

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Postgraduate Certificate Advocacy for Victims of Sexual Violence

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>	Postgraduate Certificate
5.	<b>Programme title</b>	Advocacy for Victims of Sexual Violence
6.	<b>Pathways available</b>	N/A
7.	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b>	Taught programme: University of Worcester
8.	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	This is a part time course that is modular. Each module will normally be delivered over two x 3 day blocks during a single semester.
9.	<b>UCAS Code</b>	N/A
10.	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	The course is in line with QAA Masters Level Characteristics (2010) See <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/MastersDegreeCharacteristics.pdf">http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/MastersDegreeCharacteristics.pdf</a>  The course is also in line with Skills for Justice Occupational Standards (NOS) 'Providing independent sexual violence advice and advocacy' (2012).
11.	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision</b>	Approved Audit and Review Committee May 2012 August and October 2014 (Regulations) <b>August 2016 (Regulations amended - Section 20)</b>

#### 12. Educational aims of the programme

Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) are victim focused advocates, funded to work with victims of recent and historic serious sexual crimes. The ISVA role was commissioned by Baroness Scotland through the Home Office Violent Crime Unit in 2005 and the government continue to support the development of this role. This qualification supports the ISVA role at a level appropriate to give professional status and recognition.

The overall aim of the programme is to give students an in depth knowledge and understanding of the ISVA role and responsibilities in line with legislation and policy and National Occupational Standards and to support their development of associated skills. 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 sexual violence.
2. Support students to examine and develop a critical understanding of legislation, policy and good practice frameworks for engaging with and supporting individuals who have experienced or who are experiencing sexual violence
3. 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
4. Enable students to develop a strong sense of professional identity through reflective practice.

5. Produce able and qualified ISVAs in line with National Occupational Standards as follows:

SFJSV1	Advocate on behalf of victims/survivors of sexual violence
SFJSV2	Communicate and engage with victims/survivors of sexual violence
SFJSV3	Carry out an assessment to identify the needs and risks to victims/survivors of sexual violence
SFJSV4	Provide access to information and support for victims/survivors of sexual violence
SFJSV5	Work in partnership with agencies to address sexual violence
SFJSV6	Address callers regarding sexual violence with sensitivity
SFJSV7	Establish and address requirements from callers regarding sexual violence
SFJSV8	Support victims/survivors of sexual violence through the court process
SFJSV9	Support victims/survivors of sexual violence to provided evidence

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

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#### **Knowledge and understanding:**

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of defining sexual violence and critically evaluate existing definitions
2. Critically analyse data on the prevalence of sexual violence taking into account the hidden nature of the issue in diverse communities
3. Evaluate key theoretical perspectives that have been offered to explain sexual violence
4. Critically discuss the impact of sexual violence and the ISVA role and responsibility in supporting victims
5. Critically evaluate historical and contemporary legislation, policy and good practice principles of intervention and reflect on them within multi-agency working contexts
6. Show cognizance of the Criminal Justice System and the ISVA role in supporting victims through this system
7. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards for providing independent sexual violence advice and advocacy

#### **Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

1. A programme of structured interactive lectures, seminars, workshops, group work, presentations, discussion and debate, group and individual tutorials.
2. Use of multi media resources
3. The researching and writing of a variety of assignments and the subsequent written and oral feedback
4. Self-directed research with tutorial guidance and discussion
5. Consistent approach to theory as related to practice
6. Case study analysis
7. Contribution to teaching by service users and practitioners

8. Opportunities for shared learning reflecting and acknowledging diversity in the student's knowledge and experience
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**Cognitive and intellectual skills:**

1. Utilise knowledge and understanding to critically analyse and synthesise complex issues surrounding sexual violence
2. Demonstrate critical thinking and evaluative skills in the analysis and interpretation of data
3. Demonstrate the construction of coherent and reasoned arguments and conclusions
4. Critically synthesise informed judgements on complex ethical and professional issues in relation to the contested nature of sexual violence interventions
5. Reflect on knowledge and understanding to locate and justify a personal position on sexual violence
6. Show sensitivity to the values and interests of diverse others

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

1. The presentation, discussion and analysis of competing theoretical and ideological concepts and their analysis
  2. The presentation, discussion and evaluation of data
  3. The engagement of learners in discussion and analysis of key issues and concepts
  4. Module assessments providing the opportunity to reflect on individual and observed practice
  5. Formative and summative work
  6. The promotion of reflexivity
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**Practical skills relevant to employment:**

1. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through a variety of mediums and in a range of contexts
2. Employ interpersonal and team working skills to effectively collaborate with others
3. Utilise skills of critical discussion, analysis and evaluation
4. Demonstrate a positive attitude to professional development through critical reflection and self-evaluation

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

1. Skills for practice taught within modules
  2. The application of theory to practice
  3. Critical analysis, reflection and self-evaluation
  4. The use of discussion and presentations both formatively and summatively
  5. The sharing of information in small groups and in the class through presentations and discussion
  6. The use of case study material
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### **Transferable/key skills:**

1. Demonstrate advanced oral and written communication using appropriate academic conventions
2. Utilise negotiation and interpersonal skills for problem solving
3. Participate in independent learning, planning and time management
4. Engage in empathic and ethical principles and practice
5. Demonstrate effective use of information technology
6. Critically analyse data
7. Undertake personal reflection, self-assessment and action planning
8. Organisational skills and the ability to prioritise

### **Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

- The embedding of advanced study skills within the course
  - The embedding of interpersonal skills, ethical principles and practice within the course
  - Written assessment in a variety of formats
  - Self management skills developed through research for assessment and the meeting of deadlines
  - Oral skills developed by peer and whole group discussion/debate and presentation delivery
  - Information technology used to support the programme and student learning
  - Reflective and reflexive practitioner approaches
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## **14. Assessment Strategy**

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.

Informal assessment is ongoing via observation, tutorials and questions and answer sessions as well as formative informal presentations. The assessment strategy for the course is designed to enable students to demonstrate the development of their own knowledge, skills and attitudes underpinning practice and 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 related to sexual violence and the ISVA role.

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

- Provision of a range of assessment methods

- High quality feedback provided throughout the course as the result of observation, discussion and question and answer sessions to provide ongoing support.
- 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.
- Anonymous marking where possible.
- Internal and external moderation 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 and module descriptors and grade descriptors have been aligned to assessment grids for each assignment 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. Blackboard 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.

The course is mapped to the Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards for 'Providing independent sexual violence advice and advocacy' (2012)

## 15. Programme structures and requirements

<b>MODUE CODLE</b>	<b>MODULE TITLE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>STATUS (Mandatory or Optional)</b>
ISVA4001	An Introduction to the ISVA: Role, Responsibility and Risk	20	M
ISVA4002	Supporting 'victims' of Sexual Violence	20	M
ISVA4003	Professional Practice: Policy and Procedures	20	M

Modules are sequential with students moving through the course form ISVA4001 to ISVA4003

## 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 levels. 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:

Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards for 'Providing independent sexual violence advice and advocacy'

## **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

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 AcademicTutor.

Due to the nature of the course content, additional 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. The close working relationship with Rape Crisis aids this process.

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
- 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
- Ongoing support via Blackboard and email
- Student representation on the Course Committee
- ILS support from a subject specific librarian

## **18. Admissions Policy**

This course is designed for individuals who have a first degree or equivalent, or who aim to work with 'victims' of sexual violence in the role of ISVA. As such it welcomes:

- Employees of Rape Crisis centres whose role is that of Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)
- Employees whose role is that of ISVA from other organisations/agencies both statutory and voluntary and from SARC's (Sexual Abuse Referral Centres)
- Any person who wishes to gain this professional qualification in order to work as an ISVA

## **Entry requirements**

Prospective students are required to have

- A first degree at second class honours or above in a related field **or**
- A professional qualification in a specific field **or**
- Current practice in the field of sexual violence and be able to demonstrate an ability to study at postgraduate level

## **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**

The admission process is via application form forwarded to the Admissions Office and screened by the Course Leader for eligibility. Those that are deemed eligible according to entry requirements are invited to attend 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 sexual violence, academic qualifications professional experience (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 sexual 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 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 tutor 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.

### **Admissions/selection criteria**

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 based on entry requirements, application form, interview and written essay. Places will be subject to references.

Decisions will be forwarded to the Admissions Office in Registry 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.

Any student not gaining a place will be offered feedback orally or in writing upon request

All successful students will need current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance. Existing clearance used for employment will be accepted but must be accompanied by a signed student statement that they have had no criminal convictions and/or cautions since the date shown on the DBS documentation or declaring any such criminal convictions and/or cautions. Minor offences will not prevent students from participating in this course.

Successful students who do not have current DBS clearance must apply for clearance when accepting their place on the course (to paid for by the student) and must provide the clearance documentation within the first six weeks of the first module or proof from the DBS that the clearance has been delayed.

There is a Code of Student Conduct that students should familiarise themselves with and adhere to.

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

- 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

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 sexual violence practice and research representing 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 Certificate	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map

PG Cert awards are unclassified.

## 21. Indicators of quality and standards

Indicators of quality and standards for this programme include:

- Course meets the requirements set out by the Home Office ISVA Training Fund making the University of Worcester a Home Office approved educational provider
- External Examiner reports.
- Student evaluations.
- Employment of graduate students as ISVA's
- Alignment with Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards for 'Providing Independent Sexual Violence Advice and Advocacy'

## 22. Employability and graduate destinations

This course is specifically designed to prepare students for employment in the role of ISVA in any statutory agency or voluntary organisation. It has been developed at the request of Rape Crisis England and Wales and has had their support throughout. Funding is via the Home Office.

Students may however wish to build on the Postgraduate Certificate to study a Postgraduate Diploma or Masters degree at the University of Worcester or elsewhere. The University of Worcester offers a Masters Degree in Professional Development: The Dynamics of Domestic Violence which may be of particular interest to students completing the Postgraduate Certificate in Advocacy for Victims of Sexual Violence. The MA in Professional Development: The Dynamics of Domestic Violence has been successfully running for six years and has received acclaim locally and nationally.

**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.