

# CLD Standards Council Scotland Practice Placement Guidelines

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

### 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 <http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/updated-guidance/>

### 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

### 1.1 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 of qualifications across the UK 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 (QAA) COVID-19 Guidance:
  - <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/support-and-guidance-covid-19>
- Joint guidance statement from SQA and Colleges Scotland regarding Higher National qualifications:
  - [Qualifications guidance 2020-21 - SQA](#)

### 1.2 What does CLDSC do to protect/promote/raise issues that are of concern to its Members?

- Ongoing discussions with Scottish Government including representation by Dr Marion Allison, Director, CLDSC, on the short-term Ministerial Task Force group. This group was established in January 2021 by the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science to work to agreed principles to consider where Government and its agencies can help reduce the impact of the pandemic on students by working together flexibly to deliver nationally required outcomes and delivering solutions that are in the best interests of students. Areas for discussion include completion of qualifications/courses in this academic year; delivery of practical elements within courses/qualifications; and financial sustainability for students.
- Ongoing discussions with HE/FE representatives, including FE/HE/CLDSC staff meetings; Practice Placement Supervisors Focus Group; Student CLD Practitioners Focus Group.
- Regular review and updating of CLDSC Placement Guidance.

- Provide opportunities for discussion and reflection through a variety of media including Weekly Member Updates and Student Slack Workspace.

### 1.3 Which courses does the CLDSC Placement 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](#).

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

### 1.4 Which academic year does the guidance relate to?

This guidance relates to academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21. For details on how to apply the guidance, please contact your educational provider for direction and support.

### 1.5 What are Professional Qualifications in CLD?

Professional qualifications in CLD are awarded at [Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#) Level 9 or above. Examples include:

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

### 1.6 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

### 1.7 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.

### 1.8 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](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 amount of hours of practice is included across the full length of the programme.

**1.9 What are the standard minimum practice hours which are required for my programme (outwith the COVID 19 pandemic period)?**

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	

If you are completing a qualification through the [SVQ](#) route, this is recognised as involving 100% practice. Work times and study arrangements will be agreed between the student and employer.

**1.10 My placement has already involved lots of 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.

**1.11 What can I use to evidence my practice activity?**

Here are some examples

- witness testimonies
- professional discussions
- authenticated learner-produced reports
- records photographs or video evidence of work activity taking place
- video/audio link recording
- 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

- National Professional Learning such as attendance at digital conferences, working groups (where reflected on and discussed/documentated with peers or practice supervisors)
- Volunteer activity

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. A new online version of this is currently in creation and further updates will be provided as soon as this is available.

### 1.12 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 pass or fail Student CLD Practitioners placements. This standard is based on the QAA Benchmarks for Youth and Community Work. CLDSC applies this approach to both Professional and Developmental Approval routes. The QAA states:

*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.*

[QAA Subject-benchmark-youth-and-community-work.](#)

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.

### **1.13 I have a lot of CLD practice experience: do I need to complete all of the placement hours?**

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.

### **1.14 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 January 2021, the Scottish Government announced twenty million pounds (£20,000,000) for student hardship funds, in addition to the five million pounds (£5,000,000) that was announced in December 2020. Students should apply directly to their institutions to access Discretionary Fund Support.

For Higher Education Students who require to repeat a year of study, an additional year of funding from SAAS known as a 'plus 1' is available. Further information can be found at the Student Information Scotland Website is our main source of information to students on all aspects of student finance - Student Information Scotland

- <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/>
- <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/students/funding-students.aspx>
- <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/coronavirus/extra-hardship-payments-for-students>
- [Student Information Scotland– Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Student Support – Scotland](#)



## 2. Professional Qualification Questions

### 2.1 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

North-South ETS (NSETS) <https://www.youth.ie/programmes/projects-initiatives/nsets/>

Scotland

CLD Standards Council Scotland (CLDSC) [www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk](http://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 - [NYA Guidance Statement to Universities \(Jan 2021\) FINAL](#)

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

As noted in 1.2 above, CLDSC is represented on the Ministerial Task Force which is considering all issues related to academic study including 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: [Covid-19 – Update and FAQs | General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://www.gtcs.org.uk/covid-19-update-and-faqs)

## **2.3 Do I need to complete all the required hours of placement in light of the COVID-19 situation and the closure of placements?**

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. The aim is still for students to complete 100% of required placement hours and activities as normal. However, if the ability to complete this is affected by the pandemic, the flexibility outlined below in tables 2A or 2B be utilised.

#### **2.4 What can my placement activity consist of?**

As well as a flexible reduction in placement hours (up to a maximum of 25% across the duration of the programme), flexibility has also been built into what constitutes placement activities.

The aim is still for students to complete 100% of required placement hours and activities as normal. However, if the ability to complete this is affected by the pandemic, the options below can be used to support practice.

Please note, the amount of hours required varies depending on the programme of study you are undertaking.

Table 2A

<b>BA/BA Hons – 1440 placement hours</b> <b>Placement hours can be made up of the following activities</b>					
Activity	Support	Assessment/Evidence	Minimum hours required	Maximum hours allowed	Maximum hours flexible reduction
Formal Placement	Placement Supervisor	Placement Assessment	792		
National Professional Learning	Self-directed – CLDSC information CLDSC Buddy	CLDSC PL Log Assessor - Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer		288	
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			360
<b>Sub-totals</b>			<b>1080</b>		<b>360</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1440 total placement hours accounted for</b>		

Table 2B

<b>PG Diploma/Masters - 480 placement hours</b> <b>Placement hours can be made up of the following activities</b>					
Activity	Support	Assessment/Evidence	Minimum Required	Hours must Not Exceed	Maximum hours flexible reduction
<b>Formal Placement</b>	Placement Supervisor	Placement Assessment	264		
<b>National Professional Learning</b>	Self-directed – CLDSC information CLDSC Buddy	CLDSC PL Log Assessor - Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer		96	
<b>Volunteer Activity</b>	Self-Directed CLDSC Buddy	Student Report Assessor – Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer			
<b>Lost placement hours due to pandemic interruption.</b>	CLDSC Guidance	Agreement with HE/FE lecturer			120
<b>Sub-totals</b>			<b>360</b>		<b>120</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>480 placement hours accounted for</b>		

### 3. Developmental Qualification Questions

#### 3.1 I'm doing a Higher National Certificate in Working with Communities. My placement has closed, how can I complete my placement hours?

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 flexible reduction of up to a maximum of 25% in assessed supervised practice hours across the whole programme 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.

Here are some examples and a further link to SQA guidance:

- witness testimonies
- professional discussions
- authenticated learner-produced reports
- records photographs or video evidence of work activity taking place
- video/audio link recording
- 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
- National Professional Learning such as attendance at digital conferences, working groups (where reflected on and discussed/documentated with peers or practice supervisors)
- Volunteer activity

SQA has provided [guidance to assessing SVQs](#) which details some suggestions for other appropriate methods of assessment and/or types of evidence.

[SQA has issued guidance to assessing HNC and PDA programmes: Update from the Higher National and Vocational Qualifications 2021 Group - SQA](#)

### **3.2 I have not completed my graded unit. How will it be graded?**

See information from SQA FAQ below:

**Q How can colleges apply a grade to a Graded Unit where this cannot be completed and may even be the weakest element of available evidence?**

A The Graded Unit is the summation and application of the candidate's understanding of mandatory units in the HNC or HND to meet the course aims. The course team, through a professional discussion, review the quality and sufficiency of candidate evidence, in addition to any work submitted for the Graded Unit, to determine a grade.

Information on more SQA FAQ can be found [here](#)

**3.3 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 flexible reduction of up to 25% in placement hours be granted across the full length of any programme. The aim is still for students to complete 100% of required placement hours and activities as normal. However, if the ability to complete this is affected by the pandemic, the flexibility outlined below in tables 3A and 3B can be utilised.

**3.4 What can my placement activity consist of?**

As well as a flexible reduction in placement hours (up to a maximum of 25% across the duration of the programme), flexibility has also been built into what constitutes placement activities.

The aim is still for students to complete 100% of required placement hours and activities as normal. However, if the ability to complete this is affected by the pandemic, the options below can be used to support practice.

Please note, the amount of hours required varies depending on the programme of study you are undertaking.



Table 3A

<b>PDA – 112 placement hours</b> <b>Placement hours can be made up of the following activities</b>					
Activity	Support	Assessment/Evidence	Minimum hours required	Maximum hours allowed	Maximum hours flexible reduction
Formal Placement	Placement Supervisor	Placement Assessment	62		
National Professional Learning	Self-directed – CLDSC information CLDSC Buddy	CLDSC PL Log Assessor - Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer		22	
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			28
<b>Sub-totals</b>			<b>84</b>		<b>28</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>112 total placement hours accounted for</b>		

Table 3B

<b>HNC – 384 placement hours</b>					
<b>Placement hours can be made up of the following activities</b>					
Activity	Support	Assessment/Evidence	Minimum hours required	Maximum hours allowed	Maximum hours flexible reduction
<b>Formal Placement</b>	Placement Supervisor	Placement Assessment	211		
<b>National Professional Learning</b>	Self-directed – CLDSC information CLDSC Buddy	CLDSC PL Log Assessor - Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer		77	
<b>Volunteer Activity</b>	Self-Directed CLDSC Buddy	Student Report Assessor – Placement Supervisor/HE/FE Lecturer			
<b>Lost placement hours due to pandemic interruption.</b>	CLDSC Guidance	Agreement with HE/FE lecturer			96
<b>Sub-totals</b>			<b>288</b>		<b>96</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>384 total placement hours accounted for</b>		

### 3.5 I'm doing the SVQ in Community Development, how is this affected?

SVQ is recognised as involving 100% practice. Work times and study arrangements will be agreed between the student and employer.

About SVQs <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/79494.html>

Support on applying this guidance to specific SVQs can be accessed contacting [contact@cldstandards.gov.uk](mailto:contact@cldstandards.gov.uk)

## 4. REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

<b>CLD Standards Council Scotland</b>	Competent Practitioner Framework <a href="http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/resources/competent-practitioner-framework/">http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/resources/competent-practitioner-framework/</a>
	COVID 19 Guidance for CLD Students & Programme Providers <a href="http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/guidance-for-cld-students-and-programme-providers/">http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/guidance-for-cld-students-and-programme-providers/</a>
	<a href="#">CLD Student Resources</a> <a href="#">CLD Student Resources   CLD Standards Council for Scotland</a>
<b>Colleges Scotland</b>	<a href="https://collegesscotland.ac.uk/">https://collegesscotland.ac.uk/</a>
<b>International Association for Community Development</b>	Standards for Community Development Practice <a href="http://www.iacdglobal.org/2018/07/02/all-iacd-members-urged-to-promote-and-disseminate-the-associations-international-standards-for-community-development/">http://www.iacdglobal.org/2018/07/02/all-iacd-members-urged-to-promote-and-disseminate-the-associations-international-standards-for-community-development/</a>
<b>National Occupational Standards</b>	<a href="http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/resources/standards-and-benchmarks/national-occupational-standards/">http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/resources/standards-and-benchmarks/national-occupational-standards/</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Development</li> <li>• Youth Work</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education</b>	<a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk">www.qaa.ac.uk</a>

<b>Student Award Agency Scotland (SAAS)</b>	SAAS FAQs <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Frequently Asked Questions - SAAS</a>
<b>Scottish Government</b>	<a href="#">Coronavirus in Scotland - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</a>
<b>Student Information Scotland</b>	Coronavirus Student Support <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Student Support - Scotland (studentinformation.gov.scot)</a>
<b>Scottish Qualifications Authority</b>	COVID-19 Guidance - <a href="https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93678.html">https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93678.html</a>
	Info for HNC Working in Communities Graded Unit. <a href="https://www.sqa.org.uk/files/hn/HJ4Y34.pdf">https://www.sqa.org.uk/files/hn/HJ4Y34.pdf</a>
<b>The Professional Association of Lecturers in Youth &amp; Community Work</b>	<a href="#">TAG:PALYCW</a>