

CLD Standards Council Scotland Practice Placement Guidelines

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

Version 1: 27 MARCH 2020

1. Purpose

This purpose of this document is to respond to Frequently Asked Questions raised in relation to the recently amended Practice Placement Guidelines. This document is complementary to the Guidance issued by CLD Standards Council Scotland on 18 March 2020.

2. Overview

The document is split into 4 sections:

1. General Questions
2. Professional Qualifications Questions
3. Developmental Qualifications Questions
4. References/Further Reading

1. General Questions

Which courses does the CLDSC Guidance relate to?

The guidance relates to all courses approved by Community Learning and Development Standards Council Scotland (CLDSC) through the Professional Approval or Developmental Approval routes.

<http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/approval/approved-training-programmes/>

For courses not approved by CLDSC, students should speak with individual Higher Education Institutes (HEI) or Further Education Institutes (FEI).

What are Professional Qualifications in CLD?

Professional qualifications in CLD are awarded at Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 9 or above. <https://scqf.org.uk/interactive-framework/>

Examples include:

- Bachelor of Arts (BA/BA Hons) in Community Learning & Development
- Post Graduate Diploma in Community Education

What are Developmental Qualifications in CLD?

Developmental qualifications in CLD are awarded at SCQF levels 6-8.

Examples include:

- Higher National Certificate (HNC) Working in Communities
- Professional Development Award (PDA) Youth Work
- Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) Community Development

Why is approval by CLDSC important?

Approval is a form of quality assurance and ensures that the programme, course or provider

- has adhered to the relevant set of guidelines; and
- is judged by peers to equip an individual with sufficient knowledge and skills to begin practising in the broad field of CLD.

Approval aims:

- To raise the quality of existing learning, where appropriate, in line with stated standards of competence.
- To ensure comparability of learning standards.
- To provide a national system of mutual recognition and transferability of an individual's qualifications,
- To enhance the learning provision through co-operation, networking and collaboration between participating bodies.
- To enhance the effectiveness and range of learning opportunities.
- To enhance the professional status of Community Learning and Development.

How was this guidance developed/agreed?

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 will be reviewed regularly to take account of changes from government/other stakeholders.

It also 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>
- 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.

Why is there a focus on the amount of practice placement hours achieved?

Students undertaking qualifications approved through our Professional or Developmental Approval routes, must undertake a minimum amount of practice in order to achieve the professional qualification. This is based on the QAA Benchmarks for Youth & Community Work which advise that:

Students have significant involvement in community and youth projects as well as in other, more formal, settings. Learning through working with experienced practitioners of youth work, community education and/or community development, as well as other professional staff, is a central feature of courses in this subject area.

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-youth-and-community-work.pdf?sfvrsn=5e35c881_4

All programmes approved through the Professional or Developmental Approval routes must ensure a minimum of 40-50% practice is included across the full length of the programme.

Click for more information on the [Professional Approval Process](#) and [Developmental Approval Process](#) followed by academic institutions when applying for Approval from CLDSC.

What are the existing minimum practice hours which are required for my programme?

Degree/ Programme Type	SCQF LEVEL	SCQF Credit Points	Total Notional hours of study across the full length of the programme	Supervised Practice hours to meet 40% – 50% requirement across the full length of the programme
PDA	6	28	280	112 - 140
HNC	7	96	960	384 - 480
Diploma	8	240	2400	960-1200
BA	9	360	3600	1440 - 1800
BA (Honours)	10	480	4800	1920 - 2400
Post Graduate Diploma	11	120	1200	480 - 600
Masters	11	180	1800	720 - 900

My placement has already involved lots of great group work with no assessment being made. What can I do about this to make it count?

If your work has not been assessed, please speak to your practice supervisor or educational provider about why this has not happened.

The QAA Benchmarks describe assessment as follows:

Assessment draws upon a diversity of methods which reflect the range of practical, academic and digital skills required by practitioners in the field.

These may include:

- *essays*
- *reports*
- *presentations*
- *posters*
- *work-based portfolios*
- *reflective logs and journals*
- *research projects*
- *simulations such as funding applications and needs assessments*
- *development of practice resources*
- *peer learning and assessment*
- *examinations/multiple-choice tests*
- *assessment of practice.*

You can also make sure any reflection you have carried out and evidence of work undertaken is included in your portfolio of learning as evidence. This, as with all

practice placement reflections, should be in line with the [CLDSC Competent Practitioner Framework](#). You can then speak with your practice supervisor or educational provider about how to include this in your assessments. The Practice Placement Guidelines on the CLDSC website gives information on what should be expected of everyone involved in the practice placement process.

<http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/approval/guidelines-for-professional-practice-placement/>

Who can assess my practice experience? Can lecturers/class tutors assess my practice experience?

It is part of our Approvals Standards that practice placement supervisors should be able to pass/fail placements. This standard is based on the QAA Benchmarks for Youth and Community Work which state:

Assessment is sustainable and aligned to practice. This recognises that students learn more deeply when the planned learning is constructively aligned with the assessment process. Sustainable assessment methods are fit for purpose in assessing knowledge and understanding of the subject area but also strengthen graduate attributes in their use of assessments or in their capacity to make professional judgements across a range of future practice contexts. Assessment is thus formative, summative and sustainable in its alignment to professional practice and involves an appropriate range of methods of gathering evidence about student achievement and progress. It includes the use of data from both higher education providers and from practice agencies in which the student is undertaking her/his professional education.

For practice-based learning the role of the practice-based supervisor is critical. Assessment of practice is rigorous and undertaken in partnership between the higher education provider and the practice area. Practice-based learning is based on clear contracts with employers. Supervisors and mentors are fully briefed by the higher education providers, and where they are involved in assessment there are clear systems for the moderation of their assessed practice. Practice supervisors for courses leading to professional qualifications are appropriately professionally qualified.

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-youth-and-community-work.pdf?sfvrsn=5e35c881_4

This guidance gives educational providers and/or practice supervisors the opportunity to work with individuals to make the fair and right decision for all students and ensure the professionalism of the CLD Sector.

How can students who already work in CLD prove they are of a standard required?

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. This will require the educational provider and/or practice supervisor to work with individuals to ensure that the evidence is acceptable and appropriate and to support this process we have suggested that the views of External Examiners with CLD practice are sought.

I don't think I can afford to spend any longer at College or University than the arranged finish date – what help is available for me?

In his statement to Scottish Parliament on 19/3/20, John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, confirmed that there has been, and will continue to be, consultation with the Higher Education and Further Education sectors, Student Awards Agency Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council in relation to student support. For further information on what is agreed between Scottish Government and these agencies please speak to your tutor/lecturer.

View: <https://www.scottishparliament.tv/meeting/ministerial-statement-education-covid-19-march-19-2020>

Read: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/statement-covid19-managing-impacts-scottish-education/>

2. Professional Qualification Questions

What does mutual recognition mean for me?

A mutual recognition agreement by the Joint Education Training Standards Committee (JETS) is in place. JETS is a co-operative Scheme of the UK & Ireland Joint ETS administered by its members:

England - ETS (England) <https://nya.org.uk/careers-youth-work/getting-qualified/education-training-standards-sub-committee-ets/>

Wales - ETS (Wales) <https://www.etswales.org.uk/home.php>

Northern Ireland and Ireland - the North-South ETS (NSETS)

<https://www.youth.ie/programmes/projects-initiatives/nsets/>

Scotland - CLD Standards Council Scotland. www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk

The primary responsibility of JETS is to validate and endorse courses leading to professional qualification in youth and community work (and for CLD in Scotland) in their respective jurisdictions.

Mutual recognition means that Professional (higher education) qualifications which have been approved/validated by any of the above organisations are recognised across the UK as equivalent. For example, if you gain a qualification in Scotland approved by CLDSC, your qualification will be recognised by other employers and professional associations meaning you can work in Northern Ireland, Wales, England or Eire.

An example of the guidance for practice placement in other nations can be found here: England - <https://nya.org.uk/covid-19-ets/>

Is my CLD student placements being treated in the same way as student teacher placements and other student placements?

We are aware that most Professional CLD Approved Programmes are delivered in a School of Education within a university setting where student teachers and student social workers are also studying. Where appropriate, the CLDSC has prepared this guidance in line with other Professional Bodies (e.g. General Teaching Council Scotland [GTCS] and Scottish Social Services Council [SSSC]). However, our guidance takes account of the different professional context and placement requirements for CLD students.

As the only practice which is assessed in CLD programmes is that which takes place during the qualification, the quality of the practice must be assessed during this time and sufficient practice must be available on which to assess.

Further information relating to the SSSC guidelines for social work placements and the GTCS guidelines for teaching placements can be found:

SSSC: <https://news.sssc.uk.com/news/social-work-student-placements-and-bursaries>

GTCS: <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/News/news/coronavirus-covid-19-students.aspx>

What are the minimum hours that will be accepted in light of the COVID-19 situation and the closure of placements?

It has been agreed through the JETS Approvals group that a 12.5% reduction in placement hours be granted across the full length of any programme. Details below:

Degree/ Programme Type	SCQF LEVEL	SCQF Credit Points	Total Notional hours of study across the full length of the programme	Supervised Practice hours to meet 40%–50% requirement across the full length of the programme	REVISED Supervised Practice Hours - across the full length of the programme
Diploma	8	240	2400	960 - 1200	840 - 1056
BA	9	360	3600	1440 - 1800	1260 - 1584
BA (Honours)	10	480	4800	1920 - 2400	1680 - 2112
PGD	11	120	1200	480 - 600	420 - 528
Masters	11	180	1800	720 - 900	630 - 792

[Source: Annex 3 - Professional Approval Guidelines Guidance Document](#)

Undergraduate degree example

*Student completing a 3-year BA programme full-time study:
Year 1 practice – 480 hours
Year 2 practice – 480 hours
Year 3 practice – 480 hours
TOTAL HOURS OF ASSESSED PRACTICE: 1440*

The above hours are the overall minimum practice placement hours requirement. However, students in different years or programmes should take note of the following requirements as noted in our Guidance:

Guidance for non-final year students e.g. Years 1 and 2: “...CLDSC would advise that universities progress them to the next year/level ...on the condition that they undertake additional supervised practice...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: “A reduction of 12.5% in assessed supervised professional practice will be accepted as a qualifying standard, providing students have demonstrated a consistent pass in previous practice assessments. This allowance will not apply to 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.”

Guidance for post-graduate students: “In this case successful completion of the required 40 – 50% placement practice is the **absolute** minimum requirement for a programme pass. HEIs may require to consider extending the programme.”

3. Developmental Qualification Questions

I'm doing a Higher National Certificate in Working with Communities. My placement has closed and I have not completed my graded unit. How will it be graded?

Students may find that their practice placement area has now closed or is no longer able to support them due to the exceptional circumstances presented by COVID-19. A reduction of 12.5% in assessed supervised practice will be 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 would not apply to 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. 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 College teaching terms/semesters.

Students who become involved in COVID-19 Community Hub or other volunteering (e.g. undertaking digital provision to learners) may wish to include this practice as evidence.

Should additional evidence be required, examples which may be included are:

- *reports*
- *presentations*
- *posters*
- *work-based portfolios*
- *reflective logs and journals*
- *research projects*
- *simulations such as funding applications and needs assessments*
- *development of practice resources*
- *peer learning and assessment*

SQA has yet to provide guidance on Graded Unit assessment procedures. The CLDSC will issue further guidance on Graded Units as soon as this available from the SQA.

What are the minimum hours that will be accepted in light of the COVID-19 situation and the closure of placements?

Degree/ Programme Type	SCQF LEVEL	SCQF Credit Points	Total Notional hours of study	Supervised Practice hours to meet 40% – 50% requirement across the full length of the programme	REVISED Supervised Practice Hours across the full length of the programme
PDA	6	28	280	112-140	98 – 140
HNC	7	96	960	384-480	336 - 422

[Source: Annex 3 - Developmental Approval Guidelines Guidance Document](#)

HNC Working in Communities Example

6 Mandatory Units = 800 HOURS (includes
graded unit at 8 SCQF credit points)
2 Optional Units = 160 HOURS
Total SCQF credits = 960 HOURS
To comply with revised minimum practice placement
336 HOURS

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/GroupAwardSpecificationForHNCWorkingWithCommunitiesGM1M15.pdf

4. REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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/>

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

Scottish Qualifications Authority

COVID-19 Guidance - <https://www.sqa.org.uk/files/hn/HJ4Y34.pdf>

Info for HNC Working in Communities Graded Unit.

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/files/hn/HJ4Y34.pdf> -