

**Programme Specification for
MA/PG Cert/PG Dip Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence.**

This document applies to Academic Year 2024/25 onwards

Table 1 Programme Specification for MA/PG Cert/PG Dip UDSV

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A
4.	Final award or awards	PG Cert/ PG Dip/ MA
5.	Programme title	Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence
6.	Pathways available	NA
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Blended Learning
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Sequential 'face to face' Teaching Blocks. PG Certificate: Full-time and part-time over one year PG Diploma: Full-time over one year, part-time over two years MA: Full-time over one year, part-time over two years
9.	UCAS Code	NA
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	QAA Masters Degree Characteristics statement.
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Approval May 2017 August 2017 AQU amendments December 2017 Amendment to Admission requirements (Section 18) and addition of PG Cert and PG Dip as Entry routes August 2018 – AQU amendments and minor updates February 2019 – AQU amendments August 2019, AQU amendments to Section 19 August 2020 - AQU amendments July 2021 – Accessibility checker added August 2021 - AQU amendments. August 2022 - AQU amendments. July 2023 – annual updates September 2024 – annual amendments

12. Educational aims of the programme

The [Centre for Violence Prevention](#) (CVP) has a vision to become an international centre of excellence in violence prevention research, education and advocacy by bringing together a multidisciplinary team of academics and practitioners in order to develop and disseminate evidence-based practice.

The programmes comprises three core strands which will be interwoven within the four mandatory modules before a student will undertake the final dissertation.

These are:

i) **Reflective professional practice** - which should inform the student's critical understanding of theory and knowledge with the potential to transfer the acquired

knowledge to their professional or research practice. This strand demands that the student challenges aspects of attitudes, norms and values in society or, within their relevant professional organisations which may contribute to the oppression and discrimination of those individuals and communities affected by DSV. Similarly the student should be ideally troubled within their own personal or professional identity and develop a positive appreciation of their role in recognising and responding to DSV.

ii) **Research inquiry skills** - developed by the student over the course of the programme that should enable them to confidently and critically investigate contemporary issues on DSV that are related to their field of personal or professional interests. The student's core ethicality in research practice is further enhanced through a robust understanding of research theory and methodologies which are prevalent to the study of DSV. The emphasis on the voice of victims, perpetrators and/or practitioners is a key component of research engagement and meaning towards a making a valuable contribution in their personal and professional development.

iii) **Social justice through advocacy** - is a key strand to the programme's provision and this is cultured through discourses of a human rights framework. The complexity of DSV is rightly recognised in terms of the diversity of individual victims and perpetrators and the range of different cultural contexts in which DSV is perpetrated. The student's appreciation of the rights of the individual as a child or adult and, as victim or perpetrator are raised, dismantled, deconstructed and re-examined as part of the philosophical values of the programme.

The educational aims of the programme are to:

1. Provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment in which the student can critically engage in individual and collective examination of the dynamics of Domestic and Sexual Violence (DSV).
2. Promote student engagement with the programme through a commitment to an inclusive ethos that increases access by students from diverse personal and professional backgrounds.
3. Develop the student's critical understanding of key theoretical concepts from historical, legal, economic, social and political disciplines, which have influenced current understanding and responses to DSV.
4. Develop an advanced understanding of the complex needs of different service user groups and communities and safe interventions and approaches to needs.
5. Encourage the student to interrogate and examine policy provision and good practice within national and international contexts.
6. Enable the student to continue to develop a strong and positive sense of personal and professional identity through critical reflective thinking and practice.
7. Critically appraise prevention and intervention strategies in responding to DSV.
8. Develop and enhance the student's ability to design and carry out research activities in an ethical manner according to the University of Worcester's guidance and to be prepared to present and publish their findings.

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

The MA programme is developed for graduates and those with relevant professional

qualification and experience in the fields of health, education, criminal and social justice, social work or working in the charitable sector, assessing and responding to issues of Domestic and Sexual Violence. The programme is particularly appropriate for individuals who want to improve their knowledge and skills set to intervene more effectively in supporting victim/survivors of DSV, the risk management of perpetrators, or in preventing and reducing the impact of DSV. The programme is distinctive in that it places emphasis on the critical reflective researcher-practitioner to critically appraise the theories of violence. This includes a focus on the functional and structural causation of DSV and post-structuralist theory which gives emphasis to DSV as embodied and contextualised acts of abuse and resistance. Psychological theories, systems and ecological explanations are also considered, in addition to feminist theories and writings examining issues of causation and volition. The programme should therefore develop the student's understanding in response to the examination of theoretical approaches to DSV and subsequently positively impact on practice responses. The student is encouraged to consider the different national and international, cultural and social contexts of DSV from early childhood to older age.

The programme should provide the student with a range of opportunities to develop and demonstrate advanced knowledge, critical understanding, competent skills, ethical qualities and other desirable attributes for any individual practitioner or researcher working with or aspiring to work with individuals affected by DSV. The learning and teaching opportunities available to students of the MA programme are designed to maximise the potential of each individual to enjoy and embrace their learning experiences. The programme through blended learning provision should offer a range of activities offering teaching skills and assessment of skills within the classroom environment, including face to face lectures, role play scenarios of case study examples, conference and seminar events, online learning activities (OLAs) via discussion fora and virtual learning events on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that is Blackboard (BB). The programme will offer a range of assessment opportunities to students including essays, report writing, poster presentations, individual and/or group oral presentations and case study analysis. There is emphasis on critical reflective thinking and developing current or future practice, each student will be required to engage with an online reflective journal as part of gauging their personal and/or professional development through the course. The journal will not be a formal assessed item. Each student progressing to the full MA award will complete their studies with the submission of a final dissertation thesis.

The following Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) have been informed by the Characteristics Statement descriptors for a qualification at Masters(M) level: Master's degree (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, September 2015 (see further at section 16) and adapted for the needs of this programme.

The Learning Outcomes for the Masters in Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence are as follows:

Postgraduate Certificate Award, Postgraduate Diploma and Masters Award of Mapped Learning Outcomes

Table 2 knowledge and understanding outcomes and which module/code they relate to

Knowledge and Understanding			
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s	Award

1.	Demonstrate a critical awareness and comprehensive understanding of key concepts and controversies in the study of Domestic and Sexual Violence.	DSVM 4001 4002 4003	PG Cert PG Dip MA
2.	Critically analyse and synthesize key theoretical underpinnings and their applications to practice and research.	DSVM 4001, 4003, 4005	PG Cert PG Dip MA
3.	Critically evaluate and critique applied research theory and appropriate quantitative and qualitative research methods.	DVSM 4001, 4003,	PG Cert PG Dip MA
4.	Critically demonstrate autonomous learning in the choice and design of an original project which has crucial relevance to domestic and sexual violence theory and/or practice.	DSVM 4005	MA

Table 3 cognitive and intellectual skills outcomes for module code/s

Cognitive and Intellectual skills			
5.	Develop advanced critical thinking skills in response to theories, problems and debates within the study of DSV.	DSVM 4001, 4003, 4004.	PG Cert PG Dip MA
6.	Process and articulate arguments and challenges in a variety of communication media from the field of study of DSV.	DSVM 4003, 4004.	PG Dip MA
7.	Demonstrate originality and critical analytical thinking skills to enhance knowledge and relevance to practice.	DSVM 4003, 4004.	PG Dip MA
8.	Demonstrate critical thinking in the analysis and interpretation of secondary sources and primary data where appropriate.	DSVM 4005	MA

Table 2 learning skills and capabilities related to employability outcomes for module code/s

Skills and capabilities related to employability			
9.	Demonstrate an advanced appreciation of ethical principles in relation to professional practice and research with service users and providers.	DSVM 4002, 4003, 4004.	PG Cert PG Dip MA
10.	Critically appraise a range of sources of knowledge and evidence to inform assessment and intervention approaches to responding to DSV.	DSVM 4002, 4004.	PG Cert PG Dip MA
11.	Articulate and critically present advanced knowledge and application to problems and issues in responding to the concern of DSV.	DSVM 4002, 4003, 4004.	PG Cert PG Dip MA
12.	Develop as reflective practitioners and advance understanding and awareness of processes in reflective and emancipatory writing and research.	DSVM 4005	MA

Table 3 transferable/key skills outcomes for module code/s

Transferable/key skills			
13.	Develop and sustain self-motivation and direction through study to continue as a self-autonomous learner in research and practice.	DSVM 4003 4004.	PG Dip MA
14.	Continue to enhance personal/professional development of critical thinking and decision making skills to complex situations in the context of DSV.	DSVM 4002, 4004.	PG Cert PG Dip MA
15.	Increased ability to present high quality verbal and written communications following the scholarly conventions of assessment and publication.	DSVM 4003 4004	PG Dip MA
16.	Communicate findings effectively demonstrating high standards of clarity and coherence and using accepted scholarly conventions.	DSVM 4005	MA

14. Assessment strategy

Students on these awards will experience a diverse range of assessment approaches which should enable each student to demonstrate their developing knowledge, understanding, appreciation and skills competency in responding to the concern of DSV. The [University's Assessment Policy](#) is an important point of reference and provides specific guidance on the programme's assessment strategies. The assessment strategy is developed to nurture reflective and reflexive research-practitioners who are confidently expert in adapting and evaluating theoretical concepts and models of DSV. Subsequent to thorough assessment of learning and development, the student should be able to apply their knowledge and skills effectively, incorporating creative problem solving approaches within a wide range of hypothetical professional contexts presented by the tutor, such approaches will facilitate taught skills and performance feedback to each student.

At Masters level study, the student is expected to operate at the high standards to meet the demands of critical thinking, debate and writing through the assessment process of level 7 modules. Each student will be required to contribute to their individual learning and the collective learning of their peer group as required by tutorials, seminars and presentations. The student will be expected to research actively and independently, developing and adapting a critical reading and academic writing strategy, reflecting on the range of literature and research within the field of study of DSV. Formative assessments will be set or negotiated as appropriate within the early stages of each 30 credit module, the Formative assessment should inform the Summative assessment culminating in a robust assessment pattern to demonstrate the acquired advanced learning and development on completion of each module.

Each module of the Masters programme will include elements of written assessment, and forms of individual and collective presentation to enhance creative approaches to showcase the student's transferable knowledge and skills. Each item of assessed work will provide the opportunity to demonstrate the sophisticated and critical understanding and knowledge at this advanced level of study as required by the QAA descriptors for Masters engagement of study.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Table 4 award map for each level of the course

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)		
			PG Cert	PG Dip	MA
DSVM4001	Theoretical Perspectives on Gender, Violence and Interpersonal Relationships.	30	M	M	M
DSVM4002	Recognition, Responses and Impact of Violence.	30	M	M	M
DSVM4003	Preparing for Independent Research	30		M	M
DSVM4004	Public Health Responses to Violence and Managing Perpetrators.	30		M	M
DSVM4005	Dissertation	60			M
Total Credits		180			
PG Certificate To be awarded the PG Cert Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence students must successfully complete 60 credits at Level 7: Modules DSVM4001 and DSVM4002.					
PG Diploma To be awarded the PG Dip Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence students must successfully complete DSVM4001, DSVM4002, plus DSVM4003 and DSVM 4004 to a total minimum of 120 credits at Level 7.					
Masters (MA/MSc/MBA) To be awarded the Masters, students must complete a total of 180 credits at Level 7 including 60 credits from the dissertation.					

These awards will recruit from a wide range of professional disciplines and the teaching has traditionally been facilitated via teaching blocks as a means of widening participation and bolstering inclusivity of access. This commitment will continue with an enhanced delivery of blended learning provision to increase recruitment to the programme from a wider range both nationally and internationally.

Each semester Modular Teaching Blocks x 2, of Face to Face (F2F) and blended learning provision is illustrated by the example of DSVM 4001 in the following table:

DSVM 4001 – Theoretical Perspectives on Gender, Violence and Interpersonal Relationships.

TEACHING BLOCK 1

Thursday - on campus	Friday – on campus	Saturday – off site
Face to Face lectures – all day attendance	Face to Face lectures – all day attendance	Online Learning Activities (OLA) – to be completed at pre-arranged time WITH tutor AND self-directed OLAs to be completed as directed by tutor.
AND		

TEACHING BLOCK 2		
Thursday - on campus	Friday – on campus	Saturday – off site
Face to Face Lectures – all day attendance	Face to Face lectures – all day attendance	Online Learning Activities (OLA) – to be completed at pre-arranged time WITH tutor AND self-directed
		OLAs to be completed as directed by tutor.

The above table demonstrates that each student would have 4 face to face days for each module of study in one academic semester at the university with their tutors and peers. The face to face contact days for each module will be Thursday and Friday; a Full Time student will be required to attend 8 contact days in 1 academic semester, where as a Part-Time student will attend 4 days in 1 academic semester. The module will also comprise online learning through the Blackboard facility.

Students who wish to progress to the PG Diploma should submit a course change request via their SOLE page, before the end of their PG Certificate.

Students who wish to progress to the MA should submit a course change request via their SOLE page, before the end of their PG Diploma.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at Level 7 of the [OfS sector recognised standards](#).

The Framework for HE Qualifications

The course has been developed following the Descriptor for a qualification at Masters (M) level: Masters degree (UK Quality Code Part A: Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, September, 2014) ensuring that programme qualifications adequately represents the standard of achievement required for Masters programme. The programme Learning Outcomes are mapped onto the FHEQ descriptors to ensure alignment with the descriptors that are within the Course Handbook.

The course incorporates Masters Degree Characteristics that specify the characteristics in relation to purpose, content, structure and delivery, teaching, learning and assessment approaches, including the relationship between transferable skills, employability beyond graduation from the Masters programme.

17. Support for students

All students joining the course will be invited to join an induction programme run by the programme tutorial staff of the CVP. This event, usually held immediately before the commencement of the course is to support the transition of every student to this new course of study, including those who have not been engaged in academic study for a significant period of time and offers information about the course, modules, study support, information and communication technology, an opportunity for students to meet their peers and the CVP staff. Please see the following hyperlink for details of [CVP Staff](#). The induction event will include a guided tour of the resources and an introduction to booking equipment and technical workshops and our dedicated Subject Librarian will be invited to attend the induction also. Students of the programme will be required to participate in an induction programme and to fully engage with the provisions of Blended Learning which is integral to the student's teaching and learning experience and towards their successful completion of study.

The University has a Diversity and Equality Policy, please see the following links – <https://www.worc.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx> <https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/> these equality schemes and action plans promote equality in relation to race, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation.

Students will be encouraged to seek non-academic support as appropriate via Student Services and the Disability & Dyslexia Service, the latter offers support for students who may experience mental health concerns, dyslexia issues or physical impairment or other difficulties which may impact on their teaching and learning experiences and their enjoyment of study at the university.

The University's Information and Communication Technology service provides UW students and staff with support for information technology and media, see hyperlink for further details: <http://www.worc.ac.uk/ict>

The allocated Personal Academic Tutor should be a student's regular point of contact during their time at the University. The tutor is allocated from the course team to ensure a familiarity with the student's programme. The Personal Academic Tutor will also respond to students' requests for support and help with to ensure successful completion of the student's their academic work, either at subject level or by referral to other University facilities. Please see the attached link for further details http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Personal_Academic_Tutoring_Policy.pdf

18. Admissions

Admissions policy

The programme is developed to support practitioners and those interested in research who are working with victim/survivors and perpetrators of DSV, and is therefore committed to meeting the needs of a diverse student recruitment group, both nationally and internationally.

Entry requirements

Prospective students will be required to have

- A relevant first degree gained at a 2.1 (or equivalent level) in a health related or social science discipline, or similar subject discipline **or**
- A relevant professional qualification and experience, including but not exclusively, Social Work, Police, Probation, Health and Education **or**
- Significant experience of working with victims and/or perpetrators of domestic or sexual violence over at least 12 months (please see admissions procedures below).

The programme encourages and welcomes applications from individuals of good character and personal integrity, who adheres to principles of anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practices within their personal and professional contexts. These qualities may be provided as evidence in the Personal Statement as part of the application process for consideration by the Applications Tutor.

Overseas applicants whose first language is not English, will need a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 for the level 7 course.

For further information on other acceptable qualifications, please see the following link: [UW Admissions Policy](#)

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

DBS clearance is not required by the student as they will not be involved in a Work Based Learning module for the programme. However, for the purpose of research with service users in their workplace, this requirement should already have been met by their employer.

If a student who is not in employment wishes to conduct research directly with service users, then they may be required to apply for DBS or Enhanced DBS clearance to satisfy the requirements of the host organisation. The fee for a DBS clearance will be met by the student, but the DBS must be completed through the University of Worcester.

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>

Admissions procedures

Potential students should apply directly via Registry Services (Admissions) at the University of Worcester, the admission process is based on the assessment of the required information on the course application form. In some cases an applicant may be required to attend for interview, this may be via attending in person, skype or telephone. These applicants will need to evidence through Recognition of Prior Learning procedures how their knowledge and experience demonstrates their potential to meet the programme requirements, which includes meeting the academic requirements of the programme, the ability to communicate effectively and an appropriate understanding of the dynamics of domestic and/or sexual violence. The course team will provide further guidance if required.

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 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.
- 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 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.
- Students who submit 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

- Students are entitled to retake 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 who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.
- 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 Awards

Table 5 requirements for awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7 from DSVM 4001 and DSVM 4002
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7 from DSVM 4001, DSVM 4002, DSVM 4003 and DSVM 4004
Masters (MA)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7, DSVM 4001, DSVM 4002, DSVM 4003, DSVM 4004 and DSVM 4005

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

Classification of Masters

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

Method 1

- Candidates will be awarded a Distinction where they have attained an average of A- (PD) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award.
- Candidates will be awarded a Merit where they have attained an average of C+ (PM) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award.

Method 2

- Candidates will be awarded a Distinction, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade A- (PD) or higher
- Candidates will be awarded a Merit, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade C+ (PM) or higher

Candidates will be awarded a Pass where they have not fulfilled the rules for Method 1 or Method 2, but are eligible for the award of a Masters.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

The current programme is expected to attract a range of students who are already in employment, working within Children's Social Care, Health, Criminal Justice System, Education and Women's Service Providers in the domestic and sexual violence sectors. The emphasis on developing professional knowledge and practice has implications for having an impact in service development and provision within communities, in addition to promoting leadership and instigating positive change. These are attributes that should be appreciated by each graduate and should promote opportunity for career progression within their respective discipline and service sector. Career progression may include advancement in management and leadership in the sector of domestic and sexual violence. All students will be encouraged to maintain their professional development through conference and seminar events facilitated by the CVP, including the possibility of presenting at conferences, as has been the experience of past students due to their professional expertise. Similarly, students will be invited to participate in the developing CPD programme of the Centre and to consider the opportunity of applying to forthcoming Research Degrees studentship awards and study.

Student employability

Undertaking the range of mandatory modules offered on this programme, including the practice based focus, provides students with a range of transferable skills. The module specifications are applicable to a variety of work environments dedicated to working with victims and survivors of abuse or with perpetrators of abuse. The course has been designed to enhance knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of Domestic and Sexual Violence and the importance of inter-disciplinary and multi-agency working to provide greater protection for victims and to ensure improved measures for holding perpetrators to account and to stop abuse from occurring in the first place. The MA degree can provide a sound progression route for a range of career options and further study as required. Careers advice is provided by UW careers advisors, presentations by other MA graduates, Research degree students and guest speakers.

Links with employers

The Centre for Violence Prevention has ongoing links with key professionals and experts who contribute to the development and learning and teaching of the programme. Students therefore benefit from health professionals from the NHS, specifically Health Visiting and Midwifery. The CVP also has strong links with Safer Places in Essex and this agency also contribute to the teaching of the MA programme, including the Worcestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Advice Centre, West Mercia Women's Aid and Warwick and West Mercia Constabulary.

Consequently the CVP can advance employability prospects through:

Offering flexible study routes which allow opportunities for students who may be in full or part time employment. The application of theory into professional practice is an invaluable combination of qualifications and experience that enhances the student's developing professional profile when applying for graduate jobs.

The CVP can offer additional training relevant to the course sought after by employers, this provision is currently met through the annual programme of conferences, seminar and CPD events facilitated by the centre.

The CVP provides opportunity for students to represent their peers within a range of committees both at course and institute level which can support developing skills of self-advocacy and advocacy for service users and vulnerable groups. The programme may help students to develop an improved appreciation of their developing knowledge

and skills and to engage more with employment opportunities in the sector of DSV. The CVP currently has links with Warwick and West Mercia police, Worcestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Advice Centre (WRSAC) and Essex Local Authority, the following statement is an endorsement of the learning and teaching delivered by the CVP tutorial team at Essex:

'[CVP]...colleagues have provided an excellent level of teaching and support to our staff completing these modules and we have been delighted to have a very high completion and pass rate for our social workers. The team have been able to apply their knowledge and expertise to the setting in which we are working and make the content relevant and useful in practice' (ELA, 2017).

Access to a variety of funding and bursaries to enable an involvement within research and other extra-curricular and international opportunities in addition to access to specialist staff offering careers guidance tailored to your academic subject area through our [Careers Service](#).

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.