

Programme Specification Definitive Document

1. Basic Information

1.1 Awarding Institution:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.2 Teaching Institution:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.3 Locus of Delivery:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.4 Final Award Title:	MA
1.5 FHEQ Level:	7
1.6 Programme Title:	Youth & Community Practice: Research & Leadership
1.7 Mode and Duration of Study:	Full Time – 12 months Part Time – 24 months
1.8 School:	School of Education
1.9 HECoS Code:	100466
1.10 Collaborative Provision Arrangement:	N/A
1.11 Admission Criteria:	Normal University entrance criteria apply (please refer to the website for further details). International students will be expected to meet the English language requirements of IELTS 6.5 or equivalent.
1.12 Accrediting Professional Body/PSRB	N/A
1.13 QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s):	Youth & Community Work (2017)
1.14 Other External Points of Reference:	<u><i>Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ); UK Professional Standards Framework</i></u>
1.15 Language of Study (for learning, teaching and assessment):	English
1.16 Work-Based Learning Arrangements:	YCRM01
1.17 Arrangements for Distance Learning:	Blended learning approach with on-campus and on-line learning and teaching (skype / email/ phone).
1.18 Original Date of Production:	September 2018
1.19 Date of Commencement:	September 2019
1.20 Review Date:	By August 2025

2. Programme Outline

The MA in Youth & Community Practice: Research & Leadership course offers postgraduate study for in the wider field of youth & community practice and provides the opportunity for critical, practice-iterated professional development and advanced scholarship in research which reflect the University's key academic strengths and expertise. The course reflects the University's commitment to values driven education, social mobility and social justice, and the transformational power of education. It provides a high-quality educational experience which offers students significant and challenging opportunities for personal, professional and academic

development in order that they develop as critically reflective practitioners, with the understanding and skills required to work effectively as informal educators with young people and communities.

The MA in Youth & Community Practice: Research & Leadership is aimed at three distinct student communities: qualified youth and community work practitioners who wish to continue their studies, practitioners from the wider field of community-based practice and graduates who wish to embark on a full-time programme of Masters' level study.

The programme is designed to enable students to simultaneously develop knowledge and skills and opportunities to develop their own scholarship through systemic, interdisciplinary, critical and rigorous enquiry, high level reflection, and literature-based and research activities. It is a flexible and practice-centred programme that allows students to focus on their area of interest. Students study a 'research core' of 80 credits, complete a specialism module (30 credits) and a practice-based professional project (30 credits).

3. Distinctive Features

As an academic subject applied through professional practice, the MA in Youth & Community Practice is distinguished by its focus on professional practice that is informed by the identification of, and response to, needs and aspirations through dialogue and mutual aid. Youth & community practice is a distinctive, yet diverse field held together by a commitment to a set of shared values; participation, inclusion, empowerment, partnership and learning.

The focus on professional practice is a key element of what makes the programme distinct; students apply their academic knowledge and understanding to their direct work with young people and communities. Additionally, the pedagogy employed on the programme is, as far as possible, congruent with the educational processes that students use in community settings, whilst recognising the formal and assessed nature of the degree.

The use of Master Classes is also a distinguishing factor, enabling students to critically engage in national and international theory and practice debates and with research and innovation. Working alongside students on the MA in Youth & Community Work and active engagement in the 'e-community of practice' supports students to develop their collaborative networks and contribute to the wider development of practice through dissemination of their work.

4. Programme Aims

The programme aims to:

- Enable students to develop a level of knowledge, understanding, reflection and independent learning ability commensurate with a master's level award;
- promote understanding of young people and communities in the context of difference and inequality through which students develop inclusive and anti-oppressive practice;
- promote understanding of youth and community work characterised by its attention to values, principles, purposes and processes, and enable students to develop an educational practice compatible with these to meet the current and future needs of young people and communities;
- encourage students to be reflexive and reflective practitioners in order that they have confidence in their ability to explore complex professional dilemmas from an ethical base;
- enable students to engage critically with a variety of policy contexts and with complex fields of accountability.

5. Programme Learning Outcomes

Programme outcomes have been developed in such a way that they emphasise the integration and envisioning of theory and practice.

Knowledge & understanding:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

1. An in-depth understanding of key concepts and theoretical perspectives and frameworks within and surrounding youth and community work.
2. An enhanced understanding and a commitment to the values in youth & community work, as well as a critical awareness of them in practice.
3. A critical awareness of disadvantage and inequality and an ability to critically evaluate a range of anti-oppressive approaches and practice strategies to address such issues.
4. A comprehensive understanding of a range of informal educational roles played by youth and community workers alongside the different models, approaches and methods of practice.
5. A critical appreciation of the professional role of a youth and community worker, and their contribution to a range of fieldwork settings and contexts including multi professional practice, integrated teams and partnerships.

Intellectual skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

6. An ability to critically analyse policies and practices informed by a range of theoretical perspectives.
7. An ability to critically evaluate limitations and strengths to working with young people and communities in a global context.
8. An ability and readiness to formulate, examine and defend the judgments upon which the role(s) of the youth and community worker are based.
9. An ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing professional tasks, making decisions in complex and unpredictable situations.

Practical skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

10. An ability to operate in complex and unpredictable and / or specialised contexts within an understanding of ethical principles.
11. An ability to develop and evaluate approaches that facilitate young people's individual and collective learning and development.
12. Understanding and application of the design, delivery, monitoring and development (including research) of youth and community service provision.
13. A sophisticated understanding and critical appreciation of practitioner research.

Transferable / key skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

14. An ability to engage in practitioner research within an ethical research framework, with minimal guidance, to develop and extend professional youth and community work practice and provision.
15. A commitment to reflection and reflexivity that challenge their own attitudes in relation to inequality.
16. Initiative, originality and creativity in response to problems and economic, social and environmental issues.

17. A commitment to continuing professional development needs of self and others in response to and in promoting change.
18. The ability to engage confidently in academic and professional communications with others.

6. Learning and Teaching Methods

A range of blended learning and teaching approaches are utilized on the course to enable flexible, student-centred learning. Considerable emphasis is placed on critical enquiry and dialogue in relation to learning and development through practice and for advanced scholarship. The on-campus teaching and learning is conducted through four weekend blocks and includes lecture inputs, student-led inputs and seminar work. E-learning activities via the University Virtual Learning Environment include engagement with a variety of electronic resources and the use of e-learning tools such as Mendeley and Epigeum.

In line with the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy the teaching team is committed to engaging with and developing new approaches to teaching and learning, including the full and active use of the VLE and other e-learning resources. Throughout the course students are encouraged to identify and engage in independent reading to supplement and consolidate teaching and learning and to broaden their knowledge and understanding. The learning and teaching approaches employed through the programme contribute directly to the development of key and transferable skills and professional practice skills. Synthesising practice and theory are central to the course and students are encouraged to develop confidence in using their practice as a site of analysis and to enable discussion and enhance their and others' learning. Additionally, students are assigned a Personal Development Tutor who provides 1:1 support. The Personal Development Tutor role contributes to ensuring a holistic approach to professional development supported by module specific support and learning resources.

Method	Description
Briefing	The provision of relevant information relating to a specific topic usually associated with professional project module and the dissertation.
E- learning	Utilisation of electronic media, normally via the University's virtual learning environment to support learning in a variety of ways. Examples include providing direct access to relevant reading, the use of blogs and interactive discussions, for notices and updates. Also involves engagement with the e-community of practice platform.
Project work	Experiential learning through conduct of a professional practice project
Independent Study	Activities where an individual learner conducts research, or carries out a learning activity, on their own. Can include internet resources, sound and video files on LS, book and handout-based exercises
Lecture	Subject introduced and delivered in a specific timeframe that transmits information.
Master Class	Learning delivered by a practitioner or an academic based on their area of expertise / research may be on-campus or via video.

Seminar	A group of people developing an area that has already been introduced on the course. Generally it involves reading, review or observation of resources followed by discussion and feedback.
Supervision	Tutorials offer guidance, supervision and support and can be conducted via telephone, e mail or on-line
Tutorial (1:1 or group)	Tutorials offer guidance, supervision and support and can be conducted F2F or via telephone, e mail or on-line. May be 1:1 or small group.

6.1 Learning Enhancement

Learning enhancements include:

Master Classes

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a series of e-Master Classes delivered by international practitioners and academics alongside undergraduate students and practitioners. These provide a range of perspectives on contemporary issues and research and, additionally they support students to develop their networking skills and professional identity formation.

Postgraduate level academic skills

Students can enhance their learning beyond the course curriculum through participation in weekend workshops alongside other postgraduate students. These workshops offer combinations of taught input, personal reflection, and group-based discussions and focus on postgraduate level academic skills including digital literacy.

Community of practice

Students are encouraged to actively engage in a 'community of practice', for example through the development of learning resources for the wider field, through participation in blogs, and through presenting their work at an annual conference for practitioners. This engagement encourages innovation and supports their networking skill and professional identity formation.

6.2 e-Learning

E-learning and digital literacy are a central component of the course, however the relationship with e-learning and digital literacy will differ depending on the pedagogy of the module. All modules will as a minimum provide information and links to literature and other resources on the VLE. Most of the modules will utilise a blended learning approach using the VLE to provide e-learning activities to support the face-to-face interaction and learning environment. The Master Classes inputs will generally be delivered virtually, and engagement will be both on-line and on-campus. The e-community of practice provides a rich and varied e-learning platform.

7. Modes of Assessment

All student work is assessed in accordance with the University's Assessment Regulations. The purpose of assessment is to demonstrate to staff and students the achievement of individuals in relation to the level of the course (Masters). Assessment is viewed as an aid to learning and as a means of professional and academic self-evaluation. Moderation by an External Examiner enables a wider reference point of the standards attained.

A range of assessment methods are used on the programme in recognition of the impact assessment has on student learning, approaches to learning and how this informs professional development. The assessment strategy recognises and values the variety of approaches to learning styles any given cohort and takes account of students' academic and professional

learning needs. Three modules have formative assessment: YCWM50 – this is the first assessment and students have the option of submitting a draft for feedback; YCRM02- this is first presentation and students will have an opportunity to present an outline of their presentation for feedback; YCWM52 – students will receive formative peer assessment of their proposal. Consideration is given to the development of particular key skills which may be developed through assessment. Examples include presentation skills and self -assessment. Self -assessments are used in both placement modules and supports students to develop their reflective practice and plan for their professional development needs.

The table below indicates the summative assessment outcomes for this master’s Level course in line with the University’s published M level descriptors:

Distinction	70 % - 100%
Merit	60% -69%
Pass	50% - 59%
Condonable Fail	40% - 49%
Fail	0% - 39%

Glossary of Assessment Methods

Method	Description
Essay	An independently studied, academic piece of writing on an approved topic, supported by tutorial guidance.
Research Dissertation	A substantive, independent, research-focused dissertation which makes an identifiable and innovative contribution to knowledge and practice.
Presentation	Students orally and visually present assessment information against module learning and assessment outcomes utilising a range of presentation format options, e.g. poster, PowerPoint, etc. They may be delivered in person or on-line within timed conditions.
Report	A written summative report which discusses and reports on a specific project’s findings and develops students’ learning.
Research Proposal	A proposal outlining and discussing the intended title, aims, objectives, literature background and research methodology for a research project.
Self-assessment	A critically reflective account of development of self usually set against identified learning needs.

8. Exemptions to University Regulations

The modules are not anonymously marked due to the professional development focus of the programme.

9. Work-Based Learning/Placement Learning

The programme includes one module (Professional Project) that is designed to support students’ reflective practice through work-based learning on a full-time, part-time or voluntary basis. If students do not have access to a practice environment the University assists students in locating a suitable setting.

10. Programme Structure

Full Time

Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Assessment	Semester/ Term	Compulsory/ Optional	Condonable/ Non-Condonable
YCWM50	Theory & Practice of Youth & Community Practice	20	100% Coursework	Semester X	Compulsory	Condonable
YCWM51	Leadership & Organisational Contexts	20	100% Coursework	Semester X	Compulsory	Condonable
YCWM52	Research in Practice	20	50% Coursework 50% Practical	Semester X	Compulsory	Condonable
YCRM01	Professional Project	30	90% Coursework 10% Practical	Semester X	Compulsory	Condonable
YCRM02	Specialist Subject Study	30	70% Coursework 30% Practical	Semester X	Compulsory	Condonable
YCWMD5	Research Project	60	100% Coursework	Semester X	Compulsory	Non-Condonable

Key: Semester X = A & B. **Semester B is extended to August 31st.**

- A definitive module descriptor is required for each module

Delivery Pattern

Full-time (12 months)

Duration	Taught Input	Module
September - January	September & November	YCWM50: Theory & Practice of youth & Community Work
September - April	September & November	YCWM52: Research in Practice
September - February	September & November	YCRM02: Specialist Study Project
January - May	January & April	YCWM51: Leadership & Organisational Contexts
February - June	January & April	YCRM01: Professional project
April - August	January & April	YCWMD5: Research Project

Part-time (24 months)

Year 1

Duration	Taught Input	Module
September - January	September & November	YCWM50: Theory & Practice of youth & Community Work
September - February	September & November	YCRM02: Specialist Study Project
January - May	January & April	YCWM51: Leadership & Organisational Contexts

Year 2

Duration	Taught Input	Module
September - April	September & November	YWCM52: Research in Practice
September - January	September & November	YCRM01: Professional Project
April -August	April	YCWMD5: Research Project

The table below shows the various ‘threads’ through the programme. These ‘threads’ provide cohesion and coherence to the programme, so that learning can be developed and built upon in a robust way that makes sense to the students. Links will be forged during learning sessions with content from previous modules, as well as indication of learning on up-coming modules. The ‘threads’ act as a mechanism for students to see how the learning links together in meaningful way and will be made explicit to students throughout the programme.

11. Accrediting Professional Body /Professional Regulatory and Statutory Body (PSRB)

N/A

12. Professional Advisory Group

This course does not have a formal PAG however the importance of ongoing partnership with the field in the development of its suite of youth and community work courses is acknowledged and valued. Staff members have extensive links with a range of organisations and groups locally, nationally and internationally and draw on this wide range of expertise.

The engagement of a wide range of practitioners and employers in the field helps to ensure the courses remain relevant in terms of current practice, and aware of regional developments. Following the demise of the Regional Youth Work Unit, the University sees it has a significant role to play in developing a ‘community of practice’ and student participation will be an integral part of this.

13. Academic Progression Opportunities

Successful participants could be eligible to apply for an MPhil/PhD programme at Plymouth Marjon University, or other institutions.

14. Employability and Career Progression Opportunities

The MA in Youth and Community Practice: Research & Leadership contributes to individual professional development (CPD) and to innovation and creativity in the field of youth and community practice. Successful completion of the programme signals to employers advanced professional scholarship. The course enhances career prospects and progression in a competitive, challenging and rapidly changing jobs market.

15. Support for Students and for Student Learning

The University recognises the value of the whole student experience within Higher Education and students have full access to the University’s facilities for academic and pastoral support and guidance.

The Student Support team offers a confidential and comprehensive service to guide and support students through their studies in the following areas:

- Academic Advice
- Academic Skills
- Accommodation

- Disability and Inclusion Advice Service
- Employability and Careers Development
- Finance and Welfare
- Health
- Student Counselling and Well-being
- Student Volunteering

Student support and guidance is further promoted by the following:

- A Personal Development Tutor for every student in the University
- Academic tutorial staff, including programme leaders, module leaders and tutors
- Extensive library, and other learning resources, and facilities
- Library and study skills guidance material
- Programme handbooks, and module guides
- The Chaplaincy Centre which is at the heart of the University and is used for social gathering, quiet reflection and prayer
- On-campus Nursery provision

16. Student Feedback Mechanisms

The programme team seek to develop positive relationships with students through ongoing and continuous dialogue and regular communication. Students are invited to participate in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES). In addition feedback at programme level is achieved programme and module evaluation surveys. Formally, the Student Staff Liaison Group will meet twice a year. This group brings forwards issues and solutions and receive External Examiner Reports and Responses and Programme and Placement Reports. Minutes of the meetings will be received by the Student Experience Council and Department and Faculty Leadership teams.

17. Other Stakeholder Feedback

Employers and fieldwork practitioners (many of whom are alumni) provide feedback through discussions with University Tutors at placement visits, at the briefing and where possible at events hosted by the University. The 'e-community of practice' platform enables on-going dialogue between students, practitioners, employers and the University.

18. Quality and Enhancement Mechanisms

The quality of the student experience and the standards of the awards are managed, and quality assured through the University's regulations policies and procedures. Student achievement and progression is managed through the Module Assessment Boards (MABs) and the Progression and Award Boards (PABs). Programmes are reviewed annually through University annual monitoring processes, including external examiner contributions, and incorporate student feedback mechanisms at both modular and the programme level reported formally through the University's annual monitoring and reporting cycle.

