

# Middlesbrough College

| Foundation Degree Social & Community Studies

| Programme Specification

September 2023



## Programme specification

### 1. Overview/ factual information

<b>Programme/award title(s)</b>	FD Social & Community Studies
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Middlesbrough College
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Open University (OU)
<b>Date of first OU validation</b>	2023
<b>Date of latest OU (re)validation</b>	
<b>Next revalidation</b>	2028
<b>Credit points for the award</b>	240
<b>UCAS Code</b>	
<b>HECoS Code</b>	
<b>LDCS Code (FE Colleges)</b>	
<b>Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.</b>	Sept 2023
<b>Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	<a href="#">Social Policy 2019</a> <a href="#">Youth &amp; Community Work 2019</a>
<b>Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.</b>	<a href="#">Framework for Higher Education Qualifications QAA Quality Code</a>
<b>Professional/statutory recognition</b>	n/a
<b>For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.</b>	n/a
<b>Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL &amp; Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship</b>	FT – face to face
<b>Duration of the programme for each mode of study</b>	FT 2 years (30 weeks)
<b>Dual accreditation (if applicable)</b>	n/a
<b>Date of production/revision of this specification</b>	Jan 2023

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 student module guide(s) and the students handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

## 2.1 Educational aims and objectives

The overall aims of the programme are to:

- enable students to:
  - o Evaluate theoretical concepts in a range of areas associated with social and community settings
  - o Assess the ethics and values that underpin social & community work
  - o Recognise how National Legislation and Policy initiatives impact on social and community work
  - o Employ effective working practices, policies and procedures that exist within social and community-based settings
- prepare students for continuing study should they wish, through the development of undergraduate skills;
- enable students to evaluate their current skill set in the context of industry/employer needs and the possibility of study beyond Level 5;
- develop students' employability with a focus upon supporting students to prepare for employment as well as actively seek to establish links with employers;
- embed reflection in practice in order that students establish personal and professional development goals;
- promote and develop independent learners.

## 2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

Students can progress from Level 4 to Level 5 of the Foundation Degree through successful achievement of 120 credits at Level 4.

On successful completion of the full award (an achievement of 240 credits), students who apply to the BA (Honours) Social & Community Studies [Top-up] will be accepted. (The latter award has been written by the Programme Team and is being revalidated at the same time as this programme.)

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60-credit work-based learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work-based learning and academic content are organised with the award.

This is enabled through two modules:

- L4 Developing working Practice (30 credits)
- L5 Work-Based Project (40 credits)

2.4 List of all exit awards

Cert HE in Social & Community Studies [120 Credits]  
Foundation Degree in Social & Community Studies [240 Credits]

### 3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

<b><u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 4</u></b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
<b>Safeguarding Vulnerable Individuals</b>	20			Yes	1
<b>Social &amp; Contemporary Issues Facing Young People &amp; Adults</b>	20			Yes	1
<b>Higher Education Study Skills</b>	10			Yes	1
<b>Policy &amp; Political Perspectives</b>	20			Yes	2
<b>Understanding S &amp; C Organisations</b>	20			Yes	2
<b>Developing Working Practice</b>	30			No	2

Intended learning outcomes at Level 4 are listed below:

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 4</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>A1:</b> Explain key ethical concepts in the social and community-based sector.	<b>A1:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative work so that students are in a position to individually explain key ethical concepts in the social and community-based sector.
<b>A2:</b> Describe a range of effective working practices, policies and procedures that exist within social and community-based settings.	<b>A2:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative work so that students are in a position to individually describe a range of effective working practices, policies and procedures that exist within social and community-based settings.
<b>A3:</b> Explain current legislation and national policy relating to social and community settings.	<b>A3:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative work so that

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 4</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
	students are in a position to individually explain current legislation and national policy relating to social and community settings.
<b>A4:</b> Explain theoretical concepts and approaches which apply to work within the social and community sector.	<b>A4:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative work so that students are in a position to individually explain theoretical concepts and approaches which apply to work within the social and community sector.
<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>B1:</b> Recognise the provisional and changing nature of knowledge in the social and community based sector.	<b>B1:</b> At Level 4, students are introduced to a range of social and community contexts to enable learners to focus working practice in context and to recognise the provisional and changing nature of knowledge in the social and community based sector. While there is a large element of teacher centred/led activity, the aim of each session is to blend in student led/centred activity where learners can develop their understanding of the social and community sector.

3B. Cognitive skills	
<b>B2:</b> Develop logical discussion and draw conclusions based on evidence from the social and community based sector.	<b>B2:</b> While there is a large element of teacher centred/led activity, the aim of each session is to blend in student led/centred activity where learners can develop their abilities in logical discussion and draw conclusions based on evidence from the social and community based sector.
<b>B3:</b> Gather, record and describe data / evidence from a range of sources relating to social and community based sector.	<b>B3:</b> While there is a large element of teacher centred/led activity, the aim of each session is to blend in student led/centred activity where learners can develop their abilities in gathering, recording and describing data / evidence from a range of sources relating to social and community based sector.
3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<b>C1:</b> Act with limited autonomy under directional supervision within defined guidelines.	<b>C1:</b> The learning and teaching strategy is designed to encourage a progressive acquisition of subject knowledge and skills by moving from study methods that have a greater degree of support and assistance gradually towards more independence and self-direction. Students are also provided with the task of finding, reviewing and presenting current articles based around the topics covered in each session.
<b>C2:</b> Operate ethically within predictable and defined context in the social and community sector.	<b>C2:</b> Sessions and tutorials are designed to assist the students in developing their awareness of ethical issues so that they can then operate ethically within predictable and defined context in the social and community sector.



<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<b>C3:</b> Identify and develop practical & professional skills appropriate to the workplace.	<b>C3:</b> Sessions and tutorials are designed to assist the students in developing practical & professional skills appropriate to the workplace – assessed both in formative and summative assignments
<b>C4:</b> Use reflective practice to identify areas of development and current practice.	<b>C4:</b> Sessions and tutorials are designed to assist the students in developing their own reflective practice skills (as well as being covered specifically within a selection of the course modules). Tutorials focus on setting targets as a result of reflective practice.
<b>C5:</b> Plan for personal and professional development	<b>C5:</b> Sessions and tutorials are designed to assist the students in developing their own reflective practice skills (as well as being covered specifically within a selection of the course modules) in order to assist them in planning for their personal and professional development
<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>D1:</b> Identify and use appropriate writing skills	<b>D1:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students with writing skills for - essays, reports, etc. is embedded in all modules and is explicitly covered in the HE study skills module. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials also help students to identify their needs for further development.

<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
<b>D2:</b> Use effective verbal communication	<b>D2:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students in how to use effective verbal communication is embedded in all modules and is explicitly covered in the HE study skills module. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials also help students to identify their needs for further development.
<b>D3:</b> Work collaboratively within small groups to enhance a co-operative approach to learning and working.	<b>D3:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students in how to work collaboratively within small groups to enhance a co-operative approach to learning and working. is embedded in all modules and is explicitly covered in the HE study skills module. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials also help students to identify their needs for further development.
<b>D4:</b> Use appropriate IT skills to complete assigned tasks	<b>D4:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students in how to Use appropriate IT skills to complete assigned tasks is embedded in all modules and is explicitly covered in the HE study skills module. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials also help students to identify their needs for further development.

**[Please insert here title(s) of exit award(s) at Level 4, if applicable]**

Cert HE in Social & Community studies [120 Credits]

<b><u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 5</u></b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
<b>Working within a multiagency environment</b>	20			Yes	1
<b>Developing Community Based Approaches</b>	20			Yes	1
<b>Understanding approaches to learning and behaviour</b>	20			Yes	2
<b>Participation and Inclusion for Individuals with Additional Needs</b>	20			Yes	2
<b>Work-Based Project</b>	40			No	2

Intended learning outcomes at Level 5 are listed below:

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 5</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>A1:</b> Explore in detail ethical issues associated with current practice and policy.	<b>A1:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work. This activity ensures that students are in a position to individually explore in detail ethical issues associated with current practice and policy..
<b>A2:</b> Evaluate a range of effective working practices, policies and procedures that exist within social and community-based settings.	<b>A2:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work. This activity ensures that students are in a position to individually evaluate a range of effective working practices, policies and procedures that exist within social and community-based settings.
<b>A3:</b> Assess the importance of current legislation and national policy relating to social and community settings	<b>A3:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 5</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
	research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work. This activity ensures that students are in a position to individually assess the importance of current legislation and national policy relating to social and community settings
<b>A4:</b> Evaluate a range of theoretical concepts and approaches which apply to social and community settings	<b>A4:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work. This activity ensures that students are in a position to individually evaluate a range of theoretical concepts and approaches which apply to social and community settings
<b>A5:</b> Evaluate research theory, methodology and research methods for their appropriateness.	<b>A5:</b> Student learning is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work. This activity ensures that students are in a position to individually evaluate research theory, methodology and research methods for their appropriateness in a research project.

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<b>B1:</b> Gather, interpret and apply data relevant to research on a chosen area of theory and practice.	<b>B1:</b> At Level 5, students are re-introduced to a range of disciplines to develop understanding of working operations and enable them to focus upon specialisms in context. The aim of each session is to further develop student led/centred activity where learners can practice and develop their research skills and/or analysis of journals or provided data.
<b>B2:</b> Employ balanced, logical and supported argument relating to discussions on social and community settings.	<b>B2:</b> The aim of each session is to further develop student led/centred activity where they can employ balanced, logical and supported argument relating to discussions on social and community settings. supported through discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work.
<b>B3</b> Apply an evidenced-based approach to addressing current themes and approaches within social and community settings.	<b>B3:</b> The aim of each session is to further develop student led/centred activity where they can apply an evidenced-based approach to addressing current themes and approaches within social and community settings. supported through discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work.

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<b>C1:</b> Act with increasing autonomy, with reduced need for supervision, when searching for credible and appropriate data/evidence on social and community settings	<b>C1:</b> The learning and teaching strategy is designed to encourage a progressive acquisition of subject knowledge and skills by moving from study methods that have a greater degree of support and assistance gradually towards more independence and self-direction. Students are also provided with the task of finding, reviewing and presenting current articles based around the topics covered in each session.
<b>C2:</b> Demonstrate ethical awareness when carrying out research	<b>C2:</b> The significance of ethical matters is facilitated through a blend of tutor and student-led activities, supported by discussion, case study analysis, journal presentations, Q&A, individual and group research activities as well as feedback on formative pieces of work. This activity enables students to be in a position individually to appreciate and operate ethically within social and community settings.
<b>C3:</b> Evaluate a range of practical & professional skills appropriate to the workplace.	<b>C3:</b> Sessions and tutorials are designed to assist the students in developing practical & professional skills associated with social and community settings – assessed both in formative and summative assignments.
<b>C4:</b> Demonstrate the ability to effectively reflect on practice.	<b>C4:</b> Within tutorials - and in response to formative and summative feedback - students are encouraged to reflect upon their current strengths and areas for development and how they impact upon their capacity learn and also to engage with the type of employers and opportunities in which they are interested.

<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<b>C5:</b> Plan for personal and professional development	<b>C5:</b> Sessions and tutorials are designed to assist the students in developing practical & professional skills associated with social and community settings – assessed both in formative and summative assignments.
<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>D1:</b> Utilise appropriate writing skills	<b>D1:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students with communication skills - i.e. verbal, written, essay, report short or extended writing – is embedded in all modules. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials will also assist in identifying any further development learners may require.
<b>D2:</b> Use effective verbal communication	<b>D2:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students with communication skills - i.e. verbal, written, essay, report short or extended writing – is embedded in all modules. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials will also assist in identifying any further development learners may require.



3D. Key/transferable skills	
<b>D3:</b> Work collaboratively within small groups to enhance a co-operative approach to learning and working	<b>D3:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students with work collaboratively within small groups to enhance a co-operative approach to learning and working is embedded in all modules. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials will also assist in identifying any further development learners may require.
<b>D4:</b> Demonstrate numerical and statistical skills in simple contexts.	<b>D4:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students in how to demonstrate numerical and statistical skills in simple contexts is embedded in the work-based project module. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials will also assist in identifying any further development learners may require.
<b>D5:</b> Utilise research skills to identify and select relevant literature linked to the chosen subject.	<b>D5:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students in how to utilise research skills to identify and select relevant literature linked to the chosen subject is embedded specifically in the work-based project module but also is embedded into all modules. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials will also assist in identifying any further development learners may require.
<b>D6:</b> Adapt appropriate IT skills for a given purpose	<b>D6:</b> Tuition assisting and guiding students in how to adapt appropriate IT skills for a given purpose is embedded in all modules. Formative assessments and class work allow students to receive feedback on the skills they are developing. In addition, tutorials will also assist in identifying any further development learners may require.

**[Please insert here title(s) of exit award(s) at Level 5, if applicable]**

Foundation Degree in Social & Community Studies [240 Credits]

#### 4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:**
  - where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression
  - any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules
  - where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route
- **Additional considerations for apprenticeships:**
  - how the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship
  - the integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training
  - how the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship

##### 4.1 A range of social and community contexts

This programme provides students with an opportunity to explore key themes within the overall context of the social and community sector: - Sociology, Ethics & Values, Leadership & Management and Psychology and the individual. These are mandatory modules, so the course does not, at this time, include elective modules. The overall approach enables students to study the application of these ideas across a range of contexts. The programme also introduces students to more specific work-based learning (see Section 4.2 below) and develops students' employability and research skills.

##### 4.2 Work-based Learning

At Level 4, students are supported to develop their working practice and to consider career opportunities within the social and community setting. i.e., in the module *Developing Working Practice*. This activity enables students to map their learning to the jobs market and to identify an organisation with which they can work at Level 5. This activity also facilitates students to identify additional skills/knowledge they need to develop or learn to succeed in their chosen area as a career. This employer engagement aspect of the programme seeks to foster meaningful engagement and links between students and employers.

At Level 5, students have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge to a sector-based project with a live social and community-based organisation (in the module *Work-based Project*), providing a platform to showcase themselves to a potential employer and to enhance their employability. In addition, *Work-based Project* also prepares students for extended writing and develops research skills students will need in industry and for further study on a Level 6 programme.

These two work-based learning modules provide students with the opportunity to personalise their learning on the programme to a specific aspect of social and community in which they are interested. This approach supports autonomous learning as students become the co-creators of the curriculum.

## 5. Support for students and their learning.

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how student learning is supported in the workplace)*

### 5.1 Induction

A detailed induction programme is provided to help students settle into the course and also to 'gel' as a group. The programme is designed to ensure that all students understand how to get the most from their programme of study and understand what the benefits being enrolled with the College. The following activities are provided in Induction Week:

- Students are given an induction assignment to give them a feel for the course themes and assessment methods and to get them into group working as early as possible.
- Tours of resources are included to encourage early engagement with support and facilities.
- Key information relating to health and safety, safeguarding and student regulations will also be provided.
- Where possible, Alumni speak to new students about their experience of the programme and specifically address what students need to do to achieve
- A representative from the Student Union helps to elect Student Representatives.

### 5.2 Attendance Support

Attendance is monitored closely to ensure that all students are getting the best from the programme. Should a student need to miss a session for any reason, they are required to email the lecturer beforehand. Where a lecturer notes that a student is absent with no prior warning, the student is emailed at the end of the session, asking if the student is well and reminding the student that they are required to let lecturers know if they cannot attend.

Where a student misses three consecutive sessions, the Personal Tutor also contacts the student with an invitation to attend a formal meeting. Where attendance problems persist, the Personal Tutor works with the college Student Support Staff who, where necessary, direct students to the relevant confidential support (personal, financial, etc.). Where students are facing difficulties, it is vital to ensure they get the right support and where necessary, make a decision to withdraw or suspend as the timing of any withdrawal/suspension can affect their Student Loan.

### 5.3 Tutorial Support

All students receive both subject and personal tutorials throughout the programme. Subject tutorials are part of the module delivery patterns and are designed to focus on and monitor student academic progress. The tutorials are delivered as a combination of group and individual sessions with each student having at least one 30-minute individual tutorial per term. Individual tutorials are an opportunity for the module tutor to identify any particular issues students may be having with the module and if necessary, signpost to any additional support that may be needed. Group subject tutorials are

provided by the module tutor as opportunities to revisit particular aspects of the module and designed to reflect the students' development as independent learners. In the early weeks of Level 4, input will be tutor-led but this balance will shift toward more student-led activities by Level 5 so aiding transition from Level 4 to 5.

#### 5.4 Encouraging Completion

One of the significant advantages offered by the programme is the amount of time students spend with tutors. This is due to the relatively small number of students and a mode of delivery that includes a significant amount of facilitation. There are, therefore, plenty of opportunities to encourage students to meet assignment deadlines. From Induction Week onwards staff give students feedback in both formative and written, summative feedback. Another oft-repeated comment is that students must let lecturers know as soon as possible if a deadline may be missed so that, where appropriate, a deadline extension form can be completed (where such an extension is warranted.)

#### 5.5 Summer Reassessment Period

Tutorials are provided for students offered reassessment and the facilities remain available.

#### 5.6 Pastoral Support

The amount of *ad hoc* pastoral support noted above is greatly valued by the students. More challenging are students who don't attend as is the effect of non-attendance upon their performance. In recent years, the number of students declaring Asperger's or dyslexia has increased slightly. Students with learning issues are identified during the application process and when directed to the College HE ANC (Additional Needs Coordinator) who makes – or facilitates - assessments that result in a range of outcomes and guidance for the Programme Team. In addition, the Programme Team attend annual Staff Development sessions relating to both conditions - attendance at many of these sessions is mandatory. For students with dyslexia, staff have started to offer dyslexia-friendly versions of their notes and to include a higher-contrast background for notes projected to electronic whiteboards. The Programme Team have received many emails from students offering thanks for sensitive and timely support.

#### 5.7 Academic Support

A specific module in HE study skills has been included within this programme and is delivered in the first semester at L4 to explicitly develop academic skills. From experience it has been recognised that many of the students we recruit need that extra aspect of support through a structured module and where this has been included on other courses within the college has been seen to have been useful and productive.

In addition, the delivery of many modules is based upon individual sessions that consist of two parts – topic input (lecturer led) followed by a facilitated session in which students tackle extension and development activities outlined in the first part of the session. This delivery strategy ensures that theory is always applied, that practical skills, knowledge and understanding are regularly checked, and that formative feedback is continuous rather than focussed on specific points in academic year.

In addition to in-session help, students can also make appointments (via email) to get support from:

- Members of the Programme Team - Module leaders, lecturers and instructor/demonstrators.
- The Programme Leader & Personal Tutors:

The personal tutoring system is in place to support students' full engagement with their programme of study and gain as much as possible from their time at the College. Though the emphasis is on academic support, tutorials are also an opportunity to raise pastoral issues which may be having an impact on a student's academic performance. Tutors can offer support and advice and, if required, direct students to further support services available within the College. In the final year students are encouraged to arrange tutorials as and when required.

Student learning and personal development is supported at all Levels of study via personal and professional (PDP) development in all modules and particularly *Developing Working Practice* (L4) and *Work-based Project* (L5). This activity is further supported by the Personal Tutor system.

The Level 5 *Work-based Project* module also aims to facilitate students to conduct independent research and analysis on a selected topic including, where relevant, consideration of legal, social, ethical and professional issues. Finally, the module aims to facilitate students to deliver a high quality, well-presented, substantial evaluative written report.

#### 5.8 Programme Documentation and Online Learning Support

Students are provided with Programme and Module Handbooks that contain comprehensive information on how their degrees and modules are structured and delivered. These documents are also available to students throughout each academic year (and for the duration of their registration) via a web-based Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Microsoft Teams. This online resource enables all lecturers to add lecture and supplementary notes as well as videos. All students submit assessments through the VLE, these are then marked through the same system. All students attend tutorial sessions at the beginning of the course in which they learn how to use the VLE (see section 5.10 below for further information).

#### 5.9 Library and Learning Resources

Students can access a range of resources through the College Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and students attend a number of LRC introduction and help sessions during Induction Week and in the first few weeks of term.

Open access computers are available at various locations throughout the College and in all of the buildings where teaching takes place. In addition, there is a quiet room in the College LRC exclusively for higher education students. Access is dependent upon demand but is provided on a drop-in basis.

#### 5.10 Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Microsoft Teams

Every programme has its own site on the College VLE which is a key resource to support student learning as well as engagement with the programme and the College in general. All teaching materials and general course information is backed up on the VLE, ensuring that students can access what they need when they need it. The VLE is

also used as a portal to other sources of support. Students can access the programme of informal workshops designed to support their learning, including improving writing style and referencing, planning assignments, developing critical thinking and other key skills. Students also interact with staff and peers via Microsoft Teams.

#### 5.11 Additional Learning Support

Any student that considers that they have - or may have - additional learning support needs can access a range of support through the College via the HE ANC and Student Support Services. Initial assessments are provided to support understanding of the range of support that may be needed which will then trigger the provision required.

#### 5.12 Student Services

All students are able to access the College Student Services which are based in the Dock Street building which has its own reception and drop in facilities. As well as general advice about the College, the Student Services team also provide counselling, financial support, learning support, IT support and sign posting to additional or partner services.

#### 5.13 HE Student Areas

All HE students have an area in the College that is exclusively for their use with the HE Centre (University Centre Middlesbrough).

#### 5.14 The 'Job Shop'

The College provides has its own 'Job Shop' which was opened in 2013 and provides a range of support to students. As well as advertising vacancies provided by local employers, the Job Shop also provides a range of support to students, including; help with job applications, CV writing, interview preparation, job searching, writing covering letters and finding work experience. All of the support is available either through drop/bookable appointments or on-line tutorials <http://mbrojobshop.co.uk>.

Additional resources have enhanced the service provided by the careers team. The National Careers Service are now based in the college two days per week (Tuesday & Wednesday) providing specialist adult careers guidance. This will include 1-to-1 appointments, the team will also be providing group workshops that are sector specific with relevant labour market information, preparing the students for employment including the hidden job market, placement opportunities and also roles in the third sector. Programme Lead will arrange at appropriate points throughout the academic year.

#### 5.15 The Fitness Studio

All students are entitled to free membership of the Fitness Studio. The Techno Gym equipped facility provides a range of cardiovascular and resistance exercise equipment. Together with the latest innovations in IT wellness programme monitoring, students can engage in regular exercise in a friendly and easily accessible environment. Support and guidance is available during opening hours from experienced staff.

#### 5.16 Other facilities

The College has a wide range of other facilities which students can access either free of charge or at subsidised or nominal rates. Examples include:



- 156 seat theatre which produces a number of performances throughout the year many of which are free for students to attend;
- Hair Salon providing low-cost services;
- Beauty Spa facility which offers; Jacuzzi, light therapy sauna and steam room, dry; flotation room, 39 private treatment rooms and nail bar;
- Waterside Brasserie, the award-winning College restaurant which is as well as offering excellent value for money.
- Professionally equipped Recording Studios.

#### 6. Criteria for admission

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how the criteria will be used with employers who will be recruiting apprentices.)*

The most popular (and directly relevant) entry qualifications are the BTEC Level 3 Health & Social Care programmes or an A-Level portfolio with a UCAS entry target of 48 points. However, for applicants who do not meet these minima, the Programme Team explore the applicants' prior work experience and enthusiasm in interviews.

Where applicants apply with qualifications that are not directly relevant, the Programme Team looks for evidence of relevant experience. Non-standard entrants are interviewed to assess their ability to complete the course. This entails a review of any professional experience and training gained in the workplace to ensure that they are adequately prepared to cope with the academic level of study. The Programme Team will explore applicants' qualifications and experience for relevance and will apply the [College RPL process/policy](#) as necessary. All applicants are interviewed by the Programme Leader.

In all cases successful candidates require qualifications in English Language and Mathematics to at least GCSE grade 4 level, or have demonstrated adequate skills and competencies in an interview.

#### 7. Language of study

English

#### 8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)

N/A



## 9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).

*(Summary of the approved assessment plan and how the academic award fits within this and the EPA)*

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

### 9.1 College HE Teaching and Learning

The College has recognised the importance of having a distinct approach to HE learning and teaching for over ten years. The first HE specific Learning and Teaching process was introduced in 2009. Subsequent reviews and updates in 2011, 2014 and 2018, have enhanced the process to reflect the aims of the [UK Professional Standards Framework](#) and prepared the College to meet the expectations of the [Teaching Excellence Framework](#).

Many of the innovations established in the evolution of this process have been subsumed into the current Cross-College Learning and Teaching model for all levels, including a non-graded observation process. The underlying principle throughout, has been around placing the student at the centre of the process to ensure that their learning and attainment of Learning Outcomes drives the process. Underpinning this has been a focus on ensuring that lecturing staff are fully engaged in the process to match outcomes to professional discussion and peer review.

As the College moves into 2023, the approach is being further refined to form part of the Departmental Review process which is being applied across the College. The distinct nature of HE provision however, is still reflected in the approach.

### 9.2 Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL)

The OTL process for HE provision has been contextualised to reflect the differences between HE and FE. The OTL process for FE courses is based upon the expectations of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF), whereas the HE model, is aligned to the expectations of the [UKPSF](#) and the [TEF](#). Central to the process is the student as an independent learner, developing their academic skills as they progress through their academic career.

The model distinguishes between different levels of study and differing abilities of the students. At Level 4, teaching staff take a lead role in the student learning process, but as students' progress, the balance gradually evolves to involve students as leaders/co-leaders of learning. To facilitate this model, student learning and reflection may not take place at the same time as content delivery, making it difficult for an observer to see the product of the model. To work around this, the OTL process for HE lessons is based on

mapping the observation of the session to the scheme of work and planned assessment tasks.

The outcome of the OTL forms the basis of a professional discussion with a Teaching and Learning mentor, as well as with members of the HE Teaching Team, to ensure that good practice is shared across the College. Any trends identified from OTL reports or staff feedback are used to inform relevant CPD activity.

### 9.3 Feedback from Students

Another input to the process of evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning is feedback from students. Feedback emerges through several routes. The most significant is through the Module Evaluation Questionnaires. In addition to five-point Likert scale questions, students are free to comment regarding any aspect of the module. The results and comments from the Module Evaluation Questionnaires feed into Module Reports. Over the past twelve years this student feedback has been vital in informing the major and minor modifications the programme has undergone. Student feedback is also collected from the HE Student Council, Programme Boards, induction surveys, the Student Reps, the NSS and in both formal and *ad hoc* tutorials.

### 9.4 Staff Workforce Development

Improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning is also a focus of the internal and external Workforce Development (WFD) sessions. Academic staff attend a range of internal and external staff development events aimed at improving teaching and learning.

A significant WFD programme in this regard is the Teaching innovation Groups (TiG) where staff work in small groups to research and evaluate a teaching innovation of their own choosing. For the 2022/23 academic year this has been extended to include wider research projects (linked to MC Rig – Middlesbrough College Research Group) where the intended outcome is to write an academic blog article or research paper for publication in a relevant journal.

### 9.5 Staff New to HE

All staff new to teaching HE at the College are required to hold a relevant degree and a PgCE as part of the terms of their employment. A higher degree is desirable for all staff and for those teaching Level 6, holding a relevant Level 7 qualification or the commitment to study for one is essential. Staff new to teaching HE at the College receive initial tailored CPD to help them to make the transition.

### 9.6 Staff New to Delivering at Level 6

New staff employed for the delivery of Level 6 awards are required to hold a relevant level 7 qualification. Those staff already teaching at the College making the transition to level 6 delivery are provided with funding and support to complete a level 7 qualification at the earliest opportunity.

Programme teams new to Level 6 awards, are provided with advice and guidance from the Higher Education Office (HEO) during the programme development phase to ensure that the teams have an understanding of the difference in expectations at level 6. As well as general information, which is also available via the VLE, teams are

required to submit draft submissions for feedback. A process of meetings and regular reviews of the design and content of the new awards ensures that awards are aligned to the FHEQ and expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. In Programme Teams where there is no prior expertise amongst the team of delivering at level 6, mentor support is provided by the HEO and experienced staff throughout the first year of delivery.

#### 9.7 Ongoing Subject and Pedagogic Development

All HE Programme Teams share resources and good practice via Programme Boards, departmental reviews and the annual HE Conference. All teaching staff are supported by more experienced members of the team who act as mentors. In addition, the Cross-College learning and teaching mentors provide 1:1 support to teams as well as tailored CPD sessions.

### 10. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

Annexe 1: Curriculum map

Annexe 2: Notes on completing the OU programme specification template

## Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering and assessing particular programme learning outcomes.

level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4
4	Safeguarding Vulnerable Individuals																
4	Social & Contemporary Issues Facing Young People & Adults																
4	Policy & Political Perspectives																
4	Understanding S&C Organisations																
4	Higher Education Study Skills																
4	Developing Working Practice																

level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
5	Working within a multi-agency environment																			
5	Developing community approaches																			
5	Understanding approaches to learning & behaviour																			
5	Participation and inclusion for individuals with additional learning needs																			
5	Work-based Project																			

## Annexe 2: Notes on completing programme specification templates

- 1 - This programme specification should be mapped against the learning outcomes detailed in module specifications.
- 2 – The expectations regarding student achievement and attributes described by the learning outcome in section 3 must be appropriate to the level of the award within the **QAA frameworks for HE qualifications**: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/default.aspx>
- 3 – Learning outcomes must also reflect the detailed statements of graduate attributes set out in **QAA subject benchmark statements** that are relevant to the programme/award: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>
- 4 – In section 3, the learning and teaching methods deployed should enable the achievement of the full range of intended learning outcomes. Similarly, the choice of assessment methods in section 3 should enable students to demonstrate the achievement of related learning outcomes. Overall, assessment should cover the full range of learning outcomes.
- 5 - Where the programme contains validated **exit awards** (e.g., CertHE, DipHE, PGDip), learning outcomes must be clearly specified for each award.
- 6 - For programmes with distinctive study **routes or pathways** the specific rationale and learning outcomes for each route must be provided.
- 7 – Validated programmes delivered in **languages other than English** must have programme specifications both in English and the language of delivery.