

## Programme Specification Definitive Document

### 1. Basic Information

<b>1.1 Awarding Institution:</b>	Plymouth Marjon University
<b>1.2 Teaching Institution:</b>	Plymouth Marjon University
<b>1.3 Locus of Delivery:</b>	Plymouth Marjon University
<b>1.4 Final Award Title:</b>	MA
<b>1.5 FHEQ Level:</b>	7
<b>1.6 Programme Title:</b>	Youth & Community Work
<b>1.7 Mode and Duration of Study:</b>	Full Time – 12 months. Part Time – 24 months
<b>1.8 School:</b>	School of Education
<b>1.9 HECoS Code:</b>	100466
<b>1.10 Collaborative Provision Arrangement:</b>	N/A
<b>1.11 Admission Criteria:</b>	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.
<b>1.12 Accrediting Professional Body/PSRB</b>	National Youth Agency
<b>1.13 QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s):</b>	Youth and Community Work (2017)
<b>1.14 Other External Points of Reference:</b>	<u>Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ); <a href="#">UK Professional Standards Framework</a>; Professional Validation &amp; Curriculum Requirements (NYA 2019); LSI YW00: Youth Work National Occupational Standards (2012); JNC Framework.</u>
<b>1.15 Language of Study (for learning, teaching and assessment):</b>	English
<b>1.16 Work-Based Learning Arrangements:</b>	Placements are an integral part of the programme. 400 hours of professional practice across 2 settings (YCWMP5 & YCWMP6)
<b>1.17 Arrangements for Distance Learning:</b>	Blended learning approach with on-campus and on-line learning and teaching (skype / email/ phone).
<b>1.18 Original Date of Production:</b>	September 2018
<b>1.19 Date of Commencement:</b>	September 2019
<b>1.20 Review Date:</b>	By August 2025

## 2. Programme Outline

Youth & Community Work is a practice of informal education that involves the development of democratic and associational approaches which promote learning and development in the communities or individuals who choose to take part in the programmes that youth & community workers facilitate and support. It is focussed on work with adolescents and adults, with groups as well as individuals, and with personal development in the context of the development of wider social networks and collective engagement with issues of social justice.

The MA in Youth & Community Work leads to both an academic award and the professional qualification in youth work (JNC). The professional qualification is awarded at the postgraduate diploma level. The course 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, and collaboratively with other professionals in the context of the inter-disciplinary workforce.

## 3. Distinctive Features

As an academic subject applied through professional practice, the Youth & Community Work course is distinguished by its focus on practice based on the identification of, and response to, needs and aspirations through dialogue and mutual aid. Youth & Community Work is a distinctive body of professional practice, it is a diverse field held together by a commitment to a set of shared values; participation, inclusion, empowerment, partnership and learning.

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, a crucial factor in their achievement of professional status. Additionally, the pedagogy employed on the programme is, as far as possible, congruent with the educational processes that students are being trained to 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 Practice: Research & Leadership provides the opportunity for students to develop their collaborative networks and develop their understanding of interprofessional practice first-hand. The active engagement in the 'e-community of practice' also supports students to develop their sense of professional identity, network 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 and professional practitioner status;
- 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;

- 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 develop a strong sense of their own professional identity, enabling them to engage critically with a variety of policy contexts and with complex fields of accountability.

## 5. Programme Learning Outcomes

### 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 & community workers alongside the different models, approaches and methods of practice.
5. A critical appreciation of the professional role of a youth & 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 use knowledge and understanding critically to locate and justify their position in relation to their role as a professional youth & community worker.
8. An ability and readiness to formulate, examine and defend the judgments upon which the role(s) of the youth & 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 with an understanding of ethical principles.
11. The skills and abilities necessary for the effective practice of youth & community work and be able to creatively resolve problems encountered in practice.
12. An ability to develop and evaluate approaches that facilitate young people's individual and collective learning and development.
13. Understanding and application of the design, delivery, monitoring and development (including research) of youth & community service provision.

### Transferable / key skills:

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

14. Competence in a range of 'relationship' skills including interpersonal communication and group work in the context of youth & community work practice.

15. An ability to engage in practitioner research within an ethical research framework, with minimal guidance, to develop and extend professional youth & community work practice and provision.
16. A commitment to reflection and reflexivity that challenge their own attitudes in relation to inequality.
17. A capacity to evaluate their limitations and strengths as youth & community work practitioners.
18. Recognition of the need for continuing professional development and ability to plan to address those needs as an indication of commitment to improve practice and in order to respond to the changing nature of the work.
19. The ability to systematically organise and communicate advanced information evidencing appropriate proficiency in English language, using criteria developed for specialist audiences in unpredictably complex contexts (level 7).

In addition to meeting the programme outcomes above, students will be expected to use their placement experience to demonstrate competency of the key roles identified by the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (LS1 YW00). These are generally categorised under five broad headings:

- A. Work with young people and others
- B. Facilitate the personal, social and educational development of young people
- C. Promote inclusion, equity and young people's interests and well-being
- D. Develop youth work strategy and practice
- E. Develop, lead and manage self and 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. Practice-based learning is 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. Practitioners are central to student's learning and professional development on placement in their role as fieldwork supervisors where they assist the students' task of relating and integrating theory and practice. 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.

## Glossary of Learning and Teaching Modes

Method	Description
<b>Briefing</b>	Information-based session, generally related to preparing students for fieldwork or research.
<b>E- learning</b>	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.
<b>Fieldwork</b>	Experiential learning through engagement in professional practice placements.
<b>Fieldwork supervision</b>	Formative process between student and fieldwork supervisor to support the development of reflective practice.
<b>Independent Study</b>	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
<b>Lecture</b>	Subject introduced and delivered in a specific timeframe that transmits information.
<b>Master Class</b>	Learning delivered by a practitioner or an academic based on their area of expertise / research - may be on-campus or via video.
<b>Seminar</b>	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.
<b>Supervision</b>	Tutorials offer guidance, supervision and support and can be conducted via telephone, e mail or skype
<b>Tutorial (1:1 or group)</b>	Tutorials offer guidance, supervision and support and can be conducted F2F or via telephone, e mail or skype. May be 1:1 or small group.
<b>3 Way Meeting</b>	The student actively engages in dialogue in relation to their work with the placement tutor and fieldwork supervisor in order to gain constructive feedback to enable development.

### 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 / national practitioners and academics alongside undergraduate students and regional practitioners. These provide a range of perspectives on contemporary issues and research and, additionally 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 specific areas of work according to the criteria developed in relation to the professional requirements of the National Youth Agency and 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 two External Examiners (Academic and Fieldwork) 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; YCWMP5- 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
<b>Critical Review</b>	A critique of a selected activity, generally taking place in the placement setting.
<b>Essay</b>	A written response to a question based on synthesis and analysis, demonstrating appropriate knowledge and understanding of key current debates in the subject.
<b>Dissertation</b>	A substantive, independent, research-focused dissertation which makes an identifiable and innovative contribution to knowledge and practice.
<b>Placement file</b>	File containing various items e.g. learning contract, reflective recordings, supervision notes, evidence of planning and delivery, self-assessment.
<b>Presentation</b>	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.
<b>Research Proposal</b>	A proposal outlining and discussing the intended title, aims, objectives, literature background and research methodology for a research project.

### The Assessment of Professional Practice

The assessment of professional practice is by pass / fail. Students must pass practice and the academic tasks associated with the module in order to pass the module. The criteria for fieldwork assessment are summarised as follows:

1. Completion of placement hours
2. Active participation in supervision throughout the placement
3. Participation in 3-way meetings
4. Evidence of competence in line with the National Occupational Standards
5. Evidence of consideration of Youth Work values and ethical practice

Fieldwork supervisors receive a briefing on the criteria, including a focus on assessment issues. The final recommendation on fieldwork practice to the Exam Board is the responsibility of the University tutor, who utilises:

- Fieldwork supervisor's Report
- Evidence from discussions at 3-way meetings / any evidence from observations of practice, and any further discussion with students
- Student's Placement File, including a learning contract, a reflective diary and relevant evidence
- External Examiner (Fieldwork)'s comments, if appropriate.

## 8. Exemptions to University Regulations

The MA in Youth and Community Work leads to both an academic and a professional award and hence there are specific regulations that apply. To achieve the award of Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits) and the professional qualification (JNC) students successfully complete three 20 credit modules and two 30 credit placement modules and this represents a potential step off point. Students proceed to complete a 60 credit Research Project to achieve the award of master's degree (180 credits). The academic award and the professional status are inextricably linked and cannot be conferred separately. The placement modules are not condonable. Where students are awarded academic credits but have failed to meet the professional requirements of

the placement modules, they may transfer to the MA Youth & Community Practice: Research & Leadership course.

In order to be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Youth and Community with Professional Qualification students need to achieve sufficient credits and have met the programme attendance requirement of 80%. Students are required to attend the block teaching sessions however engagement in tutorials (group & 1:1) may be on-line via Skype or Zoom for example. Attendance registers are taken on all taught modules and attendance during the placements periods associated with YCW MP5 and YCW MP6 are recorded by students and monitored by fieldwork supervisors. A student will be required to transfer to another course or retake the module to progress through the programme if they have not achieved the required 80% level of attendance. Attendance levels are consistent with NYA requirements and relate to the professional nature of the programme.

Students on this course are required to develop an ethical approach to practice, guided by the Youth Work Values (YW00 Youth Work National Occupational Standards), the Ethical Conduct in Youth Work (NYA 2004), the Code of Ethics (Institute of Youth Work) and the University's 'Assessment of Fitness for Professional Practice'.

## 9. Work-Based Learning/Placement Learning

Placement learning is integral to the programme. There are two placement modules in the course, and these must be completed in two different settings. The focus of each level of placement is intrinsically linked to the taught modules to support students to apply their academic learning to their practice, see NOS Mapping Matrix for detail.

A typical pattern is shown in the table below:

Module Code	Credit	Total hours
YCWMP5	30	252
YCWMP6	30	148
Total hours		400

Placements are managed in accordance with the University Placement Work-based and Placement Learning Policy (2016). Placement learning takes place in a range of settings, in the statutory and voluntary sectors, locally, regionally and occasionally nationally and internationally. Fieldwork Supervisors are provided with a Supervisor's Handbook that outlines the placement requirements, placement assessment processes and supervision requirements. Annual briefings are held to provide inform, update and share learning between the field and the University.



## 10. Programme Structure

Full Time

Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Assessment	Semester/ Term	Compulsory/ Optional	Condonable/ Non- Condonable
<a href="#">YCWM50</a>	Theory & Practice of Youth & Community Work	20	100% Coursework	Semester A	Compulsory	Condonable
<a href="#">YCWM51</a>	Leadership & Organisational Contexts	20	100% Coursework	Semester B	Compulsory	Condonable
<a href="#">YCWM52</a>	Research in Practice	20	50% Coursework 50% Practical	Semester X	Compulsory	Condonable
<a href="#">YCWMP5</a>	Professional Practice (1)	30	50% Coursework 50% Practical	Semester A	Compulsory	Non- Condonable
<a href="#">YCWMP6</a>	Professional Practice (2)	30	50% Coursework 50% Practical	Semester X	Compulsory	Non- Condonable
<a href="#">YCWMD5</a>	Research Project	60	90% Coursework 10% Practical	Semester D	Compulsory	Non- Condonable

Key: Semester

X = semester A + B

D = semester B + C

## Delivery Pattern

Full-time (12 months)

Duration	Taught Input	Module
October - February		YCWM50: Theory & Practice of youth & Community Work
October - May		YWCM52: Research in Practice
October - March		YCWMP5: Professional Practice (1)
February - June		YCWM51: Leadership & Organisational Contexts
October – July		YCWMP6: Professional Practice (2)
February - September		YCWMD5: Research Project

## Part-time (24 months)

### Year 1

Duration	Taught Input	Module
October - February		YCWM50: Theory & Practice of youth & Community Work
September - February		YCWMP5: Professional Practice (1)
February - June		YCWM51: Leadership & Organisational Contexts

### Year 2

Duration	Taught Input	Module
October – July		YCWMP6: Professional Practice (2)
October - March		YWCM52: Research in Practice
February - September		YCWMD5: Research Project

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

The National Youth Agency

## 12. Professional Advisory Group

The University recognises the importance of ongoing partnership with the field in the development of its youth & community work courses. Staff members have extensive links with a range of organisations and groups locally, nationally and internationally. The engagement of a wide range of practitioners and employers in the field is facilitated through formal meetings that help ensure the courses remain relevant in terms of current practice. 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 Work contributes to individual professional development (CPD) and to innovation and creativity in the field of youth and community practice. Successful completion of an MA Youth and Community programme signals to employers advanced professional scholarship. The course enhances career prospects and progression in a competitive, challenging and rapidly changing jobs market. The JNC qualification continues to be valued by employers across the region and nationally and the programme team continues to place significant emphasis on enabling students' professional development. Graduates have found employment in a range of settings including school inclusion, information & advice, sexual exploitation prevention, housing as well as the more traditional youth work settings.

## **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
- Fieldwork Supervisors who offer support and guidance in regard to professional formation
- 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 briefings and 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 award 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.

The programme is annually monitored by the National Youth Work Agency and is informed by the findings published in the NYA Annual Monitoring Report. The quality of placements is assured through the normal University Placement Work-based and Placement Learning regulations and procedures.

