

CLD Standards Council Scotland
Response to COVID 19
Practice Placement Guidance for CLD Approved FE and HE Institutions

Version 2: Updated 27 March 2020

1. Introduction

This guidance is in response to the disruption to delivery of CLDSC approved programmes caused by the current COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak. Due to these exceptional and rapidly changing circumstances, this guidance is intended to manage and minimise disruption to CLD students attending Scottish Further Education Institutions (FEIs) and Higher Education institutions (HEIs) whilst seeking to ensure that the quality of CLD learning programmes is not compromised.

This guidance has been designed to provide clarity and consistency to educational providers, students and practice supervisors.

The CLDSC has prepared this guidance in line with other CLD (or equivalent) Approval and Professional Bodies across the United Kingdom. Working collaboratively on the preparation of these guidelines ensures that the benefits of mutual recognition remain in place and are not jeopardised. The guidance is reviewed regularly to take account of changes from government/other stakeholders

2. Guidance for FE and HE Institutions

Please see the following advice from the CLD Standards Council Scotland (CLDSC) in response to the disruption to delivery of CLDSC approved programmes caused by the current COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak. Due to these exceptional and rapidly changing circumstances, this guidance is intended to manage and minimise disruption to CLD students attending Scottish Further Education Institutions (FEIs) and Higher Education institutions (HEIs) whilst seeking to ensure that the quality of CLD learning programmes is not compromised.

This guidance has been designed to provide clarity and consistency to educational providers, students, practice supervisors and employers and aligns with the Joint Education and Training Standards Group that oversees the mutual recognition process across the UK and Ireland. Application of these guidelines will ensure that mutual recognition remains in place for Professional Approval.

The Professional Practice Panel of the CLD Standards Council agreed to recognise that all CLD placements ended on the 17th March 2020 and will remain closed for the remainder of this academic session (2019-20).

This has been agreed in the context of CLD learning providers moving to alternative methods of programme delivery. Programmes approved via the Professional or Developmental approval routes require a minimum percentage of the CLD programme to have supervised practice, with awards contingent upon the practice being completed to a required standard. The necessity of supervised practice is a core element of the CLD learning that prepares students for CLD practice. The standards for Professional and Developmental Approvals state the following:

Supervised Practice:

- include the extent of supervised practice-based learning within the course.
(This must be equivalent to 40% – 50% of the overall programme)

Guidance on how to evidence this percentage can be found within Professional Guidelines, Annex 3 page 29 within this [Approval Process Page](#)

It is recognised that the potential consequences of COVID-19 (including the temporary closure of practice agencies/activities) are that some students may be prevented from completing the required assessed supervised professional practice.

The assumption is that programme design will not change as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19 but that FEIs and HEIs will use the available flexibility as to how practice is embedded in the curriculum over the duration of a programme. In applying this flexibility, FEIs and HEIs will wish to ensure that no students are put at risk of not achieving the standards as a result of insufficient time being afforded to them in practice, whilst ensuring due care to students' wellbeing and safety. The following guidance is issued for FEIs and HEIs to help plan for any scenarios where planned practice hours may be impacted adversely with particular reference to students who would have anticipated completing their awards in academic year 2019/20:

2.1 CLDSC Guidelines - Higher Education Institutes

This guidance takes account of

- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland COVID-19 Guidance <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/qaa-covid-19-update>

Guidance for Non-Final Year Students

For students at Year 1 or Year 2 of their programme (likely to be SCQF 7 or 8) whose practice is disrupted, the CLDSC would advise that universities progress them to the next year/level without having undertaken all the required supervised practice. This is on the condition that they undertake additional supervised practice to make up the hours, and the learning outcomes associated with them, at a later stage in their programme. Individual educational providers should work with placement providers and the student to best identify when this will be possible. Consideration should be given to the use of time outside typical University teaching terms/semesters.

Guidance for Final Year Students

Year 3 or 4 students (BA/BA(Hons) (SCQF 9/10) are more likely to have completed most of their practice hours but will also face the greatest interruption. Due to the exceptional circumstances presented by COVID-19, a reduction of 12.5% in assessed supervised professional practice hours is accepted as a qualifying standard, providing students have demonstrated a consistent pass in previous practice assessments and there are no concerns about their CLD practice or conduct. This percentage reflects the calculations taken by the National Youth Agency England on their hours of practice standards and ensures alignment with our JETS colleagues and maintains our mutual recognition agreement. This allowance will not apply for students on the pass/fail borderline where the educational provider would be required to find alternative practice evidence in order to ascertain a pass/fail.

CLDSC staff will provide advice on what alternative evidence is appropriate should that be required.

Guidance for Post-Graduate Students

The CLDSC recognises that postgraduate students have a more compact timescale and a disruption of 2-3 months could risk the non-completion of their programme. However, in this case we consider the required 40 – 50% placement practice as the absolute minimum requirement for a pass in CLD supervised practice. Therefore, if a student is on a one-year programme, HEIs may require to consider extending the programme and, if necessary, revise the graduation date to ensure students have time to complete assessed professional practice.

As with BA students, individual universities should work with placement providers and the student to best identify when this could be possible, extending into university holiday periods if necessary.

2.2 CLDSC Guidelines - Further Education Institutes

This guidance takes account of

- Joint guidance statement from SQA and Colleges Scotland regarding Higher National qualifications <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93717.html>
- Further guidance from SQA regarding National Certificates, Professional Development Awards or other qualification types is still being considered.

Guidance for Higher National Certificate Students

The CLDSC recognises that HNC students (SCQF Level 7) may experience significant disruption to placements. Due to the exceptional circumstances presented by COVID-19, a reduction of 12.5% in assessed supervised professional practice hours is accepted as a qualifying standard, providing students have demonstrated a consistent pass in previous practice assessments and there are no concerns about their CLD practice or conduct. This allowance will not apply for students on the pass/fail borderline where the educational provider would be required to find alternative practice evidence in order to ascertain a pass/fail.

CLDSC staff will provide advice on what alternative evidence is appropriate should that be required.

2.3 Guidance on Individual Circumstances

Where a student has the necessary experience from wider evidence of supervised practice (for example, if a student is also employed in an appropriate CLD setting/organisation), an exemption to the requirements *may* be possible providing a case is made that compensatory practice hours provide relevant evidence. However, the learning outcomes of supervised practice will require to be clearly evidenced and any decision should be taken with approval from the appointed External Examiner for CLD practice.

2.4 Note on Wider Impact of University/College Closures or Travel Restrictions

The CLDSC recognise there may also be a wider impact on the development and approval of programmes during any closure of Universities/Colleges/other educational providers or travel restrictions imposed as a result of the continued outbreak of COVID-19. Further guidance is detailed below, concerning scheduled approval and/or re-approval activities:

2.5 Guidance on Scheduled Re-approvals

If an HEI, FEI or other educational provider is closed when a scheduled approval is due to take place, CLDSC will consider extending the existing validation period for a maximum of a year at the HEIs, FEIs or other educational providers request. In these exceptional circumstances, a request for extension must be put in writing at the earliest opportunity and addressed to: contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk and cc to susan.bisset@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk

2.6 Guidance on New Programmes in the Professional Approvals route

For new programmes the CLDSC Approvals Panel considers it a necessity to meet with the relevant HEI personnel and stakeholders to inform them of the outcome. If a scheduled panel cannot take place because the HEI is closed (or travel is prohibited) or the Approval Panel is prohibited from convening, a postponement to the approval will be required until a date can be rescheduled and the proposal will remain subject to approval until full approval sign off by CLDSC Approvals Committee has been gained. The CLDSC Approval panel will make every effort to schedule this event prior to commencement of the new academic year. Use of digital technology communication methods for undertaking panel visits will be explored with each individual institution.

2.7 The Issue of Further Guidance

The CLDSC recognises that there is continuing uncertainty with regards to the situation that is developing as COVID-19 spreads. With the situation being fluid and contingent upon official guidance from Scottish Government, UK Government and Public Health Scotland, this guidance will be reviewed periodically and if required any updated information will be issued in a timely manner.

3. Further Reading

Further information and guidance can be found via the web-links to the following organisations.

CLD Standards Council Scotland
www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk

Health Protection Scotland
<https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/wuhan-novel-coronavirus/>

Scottish Government
<https://education.gov.scot/>

NHS Inform
www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus

College Development Network
www.cdn.ac.uk

Colleges Scotland
www.CollegesScotland.ac.uk

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
www.sqa.org.uk

General Teaching Council Scotland
<https://www.gtcs.org.uk/>

National Youth Agency England
<https://nya.org.uk/>