CLD Standards Council Scotland (CLDSC)
Response to COVID 19
Practice Placement Guidance for CLD Approved FE and HE Institutions
Academic Year 2020-2021

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 applies to academic year 2020 – 2021, while restrictions to mitigate the Covid-19 crisis are in place The CLDSC has prepared this guidance as part of Joint Education and Training Standards (JETS) forum which encompasses all CLD (or equivalent) Approval and Professional Bodies[1] 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. Principles

In the light of the ongoing COVID pandemic, guidance from Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)[2], and discussion with colleagues across the UK, this guidance and any measures taken by HEIs/FEIs for the mitigation of disruption to students' learning and practice as a result of Coronavirus should be underpinned by the following principles:

- Ensuring 'no detriment' to students on end of year activity
- Avoiding 'compound disadvantage' for learners, in terms of catching up on placement hours alongside academic and wider professional studies
- Trusting the professional judgement of programme teams in institutions offering professional qualifications in CLD
- Identifying alternative measures for evidencing competence
- Equipping staff and students for digital working
- Listening to the student experience

---

[1] CLDSC – Scotland – https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/
ETS Wales - https://etswales.org.uk/
NSETS - Ireland and Republic of Ireland - https://www.youth.ie/programmes/projects-initiatives/nsets/
National Youth Agency – England - https://nya.org.uk/guidance/
[2] QAA - https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-youth-and-community-work.pdf?sfvrsn=5e35c881_4

3. Meeting Professional Standards in CLD

Regardless of COVID-19 restrictions, it is essential that students graduating from approved CLD programmes adhere to the values of CLD, Code of Ethics, CLD Competences, can demonstrate and apply the National Occupational Standards, and ultimately are fit to practise. We invite educational providers to be innovative in assessment where restrictions make it difficult to assess in placement settings.

Requirements for placement supervision should continue to be met during periods of COVID-19 restrictions. Individual supervisors/students may conduct supervision sessions via online platforms rather than in face to face meetings.

We expect that the arrangements for the assessment of professional practice/fieldwork will remain the same, though face to face supervision and 3-way meetings may be replaced by online sessions. Where practice has moved from face to face to digital delivery, we expect supervisors and, where appropriate, fieldwork tutors still to observe the student in their practice and give feedback.

We understand that the current arrangements have made it difficult for some supervisors who have been furloughed or assigned to other duties to provide end of placement assessment reports. Where this occurs, it is expected course teams will use professional judgement to make decisions about the quality of a student's practice, taking account of their knowledge of the student, previous placements, 3/4-way meetings and any indications the supervisor may be able provide.

4. Approaches to Teaching & Learning and Structuring of Programmes

With respect to on-line learning, which may be beneficial as part of a package of blended learning, it is essential that HEI/FEIs have means to confirm engagement and ensure that students fully and actively participate in interactive dialogue with lecturers and their peers.

A briefing on digital youth work has been produced through JETS and contains useful guidance on digital approaches. It is available here.

We accept that simulation exercises may be used to complement and further examine practice-based learning, however we do not encourage institutions to use simulation exercises to substitute for face to face professional practice, as we believe it is difficult to replicate real CLD practice situations.

Some institutions may have changed the timing of certain modules in their programmes. As long as this fits within the institution's own programme design and assessment strategy CLDSC is content for institutions to use professional judgement in this matter. However, forward-loading of placements may prove too big a strain for some providers, given that many organisations may not be fully operational for some time to come. . We encourage institutions to continue to engage in dialogue with placement providers in accommodating students on placement.

5. Professional Practice Requirements

Professional practice is a pre-requisite of achieving a professional qualification in CLD. CLDSC Approvals Guidelines[3] set out minimum levels of assessed professional practice. We appreciate that COVID-19 restrictions may present considerable difficulties in achieving these, both for CLD placement providers and for students.

CLDSC COVID Guidance for academic year 2019/20 focussed on completion of the academic year and, with the exception of Post-Graduate students, students were afforded a 12.5% reduction in assessed practice hours.

For the 2020-21 academic year, in order to avoid compounding disadvantage for students, it has been agreed through the JETS Approvals group that a flexible reduction of up to 25% in placement hours be granted across the full length of any programme provided that students have gained a consistent pass in previous practice assessments (where applicable) and are considered fit to continue practising. The aim is still for students to complete 100% of required placement hours and activities as normal.

Degree/ Programme Type	SCQF LEVEL	SCQF Credit Points	Total Notional hours of study across the full length of the programme	Minimum Supervised Practice hours requirement across the full length of the programme
PDA	6	28	280	112
HNC	7	96	960	384
BA	9	360	3600	**1440 across the whole of the programme (3 or 4 years)**
BA (Honours)	10	480	4800	
Post Graduate Diploma (minimum 1 academic year of full-time study)	11	120	1200	**480 across the whole of the programme**
Masters (minimum 1 academic year of full-time study)	11	180	1800	

---

[3] FEI Approval Process - https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/approval/developmental-approval-process/
HEI Approval Process - https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/approval/professional-approval-process/

For qualifications being undertaken through the SVQ route, this is recognised as involving 100% practice. Work times and study arrangements will be agreed between the student and employer.

These Revised Supervised Practice Hours should be seen as minimum requirements not as targets (students should still be encouraged to achieve the full number of practice hours) and will enable flexible distribution of placement hours across the programme, bearing in mind the importance of practice occurring alongside theoretical learning. **However, if the ability to complete these hours is affected by the pandemic, the flexibility outlined below can be utilised.**

CLD Programme (all levels) – 100% placement hours Placement hours can be made up of the following activities					
Activity	**Support**	**Assessment/Evidence**	**Minimum required**	**Maximum allowed**	**Maximum flexible reduction**
Formal Placement	Placement Supervisor	Placement Assessment	55%		
National Professional Learning	Self-directed – CLDSC information CLDSC Buddy**	CLDSC PL Log Assessor - Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer		20%	
Volunteer Activity	Self-Directed CLDSC Buddy**	Student Report Assessor – Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer			
Lost placement hours due to pandemic interruption.	CLDSC Guidance	Agreement with HE/FE lecturer			25%
Sub-totals			75%		25%
TOTAL		100% total placement hours accounted for			

For more details on how the breakdown of this can be applied to different CLDSC Approved Programmes of study, please refer to sections 2 and 3 of the Frequently Asked Questions document which support this Guidance.

CLD work undertaken through digital platforms will be considered as face to face work in the same way as actual face to face practice with learners and communities.

Practice undertaken before the student registered for their qualification programme should not be counted towards the minimum practice hours, unless such practice meets requirements of the individual educational provider's accreditation of prior learning process. Educational providers should make their own judgements on whether this can be accepted.

6. 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.

7. 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 provider's 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

8. 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 in person because the HEI is closed or travel is prohibited, a virtual meeting process will be agreed and the submission will remain subject to approval until full approval sign off by CLDSC Approvals Committee has been gained. The timescales for this process will be agreed with each HEI individually.

9. 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.

10. References/Further Reading

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

CLD Standards Council Scotland	Competent Practitioner Framework http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/resources/competent-practitioner-framework/
	COVID 19 Guidance for CLD Students & Programme Providers

	http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/guidance-for-cld-students-and-programme-providers/
	CLD Student Resources CLD Student Resources | CLD Standards Council for Scotland
Colleges Scotland	https://collegesscotland.ac.uk/
International Association for Community Development	Standards for Community Development Practice http://www.iacdglobal.org/2018/07/02/all-iacd-members-urged-to-promote-and-disseminate-the-associations-international-standards-for-community-development/
National Occupational Standards	http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/resources/standards-and-benchmarks/national-occupational-standards/ • Community Development • Youth Work
Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education	www.qaa.ac.uk
Student Award Agency Scotland (SAAS)	SAAS FAQs Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Frequently Asked Questions - SAAS
Scottish Government	Coronavirus in Scotland - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Student Information Scotland	Coronavirus Student Support Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Student Support - Scotland (studentinformation.gov.scot)
Scottish Qualifications Authority	COVID-19 Guidance - https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93678.html
	Info for HNC Working in Communities Graded Unit. https://www.sqa.org.uk/files/hn/HJ4Y34.pdf
TAG: Association of Professional Lecturers in Youth & Community Work	No Detriment Discussion https://www.tagpalycw.org/newsblog/2020/4/26/members-connect-20-reflections-from-lockdown-xmyan

–