching and assessment based on individual need and works with disabled students to allow them to manage their own learning development.

The following roles, activities and documents provide support for Foundation Degree students in the Institute of Health and Society:

- Induction programme including inputs from course team, Registry and other student services
- Programme Leader and Course Leader
- Work based learning supervisor and mentors in practice to support work-based learning
- A nominated Academic Tutor to provide pastoral support, academic advice and guidance, and assistance with PDP, as appropriate
- Course Handbook
- Module outlines which include module code, module title, level, planned teaching activity, attendance requirements, assessment brief, assessment criteria and reading lists
- Learning and study guides, including Work Based Learning Handbooks for students and mentors.
- Information and Learning Services (ILS) provide library, IT, media and print support and provides an Information and Enquiry Desk and Study Guides
- Student Services provide a range of support including programme advisers, finance, welfare and accommodation advice, and additional Study Guides
- Student representation on Course Management Committee to address course-wide issues (StARs)
- Registry Services and the student online learning environment (SOLE page) provides details of modules, registration and results
- Student and academic support, representation and social networking via the Students' Union

## 18. Admissions

### Admissions Policy

The admissions policy for the programme is designed to encourage access to higher education through a policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or age.

### Entry requirements

The University's standard entry requirements apply: 4 GCSEs at Grade C or above plus a minimum of 1 and maximum of 3½ A Levels or equivalent Level 3 qualifications. The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to the course are published in the prospectus.

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 will be asked to demonstrate evidence of ability in literacy. All candidates are able to access a learning needs assessment.

Students whose first language is not English must have a minimum standard of English at IELTS 6.

### **Course Specific Entry Requirements:**

- To fulfil the mandatory vocational practice learning element of the course, students will be required to undertake a minimum of 400 hours practice learning in a relevant setting during the course.
- Applicants already employed as health and learning disability workers who wish to use their current place of work as work based learning; must have approval from the course leader. They must also have the agreement of the relevant organisation to provide opportunities for successful achievement of course and module learning outcomes. Students must also be able to attend University for a minimum of one day per week for academic study (the study days may vary between intakes).
- Those applicants not already employed in suitable work environments have the responsibility to secure an appropriate placement. Course team support will be available to assist in signposting students where necessary.
- Students will be required to travel to and from practice based learning at their own expense. This work based learning will (where possible) be mindful of student individual needs but must be focussed on providing suitable opportunities to enable the student to achieve their learning outcomes.
- All places are conditional upon a UW Occupational Health Clearance.
- Students will be required to have a new Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Students will not be able to commence practice until clearance is confirmed.

### **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 webpages. Students with relevant previous study at level 4 and 5 or extensive experience may be considered eligible for RPL. Credit can be given for individual modules. 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**

All applications follow the University of Worcester full-time admissions regulations and procedures. All applicants, irrespective of their pathway into the course, will be required to attend a small group interview prior to acceptance onto the course.

All applicants complete the UCAS application form

Each application will be considered by UW Registry Admissions and the appropriate Course Leader

Evidence of qualifications will be checked

References and personal statements will inform the selection of candidates;

Applicants are required to provide two referees, (where possible one from their last place of study, and one from a practical work base area).

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (73L8)

Part-time applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW)

### **Admissions/selection criteria**

Students will be selected through a group interview process that will focus on:

- insight into their qualities and values;



- interpersonal and communication skills;
- small and larger group work skills
- written skills.

See Section 22 of the Programme Specification for information regarding the admissions arrangements for progression to the linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s).

## **19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching & learning**

The course is subject to the UW Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes and will follow Regulations as set out in the Undergraduate Regulatory Framework and Academic Regulations of the University.

Quality mechanisms and roles will chiefly be:

- External Examiner Report
- Annual Evaluation Reports
- Student module evaluation
- Student self-evaluation
- Course Management Committee with student representation each semester
- Internal moderation and verification of assessment
- External verification of assessment and External Examiner's Report
- Post Examination Board Moderation Group
- Staff review and development
- Staff participation in research informed teaching and learning, scholarly activity and staff development
- 5 year Periodic Review
- QAA Institutional Audit

## **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 module specifications.

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

### **Submission of assessment items**

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at 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.
- 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	120 credits at Level 4 or higher
Foundation Degree FdA/FdSc	120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5

These awards are not classified.

## 21. Indicators of quality and 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.

In 2013 the shared Foundation degree programmes had their 5 yearly Periodic Reviews and were commended for:

- The transformational effect of the Course Team's support for students leading to raised self-esteem and career aspirations.
- The Team's collaborative and reflective approach to ongoing course development.
- The impact of students in placements on the quality of life of service users and the recognition of this added value by employers.

## 22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Service integration collaboration and multi-disciplinary working in health and social care settings has informed the emerging context for this programme. In consultation with employers the course seeks to prepare students for future careers in a range of operational contexts as identified in the section Graduate Destinations below.

### Graduate destinations

Graduates are expected to seek employment working in statutory, voluntary and commercial organisations. Examples of the types of paid employment in health and social care contexts include:

- Care services.

- Education settings
- Residential settings
- Advice and guidance services
- Advocacy and rights based services
- Housing support services
- Health care provision

### **Student employability:**

The Course will enhance student employability in several ways. Sound work based practice and values will be established and strengthened during the two years of the Course (e.g. the ability to meet deadlines, to prepare well, and to communicate effectively within a formal context). Fundamental to this is the consistent synthesis, within the course's design and delivery, of the work place and classroom. Thus, students enhance their employability by using and developing a range of different skills in different contexts, and by bringing learning from one context to the other.

Student employability remains a high priority which reflects both university aspirations and the vocationally focused nature of the course. The course will be constantly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose and capable of equipping students to meet employment challenges. Additionally the course team will work with the University's dedicated Careers Advice Specialists to ensure that students can receive support and guidance relevant to their own particular situation and employment ambitions.

Graduate employability will be tracked and monitored through Higher Education Statistics Agency data generated from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey.

### **Links with employers:**

Through the substantial work based learning infrastructure maintained across the academic unit colleagues from the statutory, voluntary and independent sector keep course staff informed of changing conditions in practice. Combined with research and feedback from students the course is constantly revised and updated to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. Students are able to locate their own practice within a diverse variety of placement contexts and are encouraged to seek out placement opportunities best suited to their future career aspirations.

Students and graduates of this course will benefit from the strong links to practice already established; experienced practitioners and service managers contribute to both taught aspects of the course and to a range of on-going quality assurance arrangements.

### **Progression Top-Up Degree(s)**

Students who pass the Foundation Degree which is a valued qualification in its own right may also consider further study and are eligible to progress to the third year of existing degree programmes at UW. Specifically, this Foundation Degree will enable students to progress onto the BA (Hons) Applied Health & Social Science or BSc Health Sciences. Students are encouraged to apply by March before starting in September using the internal application available on the SOLE page. Students will need to consider topics for their independent study prior to starting in September.

**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. 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](#).