

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

MA in Professional Development: The Dynamics of Domestic Violence

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	NA
4.	Final award	Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, Masters Degree
5.	Programme title	MA in Professional Development: The Dynamics of Domestic Violence
6.	Pathways available	NA
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	The course may be delivered either via 3 hour weekly sessions or 2 intensive weekends over one semester. Weekends consist of 3 consecutive days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday or Saturday, Sunday and Monday) 9am-5pm
8.	Mode of attendance	Part time.
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	The course is in line with QAA Masters Level Characteristics (2010) and Skills for Justice Occupational Standards (NOS) 'Preventing and Tackling Domestic and Sexual Violence' (2009).
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Sept 2011, August and October 2014 (Regulations); 9 th December 2014, August 2016 (Regulations amended - Section 20)

12. Educational aims of the programme

This course is for any professional from any statutory agency, voluntary organisation, educational establishment or the corporate sector; who works with (or who aims to work with) service users/clients or staff who are experiencing or who have experienced domestic violence. The extent to which the professional may work with the service user/client or staff members may vary depending on their specific job role or the organisational remit

The overall aim of the course is to give students an in depth knowledge and understanding of the complex dynamics of domestic violence and its impact, in order to inform professional practice in line with good practice indicators and sector National Occupational Standards. As such, the course is designed to:

1. Provide a stimulating environment in which students can engage in collective exploration of the nature and dynamics of domestic violence, including reasons why those experiencing it may stay in or return to abusive relationships.
2. Provide an opportunity for students from diverse backgrounds to succeed in achieving postgraduate qualifications through the development of advanced subject specific and transferable knowledge and skills
3. Support students in the development of oral and written analytical skills to enable them to critically evaluate definitions and key theoretical perspectives of domestic violence, historical and/or contemporary policy discourses; research and all other data relating to it.
4. Help students conceptualise the historical, social, and political forces that have

resulted in changing perceptions of domestic violence and relate this to contemporary notions of domestic violence.

5. Advance students critical understanding of the multiple 'costs' of domestic violence to 'victims', those close to them, and to society from a cross cultural perspective.
6. Encourage students to examine and develop a critical understanding of good practice frameworks, their roles, responsibilities and approaches in engaging with and supporting individuals who have experienced or who are experiencing domestic violence
7. Enable students to develop a strong sense of professional identity through reflective practice.
8. Provide the opportunity to design and conduct a substantive study utilising an appropriate research methodology and associated research methods within ethical practice as dictated by the University of Worcester ethics framework and that of external frameworks where applicable.

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

Knowledge and Understanding

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

Postgraduate Certificate

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of defining domestic violence, critically evaluate existing definitions and be cognisant with the prevalence of domestic violence within diverse communities.
2. Critically analyse and evaluate key theoretical perspectives that have been offered to explain domestic violence orally and in writing.
3. Relate historical, social, and political forces that have resulted in changing perceptions of domestic violence and ensuing policy and legislation in discussion/debate and formal assessment.
4. Critically discuss the direct and indirect 'costs' of domestic violence to those experiencing it, their significant others and to society, recognising culture and diversity.
5. Apply and integrate theoretical perspectives of domestic abuse with knowledge of the 'costs' of Domestic Violence; demonstrating an engagement of the complex dynamics of an abusive relationship.
6. Critically scrutinise reasons why those experiencing Domestic Violence stay in or return to abusive relationships.
7. Critically evaluate historical and contemporary legislation, policy and good practice principles of intervention and consider them within multi agency working contexts.
8. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards for Responding to Domestic and Sexual Violence

Postgraduate Diploma

Learning outcomes 1-8 (above) plus

9. Critically reflect on comparative epistemologies and methodologies relevant to researching domestic violence and research based evidence can be applied to practice.
10. Apply knowledge from the course to working with diverse groups both theoretically and in practice
11. Demonstrate a strong sense of professional identity and identify the impact of undertaking modules on own professional practice and/or professional development through reflection.

Masters

Learning outcomes 1-11 (above) plus

- 12. Demonstrate autonomous learning in choice and design of an original project which has crucial relevance to domestic violence theory and/or practice.

<p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of a coherent and mandatory programme with optional modules shared with other postgraduate programmes • A programme of structured interactive lectures, seminars, workshops, group work, presentations, discussion and debate, group and individual tutorials. • Use of multi media resources • External visit to Charles Hastings Medical Museum, Worcester Royal Hospital, with museum tour, demonstration and hands on activity relating to evolutionary theory • The researching and writing of a variety of assignments and the subsequent written and oral feedback • Self directed research with tutorial guidance and discussion • Consistent approach to theory as related to practice • Case study analysis • Contribution to teaching by service users and practitioners • Opportunities for shared learning reflecting and acknowledging diversity in the student's knowledge and experience. 	
<p>Cognitive and intellectual skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking, analysis and synthesis in relation to the complex issues surrounding domestic violence. • Critical thinking and evaluative skills in the analysis and interpretation of data from primary research and secondary sources. • The construction of coherent and reasoned arguments and conclusions • Synthesis and informed judgements on complex ethical and professional issues in relation to the contested nature of domestic violence interventions. • Reflexivity and the ability to use knowledge and understanding critically to locate and justify a personal position on the subject • Sensitivity to the values and interests of diverse others 	<p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presentation, discussion and analysis of competing theoretical and ideological concepts and their analysis • The presentation, discussion and evaluation of data from primary research and secondary sources • The engagement of learners in discussion and analysis of key issues and concepts • Module assessments providing the opportunity to reflect on individual and observed practice • Formative and summative case study work • The promotion of reflexivity in research and in social and community practice
<p>Practical skills relevant to employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A positive attitude to personal development through critical reflection and self evaluation • Communicate effectively through 	<p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for practice taught within modules • The application of theory to practice, critical reflection and self evaluation in

<p>a variety of mediums and in a range of contexts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal and team working skills employed to effectively collaborate with others effectively • A reflexive practitioner approach 	<p>the assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of discussion and presentations both formatively and summatively • Critical analysis and reflection on own practice • The sharing of information in small groups and in the class through presentations and discussion • The use of case study material and research based assessments • Voluntary practice component
<p><i>Transferable/key skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced oral and written communication using appropriate academic conventions • Negotiation and interpersonal skills • Problem solving • Independence in learning, planning and time management • Empathy, ethical principles and practice • Effective use of information technology • Data analysis and numeracy • Personal reflection, self assessment and action planning 	<p><i>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The embedding of advanced study skills within the programme • The embedding of research based skills within the programme • Written assessment in a variety of formats including analytic and reflective essays, portfolio construction, and research based skills • Self management skills developed through the meeting of assignment deadlines, contributing to group work, working with others, work experience, individualised assessments where students choose the focus and application, and the advanced independent study • Oral skills are developed by peer and whole group discussion, group and individual presentations • Interpersonal and empathic skills, ethical principles and practice, negotiation are embedded within the programme • Information technology is used to support the programme and student learning • Reflective and reflexive practitioner approaches

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The principles of the course are consistent with the University of Worcester Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategies in that they seek to value and affirm the experience that students bring, and to nurture curiosity, connectivity, collaboration and diversity. In this way, the University strategy communicates a clear intention to make students true participants in the learning and teaching process.

All teaching and learning methods are designed to aid students in meeting intended learning outcomes through formative and summative assessment (constructive alignment) and will include a consideration of the need for differentiation for any student with physical and/or

learning disabilities or any other disclosed needs. This may involve environmental factors (e.g. wheelchair access) accessibility to materials prior to sessions, handouts/resources in different formats (large print etc) or adjustments to assessment criteria. Reasonable adaptation will be made to accommodate student needs in line with University policy.

Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards

The course is mapped to the Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards for 'Preventing and Tackling Domestic and Sexual Violence' and as such will meet the performance criteria required.

14. Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy for the course is designed to enable students to demonstrate the development of their own knowledge, skills and attitudes underpinning practice. Thus assessment is designed to develop reflexive practitioners who are competent to select, utilise and evaluate theoretical concepts and models and apply these creatively to analyse and solve problems in a wide variety of contexts.

Assessment is aligned to the University's and the Institute of Health and Society Assessment Policy in following ways :

- Provision of a range of possible assessment methods
- High quality feedback provided throughout the course as the result of observation, discussion and question and answer sessions to provide ongoing support. Feedback will also be given to formal assessment via Item Report Forms, individual and group tutorials and moderation.
- Assessment of all stated learning outcomes for each module and the overall programme.
- A balance of formative and summative assessments which will be appropriate for each module and designed to measure a diversity of competencies.
- Marking will be anonymous where possible.
- Internal and external moderation will be consistent with University policies and guidelines in that a sample of assignments from each module will be double-marked internally, and samples viewed by the External Examiner to ensure parity with MA courses nationally.
- Assessment criteria is included in module descriptors, discussed during sessions and included in the Course Handbook.

The Masters level generic grade descriptors form the foundation of the assessment of all students undertaking this course and are given to and discussed with students at the beginning of the course. These can also be found in the Course Handbook. All assessments are outlined in assessment grids that allow students to understand what they need to do in order to achieve the grades.

The programme does not employ e-learning as a dedicated assessment strategy. However, it is used to support student progress and enrich the learning environment. Pebblepad and email are consistently used by staff to support student activities and to provide materials, on line discussion, feedback and contact. Students with additional needs find these modes of contact particularly useful.

15. Programme structure and requirements

MODULE CODE	MODULE TITLE	CREDITS (number)	STATUS Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)
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Postgraduate Certificate			
MDVM4001	Theoretical Perspectives on Gender, Violence and Interpersonal Relationships	20	Mandatory
MDVM4002	The Cost of Domestic Violence	20	Mandatory
MDVM4003	Recognition and Response	20	Mandatory

PG Diploma as PG Certificate plus 60 credits as follows:			
MDVM4004	Safeguarding Children, Young People & Adults in the context of Domestic Violence	20	Mandatory
Plus 2 optional modules from the following if completing studies at this level or one optional module and the mandatory research module if going on to undertake MA			
MDVM4005	Investigating Issues for Professional Practice: Research Skills	20	Mandatory for those undertaking a dissertation Optional for those completing PG Diploma
MDVM4007	Learning Through Experience	20	Optional
MDVM4008	Counselling/ support skills	20	Optional
MDVM4009	Sexual Violence and Abuse	20	Optional
MDVM4010	Honour based Violence	20	Optional
MDVM4011	Children and Domestic Violence	20	Optional
MDVM4012	Domestic Violence: Perpetrators and Prevention	20	Optional
MDVM4013	Domestic and Sexual Violence and Public Health	20	Optional

MA 120 credits from above plus 60 credits as follows:			
MDVM4006	Dissertation	60	Mandatory

NB The specific optional modules offered will be subject to tutor availability and student interest.

The availability of optional modules from other Level 7 courses will be dependent upon the Course Leaders responsible for timetabling their modules.

16 QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at level 7 of the FHEQ. The standard of the award is consistent with Level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). The FHEQ outlines the level of understanding, knowledge and critical awareness that students at this level must demonstrate to gain credit at Master level. The intended outcomes of this course are written in line with Masters level descriptors and meet FHEQ criteria (2008, pp.20-23)

In addition the programme embraces the principles of good practice within the:

- The QAA Code of Practice on Placement Learning
- Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards for tackling Domestic and Sexual Violence

17 Support for students

The University of Worcester is committed to its aim of creating a supportive and welcoming environment which celebrates diversity and difference. Policies and procedures have been established to promote the wider participation of people from all sectors of society. The University also has a focus on developing strategies to ensure that the retention and achievement rates of students with additional needs and non-traditional entry students are equal to those with traditional entry profiles. Our equal opportunities ethos is to provide an inclusive service to all of our students.

The induction arrangements for this course ensure that all students are aware of the available facilities and student support offered at the University including but not exhaustive of:

- √ Counselling and mental health team
- √ Disability and dyslexia service
- √ Financial advice
- √ Study skills support
- √ Student Union

The latter is offered via a range of academic workshops delivered by ILS and subject specific support from the subject librarian during sessions and by appointment. Student support is also given by the Programme Leader and Module Leaders via group and individual tutorials and email and all students have a Personal Academic Tutor.

Due to the nature of the course content, additional domestic and sexual support services are flagged up to students and referral/signposting discussed. This is to ensure that any student who experiences any distress as a result of the course content (particularly those who have experienced domestic abuse) will be able to access support from within the University or externally to it as appropriate.

All information about support for students is outlined in the Course Handbook and module descriptors and discussed with the students and students also receive:

- √ Pre-course reading list
- √ Work Placement Handbook (for those choosing the optional module only)
- √ Module descriptors for each module including module code, title, level, learning outcomes,
- √ teaching activities, timetable, attendance requirements, assessments criteria and reading lists
- √ A personal academic tutor responsible for pastoral and academic support and guidance
- √ A module tutor as a first reference point for academic queries
- √ A Programme Leader with an 'open door' policy
- √ Student representation on the Course Committee

18 Admissions

This course is designed for professionals who are working with, or who aim to work with 'victims' of domestic violence and is committed to attracting a diverse workforce. As such it

welcomes workers from a variety of allied professions who are keen to develop an inter-professional dialogue.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Prospective students are required to have

- A first degree at second class honours in a related field **or**
- A professional qualification in a specific field (i.e. Social Work, Probation etc) **or**
- Current practice in the field of domestic abuse, i.e. professionals who you come into contact with clients/service users who are experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse
- Enhanced DBS clearance (to paid for by the student)

NB Prospective candidates who do not hold a second class honours degree or above, or who do not have significant professional experience will be asked to undertake an assignment prior to acceptance on the course.

ADMISSION PROCESS

The admission process is via application form, followed by an interview.

Interview

Applicants are invited to attend an interview before an offer of a place is made. The interview is designed to consider the abilities, aptitudes, skills qualifications and experiences of applicants that indicate their potential to succeed on the course.

Applicants will be asked to make a very short (5/10 min) presentation This is an opportunity for the applicant to build on their 'Personal Statement' from their Application Form to clarify their rationale for wanting to study on this course and reflect on how they think the course will help with professional development. The next part of the interview will be a discussion between the applicant and the interview panel to include questions and answers relating to domestic abuse, academic qualifications professional experience (voluntary or paid) if applicable, studying at Masters level, assessment and any other issue that may arise. Applicants are encouraged to ask any questions at this point that they would like any clarification upon.

Where applicants do not have a first degree or they have not studied for three years or more, they will be asked to write a short essay (approx 750 words) to be submitted on the day of the interview. These will be used to examine academic level and to ascertain areas where extra support may be needed i.e. referencing for example. This is important as admission is open to those that work in the field of domestic violence but may not have studied for some time and may not have a university degree. Informally assessing students' academic level in this way allows for support to be put in place for those exhibiting learning needs.

This assessment is built on in the first module with students required to select a question for the summative assignment and in preparation for this write an essay plan. The plan should outline the key points for inclusion in the summative essay and how they aim to address the learning outcomes. The essay plan will be accompanied by an annotated bibliography of 5 key texts to be drawn on for the summative essay. This activity is designed to help students who haven't studied for some time to familiarise themselves with essay writing, ensures a focus on learning outcomes and allows for them to source relevant texts and undertake background reading. Undertaking this task allows students to locate and research sources and spend time with the subject librarian. Students will then informally present their essay plan to their pp and peers (presentation not graded) one week before submission of the plan and will submit the plan by the due date with a written paragraph on how they have altered

the plan in relation to feedback. This whole process allows for students to engage with Masters level assessment criteria gradually and reflectively with support.

When the interview is completed and any written essay considered, the panel will decide on whether or not to offer a place to the applicant. This decision will be forwarded to the Admissions Office in Registry Services who will send out a letter offering a place to the applicant or declining their application. The former will include start dates, times and venue as well as any other necessary information.

Decisions regarding overseas candidates who cannot attend interview will be made on the basis of application, references and interview using appropriate technological resources.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING.

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

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

19 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Methods of evaluating the course include:

- Ongoing tutor assessment via observation, question and answer, course work, discussion and tutorials
- Moderation of marking
- Peer assessment
- Peer observation of teaching
- Student evaluation (modular)
- Course Management Committee
- External Examiner reports
- Course Annual Evaluation Report
- Learning and Teaching Committee

Information gathered from the above methods of assessment is taken into account to improve the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

Quality and standards are also shown by the commitment of the University to ensure lecturers are qualified or studying towards the HEA accredited PG Certificate Learning and Teaching in Higher Education and the commitment of the Programme Leader to be active in domestic violence practice and research and represents the University on related professional bodies.

20. 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 the 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 please see the Taught Courses 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); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map
Masters (MA)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map

PG Cert and PG Dip awards are unclassified. The awards of Masters may be made with Pass, Merit or Distinction.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

Indicators of quality and standards for this programme include:

- External Examiner reports.
- Student evaluations.
- Course Committee Minutes.
- Alignment with Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards.

The quality of the course can also be identified by the progression and employment routes for graduates of the course.

22. Graduate destinations, employability & links with Employers

Most students, who study on this course, are already in employment and embark on the programme to enhance their career prospects, further their professional competences or

widen their intellectual horizons. Career/employment opportunities that have emerged for past students have included:

- Employment in the domestic violence sector (including the first male victim worker in West Mercia).
- Students becoming key domestic violence workers/professionals.
- Students setting up support groups/services in their community.
- Students being used as 'expert' witnesses in courts.
- Progression into postgraduate study at the University of Worcester and other Higher Education establishments.

Local and national employers in the sector recognise the qualification, as does the legal system. West Mercia Women's Aid, a large domestic violence employer, was instrumental in the validation of this course and has been invited to be on the interview panel for prospective students. Excellent links are also in place with the police, probation, Crown Prosecution Service, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations, many of whom act as guest speakers on the course or are hosts for visits.

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 Course Handbook.