

## Programme Specification for Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness

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 awards</b>	Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness
5.	<b>Programme title</b>	Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness
6.	<b>Pathways available</b>	NA
7.	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b>	Blended learning with a combination of direct contact teaching at the University of Worcester and on-line learning activities. Direct contact teaching activities may take place in daytime blocks, evenings or weekends.
8.	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	Part-time over one semester
9.	<b>UCAS Code</b>	N/A
10.	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	Whilst there is no QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Law at Master's level, this Programme Specification has taken into account subject specific criteria given in the <a href="#">QAA Undergraduate Subject Benchmark Statement: Law (2015)</a> , within the context of the <a href="#">QAA Characteristics Statement: Master's Degree (2015)</a> and the <a href="#">Framework for Higher Education (2008)</a> Qualification Descriptors for Level 7
11.	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision</b>	December 2015 August 2016 (Regulations amended - Section 20)

### 12. Educational aims of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness

There is growing recognition of the role of the expert witness in health and social care litigation, and in the case of *Jones v Kaney* [2011] UKSC 13, the Supreme Court made clear that expert witnesses may be liable for negligent expert evidence. It is therefore important that any practitioner working as an expert witness ensures that he/she fully understands his/her roles and responsibilities. The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness has therefore been designed to prepare subject experts in a health or social care discipline for their role as an expert or professional witness. The student will develop skills in to provide good quality written and oral evidence within the UK legal framework, including report writing; understanding court procedures, and giving evidence.

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

The intended learning outcomes for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness are underpinned by the subject specific criteria given in the [QAA Undergraduate Subject Benchmark Statement: Law \(2015\)](#), set within the context of the [QAA Characteristics Statement: Master's Degree \(2015\)](#), the [Framework for Higher Education \(2008\)](#) Qualification Descriptors for Level 7, and the legal framework as set out in the [Civil Procedure Rules](#) (Ministry of Justice 2015).

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness has been designed to enable students to:

1. Critically evaluate the roles of professional witness and expert witness in a range of legal settings.
2. Demonstrate a critical understanding of procedure rules, protocols and rules of evidence as applied to professional and expert witness.
3. Critically appraise written expert witness evidence.
4. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the complex balance of obligations assumed by expert or professional witness, including those to the Court, and to professional regulatory bodies.
5. Demonstrate a critical awareness of the impact of their written, verbal and non-verbal communication skills when giving oral expert or professional evidence.

**Learning, teaching and assessment:**

In accordance with the [QAA \(2008: p.21\) Descriptors for Master's level study](#), the learning and teaching methods employed within the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness will provide students with a range of opportunities to develop the skills necessary *“demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level”*. The learning and teaching strategy also supports the Master's Level student's development of the ability to make decisions in *“complex and unpredictable situations”* inherent to their on-going ability to act as independent learners in both the identification and fulfilment of their CPD needs. Students will approach the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness with a range of professional and academic experience, therefore learning opportunities will be developed to capture this richness of experience and allow students to learn from, and with each other.

**Learning and teaching methods used will include:**

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness will provide students with opportunities for students to engage with a range of learning and teaching methods including tutor led direct contact University based teaching days with employing methods such as seminar discussions; case reviews; key-note lectures; mock trials; advocacy sessions and tutorials. This university based teaching will be complemented by a range of on-line provision, such as such as on-line quizzes; guided reading, consideration of clinical vignettes and facilitation of on-line discussion of key issues arising during the course of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness. Online learning (making use of the University of Worcester's Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment), and other independent study activities are an important part of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness, but this does not mean that students learn in isolation. The use of technology will allow for collaborative activities with peers and for online tutorials to take place between students and academic staff. The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness involves 4 x 7 hours direct contact, university based days, and 272 expected hours of independent study. This gives a total of 300 hours learning and teaching activity for the award.

The table below shows the relative weightings of each assessment item for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness.

	Written open book exam – report critique	Open book exam – statement writing	Critique of court room performance and written statement	Assessed court room skills – cross examination
<b>LEHS4008</b>	40%	P/F	30%	30%

### Programme delivery

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness may be studied on a part-time basis over one semester.

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness is delivered through a combination of University based sessions and a range of on-line learning delivered through the Blackboard VLE in recognition of the benefits of flexible learning. These elements of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness have been developed in accordance with the [University of Worcester Quality Standards for Flexible and Distributed Learning](#).

### 14. Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness has been designed in accordance with the [University of Worcester Assessment Policy](#), and the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#), and enables students to acquire the knowledge and skills required at Master's Level. Specifically:

- As a collective, the individual assessment items enable students to demonstrate fulfilment of the Learning Outcomes for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness.
- Students are supported through the use of the University of Worcester grade descriptors for level 7. These form the basis of the assessments for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness and are provided within the Award outline.
- A range of assessment methods have been designed to facilitate the development of advanced skills, knowledge and academic practice.
- Students will receive detailed written guidance to support the completion of both formative and summative assessments. Students will be clearly directed to a range of relevant guidance, including the Oxford University Standards for the Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA); the [University of Worcester Assessment Policy](#); the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#) and the MSc Programme Handbook containing the Institute of Health and Society Confidentiality Policy and Word Limit Policy.
- The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness will present students with a range of opportunities to submit formative assessment items. Formative assessment is key to the student's learning and development, and students are therefore expected to engage with the formative assessment process. Students will receive detailed, written feedback from the Lead for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness for both formative and summative assessments. In addition to this, tutor and peer feedback in a range of formats will be on-going throughout the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness. Feedback strategies are constructively aligned with both [the University of Worcester Assessment Policy](#), and the [University of Worcester Student Feedback Charter](#).

### 15. Programme structures and requirements

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness requires the successful completion of one module that equates to 30 Credits at Level 7.

Module Code	Module Title	Credits at Level 7	Status Mandatory (M) Optional (O)	Exclusions
<b>Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness</b>				
LEHS4008	The Expert and Professional Witness	30	M	None

## 16. **QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality**

This award is located at level 7 of the FHEQ, and is part of the University of Worcester Taught Courses Regulatory Framework (TCRF), and has been developed to reflect the QAA (2015) Characteristics Statement: Master's Degree, taking into account subject specific criteria given in the QAA Undergraduate Subject Benchmark Statement: Law (2015). The Learning Outcomes for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness have been constructed in accordance with the QAA Framework for Higher Education (2008) Qualification Descriptors for Level 7.

## 17. **Support for students**

Student support is a central component of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness and is available from within the Academic Unit of Applied Professional Studies, the Institute of Health and Society and from the wider University.

Students registering for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness will usually be engaging in part-time study over a period of one semester. Given the short duration of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness, students registered for this award will not have the opportunity to engage with the Personal Academic Tutor system that they would if engaging in a more extended period of study. Instead, they will be encouraged to engage with the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Leader on at least one occasion to facilitate personal Professional Development Planning, and to review progress and achievement through the course of study.

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Leader will play a significant role in enhancing the students' academic and personal experience of studying at the University of Worcester. In addition to supporting the students' academic development, the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Leader may also act as the students' first contact point for any other difficulties they may be experiencing during their time as students. Not only will the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Leader help students who have not studied at Level 7 before make the transition into Masters level study, but they will also help the students to understand how the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness approaches learning, skills development and assessment.

Students are advised to maintain regular contact with the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Leader with email being the communication tool of choice. All tutorial contact is recorded in writing, with a copy made available for the student.

All students will have access to UW on line services, library and other support, including:  
<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/index.htm>  
<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/disability-and-dyslexia.htm>

### **Induction**

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness team offer an induction programme for all new students. The induction programme is normally positioned at the start of each semester for new entrants to the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness, and provides students with the opportunity to meet with members of the teaching team. Students will have the opportunity to attend sessions introducing them to the principles of learning and teaching in higher education; access to learning and teaching resources (including Virtual Learning Environments for example Blackboard and library resources, and specialist legal databases such as LexisNexis® and Westlaw), and referencing using the Oxford University Standards for the Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA, 2012 4<sup>th</sup> edn). There will also be presentations from registry services, student services and the student union.

Given the value the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness team place on the induction programme, there is an expectation that all students will attend. An exception may be made if the student has been an undergraduate within the Institute of Health and Society at the University of Worcester in the two years prior to their registration for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness. Students should contact the Programme Lead for further advice.

### **Disability and dyslexia support**

The University has a Diversity and Equality Policy and does not discriminate directly or indirectly in the admission, progress and assessment of students. The Disability and Dyslexia Service within Student Services provides specialist support on a one to one basis. Additionally the University's Assessment arrangements for disabled students sets out policy, procedures <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/your-home/disability-and-dyslexia-support.html>

### **Additional course information**

All students are provided with a comprehensive MSc Law and Ethics for Health and Social Care Programme Handbook (within which this award sits). A Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Programme outline and assessment guidelines are also provided. All students have access to a personal SOLE page, with a single sign-on to an email account, learning support, course information, life support, recreation and living. This includes links to Blackboard where there are dedicated pages for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness. These are the main way in which both staff and students communicate with each other. A wide range of information and learning services are available to students including e-learning platforms including Blackboard. Additionally students have access to IT, Media and library resources, including dedicated subject librarians for health and law.

Further specific Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness information can be found in the following:

- Induction arrangements and/or academic induction day
- MSc Law and Ethics for Health and Social Care Programme Handbook
- Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Programme outline
- Study skills support through the personal academic tutoring system
- Online support
- Subject specific Library Services support through IHS Academic Liaison Librarian
- Student Services Support: <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/index.htm>
- ICT support: ICT Help Guides: <http://www.worc.ac.uk/ict/guides/>

## **18. Admissions**

### **Admissions Policy**

Entry to the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness is governed by [The University of Worcester Admissions Policy](#).

This award is open to health and/or social care practitioners or academics, or individuals with a demonstrable interest in developing their knowledge and skills as an expert witness.

Admission is via the University of Worcester Registry Services. Applications forms can be downloaded from the [University of Worcester website](#), or by contacting [Registry Services](#).

### **Entry requirements**

- An honours degree at 2:2 level or above in a relevant subject, or equivalent professional qualifications, experience and evidence of continuing professional development in appropriate areas.
- Students whose first language is not English will be expected to have reached a sufficient standard on admission to the programme (e.g. First degree awarded by an English medium school, or IELTS - 7.5 or higher required). Please note that IELTS exams must be no more than two years old at the start of the course.
- International students must hold a qualification equivalent to a UK first or second class honours degree from a school where English was the language of instruction. Students can check their qualification with the International Recruitment Team at: [international@worc.ac.uk](mailto:international@worc.ac.uk)
- UK students being sponsored by their employer must provide evidence of employer approval and payment agreement.

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

An integrated range of strategies are used by the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness team to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality and standards of learning and teaching:

- Informal midpoint and formal, anonymous end of Programme evaluation by students. The Lead for the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness will provide a formal response and action plan which is available for current and future students to access via Blackboard.
- The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness team are responsive to feedback given within external examiner reports, and use this to inform both modifications to processes where necessary, and enable continuance of good practice.
- The Lead for Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness presents the overall evaluation of the Programme through the Programme Annual Evaluation Report which is presented at the Institute's Quality Committee.
- All assessment items are marked and moderated in accordance with the [University of Worcester Assessment Policy](#).
- A sample of all assessments (as specified by the [University of Worcester Assessment Policy](#)) are sent to the External Examiner and a Post Examination Board Moderation committee is held to address, consider and manage any identified issues.
- The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness team are actively involved in staff development activities to enhance the learning and teaching experiences of the students on this Programme.
- Scholarly activity for staff is actively encouraged to enhance the learning and teaching experience for students with an emphasis on research activity; conference presentation; writing for publication; doctoral level study and post-doctoral enquiry.
- [Peer Supported Review of Teaching](#) provides space and structure for professional reflection and dialogue to enhance teaching practice for the benefit of individual staff, their peers and the learning experiences of students.
- A Student Academic Representative (StAR) will be elected for the Programme, and provided with training for the role by the Student Union. This is available via distance learning.
- Course Management Committee meetings every semester, facilitated by the Programme Lead, involving StAR's, academic and practice colleagues to allow ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness.

- Proposals for modifications to the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness including assessment strategies are reviewed by students and the External Examiner for the Programme, before being presented for approval at the Institute of Health and Society's Institute Quality Committee.
- The Institute of Health and Society student forum provides further opportunities for students to inform good practice.
- Staff can also apply for monies to facilitate the completion of Learning and Teaching Projects e.g. Students as Academic Partner (SAP) projects and through the Institute's Learning and Teaching Committee.
- A Higher Education Academy (HEA) teacher-accredited course for new staff and promotion of membership of the HEA.
- Members of the academic team are external examiners and one member of the academic unit is a reviewer for the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). The team includes Fellows of the HEA.

## 20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework. The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness Programme requires successful completion of one module: LEHS4008. The University of Worcester Regulation of assessment for modules will therefore apply.

### Requirements to pass modules

- LEHS4008 is assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specification.
- The minimum pass mark for LEHS4008 is D-.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass LEHS4008, and a pass mark in each item of assessment is required.
- LEHS4008 has attendance requirements
- Full details of the assessment requirements for LEHS4008, including the assessment criteria, are published in the LEHS4008 module outline, and in the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness 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-.

### Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness	Passed LEHS4008

The award is unclassified.

## **21. Indicators of quality and standards**

### **Achievements of Staff**

The Programme Leader is Fellow of the Higher Education Academy; a Registered Nurse; a barrister, and is the author of a range of publications relating to Law and Ethics in Health and Social Care. The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness team offers a range of professional, academic and research expertise relevant to the role of the expert witness in health and social care, including social work, nursing, midwifery, medicine, policing, emergency and pre-hospital care, solicitors and the Bar. The involvement of teaching staff in teaching, research and publishing in the field ensures students are well supported by active, knowledgeable teachers.

### **QAA Institutional Audit**

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness teaching team is delivered within the context of the wider University of Worcester academic quality framework. An Institutional Audit was conducted by the QAA in March 2011 which confirmed that students can place confidence 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 them. The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness is delivered in accordance with wider University methods which have been identified by the audit team as indicators 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.

### **Research Excellence Framework 2014**

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness will be delivered by colleagues working within the Institute of Health and Society, and the wider University of Worcester academic community. The results of the Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF 2014) were published in December 2014 and showed that the University was among the most improved Universities for research in the United Kingdom. The University submitted 112 staff (over 4 times as many as in RAE 2008) to 11 subject areas (compared to just 4 in RAE 2008) and saw a third of its research classified as "world-leading" or "internationally excellent", with just under three quarters of its research identified as at least "internationally recognised". Academic staff involved with the delivery of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness are active in scholarly activity in the field of Law and Ethics for Health and Social Care. This is reflected in a range of publications in peer-reviewed outlets, as well as engagement and contribution to external activities.

### **Working with Practice Partners**

The Institute of Health and Society has excellent working relationships with its practice partners, which have been commended by a number of organisations including the NMC, HCPC, Health Education West Midlands and external examiner reports.

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

### **Graduate destinations**

Successful completion of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness will provide health and social care academics and practitioners, the opportunity to engage in Continuing Professional Development that will broaden career opportunities in practice, research and academia. Award holders will also be well placed to progress to other opportunities offered by the University of Worcester, which, depending on their individual profile, may include the MSc Law and Ethics for Health and Social Care, the Doctor of Education or the Doctor of Health Sciences. Students may also wish to consider



registering for an MPhil or PhD. Whilst this award does not constitute part of the academic or vocational training for practitioners of law, graduates may also wish to explore the possibility of undertaking additional training with the aim of becoming a para-legal, solicitor or barrister.

### **Student employability**

Students will study for this award on a part-time basis, as a means of developing their existing practice. They will therefore continue with their existing career professional role in health and social care. They may remain in this role upon completion of the award (albeit with an enhanced profile of experience, knowledge and skills), or choose to branch into a more specialised area of practice or leadership role. The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness provides students with the opportunity to develop transferrable skills in time management, intellectual leadership, organisation, academic writing, and the use of information technology. The University of Worcester also provides careers education and support opportunities. Subsequently, award holders will be well placed to explore a variety of onward employment options.

### **Links with employers**

The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness was developed in consultation with local practitioners of health, social care and law, and in close collaboration with the Worcestershire Medico-Legal Society, a local forum for practitioners of medicine, healthcare and law. The Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness has been designed to enable students to tailor their award to meet their own professional and/or academic needs.

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness 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 can be found in the LEHS4008 module outline and the Programme handbook provided to all students at the start of the Postgraduate Award Professional Development Expert Witness.