

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the Graduate Diploma in Work with Children and Families programme. This specification is valid for new entrants from September 2010.

The aims of all Graduate Diploma with Specialist Award in Social Work programmes are:

- to provide a professionally and academically stimulating and valuable post-qualifying training at specialist level for social workers working with children, young people and their families.
- to consolidate and develop students' knowledge and skills in specialist work with children, young people, their families and carers within relevant legal and policy contexts.
- to develop students' ability to use reflection and critical analysis to develop and improve their specialist practice, including in inter-professional contexts, drawing systematically, accurately and appropriately on theories, models and relevant research.
- to ensure the integration of social work values into students' practice within an anti-oppressive framework.
- to provide an opportunity for students to begin to develop their knowledge and skills in enabling the professional development of qualifying social work students or colleagues.

The programme is delivered in three stages (Consolidation course; specialist courses and Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS) Stage 1 course), and is designed to be completed through part time study. Each of these three elements will need to be completed within the academic year of registration for that element. The entire graduate Diploma programme would normally be completed in five years. Satisfactory completion of the consolidation course is a pre-requisite for the remaining courses. The programmes provide progressive structures in which students are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. For each course students are required to write an essay.

For the purposes of administration each of the three stages will be treated separately within the student record system because of the pattern of student attendance (i.e. most students do not undertake the specialist courses in the academic year immediately following the Consolidation course). Each of the three elements will be recorded as a separate programme. A student will be awarded the Graduate Diploma once they have completed all three stages. There will be automatic credit transfer between each of the elements of the entire programme. This will include PQ1 (for Consolidation), Practice Teaching Award (for PEPS Stage 1) and a Consolidation or PEPS Stage 1 course from this or another university. Students have to have completed the specialist courses at Royal Holloway to obtain the award from Royal Holloway.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College

Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

### **Learning outcomes**

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research and professional practice of staff. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- Key theories and frameworks for understanding the development of children and young people.
- Contemporary issues in child welfare policy & practice.
- The law in relation to work with children, young people and their families.
- Partnership based practice with children and families.
- Key social work theories and frameworks for assessing and intervening effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with additional and complex needs.
- The use of social work theories and methods to inform effective social work practice
- Critical assessment of the role of research in developing effective evidence informed social work practice
- Models of adult learning and effective ways of promoting the professional development of social work competencies in others.

#### *Skills and other attributes*

- Consolidate their competence as a social worker .
- Critically apply the knowledge gained to their practice with children and families from diverse backgrounds, and with diverse and complex needs.
- Assess and provide interventions with children and families within the current and relevant legal and policy contexts, including the use of observation and direct work with children.
- Work effectively with other professionals from a range of different backgrounds and in a variety of contexts, including service user and carer led organisations.\*
- Demonstrate a capacity to clearly communicate decisions and the reasoning behind them to others within and outside their organisation, both verbally and in writing.\*
- Embed professional values in their social work practice with children and families within an ethically-sound, anti-oppressive practice framework.
- Enable the development of others' competence in social work.
- Think reflectively about their role in their organisation, including the effective use of supervision and effective time management. \*

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### **Teaching, learning and assessment**

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, seminars, essay consultations, oral presentations and guided independent study. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by formal examinations, coursework, examined essays, translation exercises, oral presentations and the dissertation or long essay. In addition, students may be involved in workshops and may produce various forms of creative work. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the Department of Social Work. <http://www.rhul.ac.uk/socialwork/>

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### **Details of the programme structure(s)**

All courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the Department of Social Work. <http://www.rhul.ac.uk/socialwork/>

## Graduate Diploma (with Specialist Award in Social Work) programme

Unit

### **Stage one:**

Students must take one of the following:

HC3801 Consolidation Course	0.5
HC3807 ASYE Consolidation Course	0.5

### **Stage two:**

Students must take:

HC3902: The Developing World of the Child	1.0
HC3903: Legal, Theoretical and Policy Frameworks	1.0
HC3904: Promoting Positive Outcomes for Children with Additional and Complex Needs	1.0

### **Stage three:**

Students must take one of the following:

HC3905: Practice Educator Professional Standards Stage 1	0.5
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A full 1 unit course is equivalent to 30 national credits, while a half unit course is equivalent to 15 national Credits (as defined by the Credit Guidelines for HE Qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland – 2001, published by the major credit consortium in the UK).

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### **Progression and award requirements**

In order to pass the programme, a student will need to achieve a mark of at least 40% in each assessed course in the programme. In addition they will need to have successfully passed the practice assessment component of the specialist course and achieved a pass grade for their portfolio. Students may resubmit any failed assignments once, which will result in the course mark being capped at 40%.

For students with an ungraded (Pass) PQ1 or Practice Teaching Award, a notional mark equalling the weighted average of the other courses will be applied to that course.

Within the programme, at the discretion of the Examination Sub-Board, a Merit will be awarded to students achieving an overall weighted average of 60.00% or higher with no individual course marks falling below 50% and a Distinction will be awarded to students achieving an overall weighted average of at least 70.00% with no individual course marks below 50% and where no resit or repeat has been taken in any course.

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### **Student support and guidance**

- Personal Advisers: All students are allocated a personal adviser who meets with them regularly through the programme. The adviser's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. Students meet with their personal advisers two or three times during the first term in groups of 8-10. Subsequently, responsibility for meetings is placed on the student.
- The Year Tutor is at the centre of the Department's student support systems. Year Tutors, Programme Co-ordinators, course leaders, seminar leaders and departmental administrators provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All staff available and accessible through dedicated office hours system.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- Detailed student handbook and course resources.
- Departmental reading room, with collection of articles and books supporting teaching and learning.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and Computer Centre.
- Extensive supporting materials in the form of distance and e-learning resources.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service liaison officer.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs.

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### **Admission requirements**

1. Students will normally possess a recognised social work qualification and be registered with the HCPC

2. Students will be required to demonstrate competence in social work practice and therefore will need to be currently working with adult service users, their families and/or carers. Students must have the support of their agency in pursuing the programme. This must include the required release time to attend the College, as well as the practice opportunities to complete the required assessment tasks.
3. Students will normally be nominated by their employing agencies, however students can apply directly to the College provided they are able to meet the attendance and practice requirements.
4. Students without a social work qualification, but another relevant professional qualification and practice experience and opportunities may also apply for the programme. These students will be required to hold as a minimum requirement a DipHE or equivalent qualification in a relevant child care discipline. In addition the application form will ask them to detail current work with children in a social care, education or health setting. If further clarification of their ability to meet the requirements of the programme is required, the option is also available for an interview. The award granted to these students who successfully complete the programme will be a Graduate Diploma in Work with Children and Families .
5. Students may apply for the accreditation of prior learning (APL) when applying for the programme.

Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. For further details please refer to the [Prospective Students](#) web page. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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#### **Further learning and career opportunities**

The students on the programme will all be employed in a social care setting. Completion of the Graduate Diploma programme will enhance their practice and opportunities for career progression and promotion. It will also enable them to continue onto further Post Qualifying and Post Graduate studies. For further details please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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#### **Indicators of quality and standards**

The teaching and learning in the programmes are closely informed by the research activity of staff in the Department. Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4\* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4\* standard and 18th for 3\* and 4\* research. 45% of the Department's research profile is of 3\* and 4\* standard.

The Graduate Diploma in Work with Children and Families (previously the London Post Qualifying Award in Child Care) has been managed and run since 2000 by the Royal Holloway PQ Management Group. The Royal Holloway PQ Management Group is a partnership between Royal Holloway, the Tavistock Centre, 29 London local authorities, CAF/CASS and 6 private or voluntary child care agencies. Partner agencies have been central to the development of this programme and it is planned to retain these robust partnership structures, and develop these further with service user involvement. Service Users and carers who have experienced social work involvement have been consulted in the development of the curriculum, will undertake some of the teaching and will have involvement in the management of the programme. Feedback from students, partner agency representatives and the external examiners has formed an integral part of the successful development of this programme and it is proposed that these processes continue.

The College has annual quality assurance procedures and undertakes Periodic Departmental Reviews. At a Periodic Departmental Review in March 2009, The Graduate Diploma programme was highly commended.

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### **List of programmes**

All the programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London (degree programmes), or of Royal Holloway Diplomas. The social work programmes in the Department are subject to approval by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

- Graduate Diploma in Work with Children and Families (2298)

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