Programme Specification for Post Graduate Certificate in Person Centred Dementia Studies

This document applies to Academic Year 2026/27 onwards

Table 1 Programme Specification for Postgraduate Certificate in Person-Centred Dementia Studies

1.	**Awarding institution/body**	University of Worcester
2.	**Teaching institution**	N/A
3.	**Programme accredited by**	N/A
4.	**Final award or awards**	Postgraduate Certificate in Person-Centred Dementia Studies Postgraduate Award in Professional Development: Expert Practice in Person-Centre Dementia Care
5.	**Programme title**	Postgraduate Certificate in Person-Centred Dementia Studies
6.	**Pathways available**	*N/A*
7.	**Mode and/or site of delivery**	The programme will adopt a distance learning approach. All modules will be delivered fully online via a Virtual Learning Environment.
8.	**Mode of attendance and duration**	Part time over a maximum of 2 years. Regular engagement with the online learning resources will be required throughout the semester.
9.	**UCAS Code**	*N/A*
10.	**Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement**	Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies 2 ed. (2024)
11.	**Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision**	June 2019 August 2019 AQU amendments to Section 19. August 2020 QAA subject benchmark statement links updated August 2020 Temporary amendment due to Covid-19: *The Module MDEM4002 will adopt a distance learning approach during semester one April 2021 Addition of Level 6 module MDEM3008 from 2021/22 and change of entry requirement wording regarding modules MDEM4002 and MDEM3008 also from 2021/22. Permanent change to online delivery only for MDEM4002 from 2021/22. August 2021 – AQU amendments. August 2022 – AQU amendments July 2023 – annual updates April 2024 -Temporary removal of MDEM 4004 for 2024/25 due to Recruitment. April 2024 - Permanent removal of Dementia UK Admiral Nursing modules MDEM3008 and MDEM4002 for 2024/25 and onwards. Sept 2025 – continued temporary removal of MDEM4004 for 2025-26. April 2026- approved sequential delivery of 15

		credit modules.

12. Educational aims of the programme

Dementia is the 21st century's biggest health challenge. Today almost 50 million people are living with dementia and that number is set to triple by 2050. The 2018 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report set out the poor state of health and social care available from pre-diagnosis to end of life for people with dementia, their families and their communities.

The Postgraduate Certificate Person-Centred Dementia Studies has been designed to address an increasing need in all health and social care settings for person-centred approaches in the field of dementia. At the same time, this programme has relevance to many other service areas within a range of settings where people with dementia may frequent or interact, including charities and businesses. Workforce leadership and skills development are central to improving person-centred approaches. Effective leadership to facilitate person-centred support for people living with dementia is fundamental for the ability of an organisation to develop and sustain services which work for people living with dementia.

The internationally renowned research by the Association for Dementia Studies provides an evidence base, which underpins the applied practice knowledge transfer this course can deliver, thereby responding to the need for person-centred leadership in the field. This will be both accessible and flexible enough to generate ongoing sustainable development of quality dementia care within a range of settings. Content is aligned with the revised Dementia Training Standards Framework at Tier 3 (2026), supporting leadership, advanced practice and system level influence.. Within health and social care professions, the major target audience of this course,increased accessibility, flexibility and self-direction have been identified as the key benefits of online learning. This design will allow for more accessibility for students within a range of settings to undertake the course.

The course aims to:

- Facilitate the development of critical thinking and reflective practice skills essential for leading person-centred services in a range of settings and the knowledge and ability to initiate sustainable change.
- Cultivate skills in developing and supporting evidence-based practice in a range of settings that enhances the capacity of people with dementia to experience full citizenship and autonomy, whilst maximising wellbeing.
- Offer opportunities for leaders and potential leaders to build competence in finding evidence and knowledge transfer that informs policy and planning for regulators, commissioners and other key stakeholder groups.
- Enable students to critically appraise person-centred approaches which enhance wellbeing in everyday life for people living with dementia and their families and carers.
- Foster multi-disciplinary collaborative practice which is inclusive of views of people living with dementia and their families and which are rooted in their everyday lived experience.
- Promote opportunities to foster peer relationships and create expert communities of practice through problem solving and innovation.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

The learning outcomes have taken in account the University's *Curriculum Design Policy, Assessment Policy and Guidance on writing learning outcomes and developing assessment criteria, as well as the QAA's Revised UK Quality Code*

On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:

LO	***Knowledge and understanding***	
1	Identify and critique the elements of person-centred dementia care as relevant to their own areas of responsibility.	All modules
	Cognitive and intellectual skills	
2	Critically appraise appropriate literature to understand the relevant evidence base in the field of person-centred dementia studies	All modules
3	Develop advanced critical thinking to promote evidence-based practice, reflective practice and facilitate sustainable change	All modules
	Employability outcomes	
4	Formulate and articulate arguments to advocate for improved services or practice to meet the needs of people living with dementia and carers.	
5	Define and demonstrate what effective leadership skills are required as managers or leaders within their own setting.	All modules
	Transferable skills	
6	Plan, implement and evaluate changes to their practice or service which support people living with dementia.	All modules
7	Develop skills to engage and communicate effectively within a digital environment	All modules

Learning, teaching and assessment

The course will be offered wholly online using a distance learning approach.

As a course using online delivery, the development and implementation of the online learning environment is essential for positive teaching and learning experiences. To this end, the course is designed to facilitate student-centred, active, authentic learning that develops metacognition, fosters intrinsic motivation and empowers students.

The course is delivered online via Blackboard, the University's virtual learning environment (VLE). Students will engage with online lectures, videos, research literature and discussions to facilitate students' independent study. This course provides regular interactive synchronous learning (scheduled, live communication) opportunities via Teams seminars in a virtual classroom andengagement with students and tutors via asynchronous discussion forums. The course lead is available for contact throughout the course. Contact with university tutors will be facilitated viaemail, dedicated module discussion forums and video chat.

Teaching

Utilising a range of tools and features of the virtual learning environment (VLE), and evidence-based online pedagogical practices, the approach to teaching will involve:

- Minimising the complexity of technology through the use of clear, concise guidance in

navigating through the various facets of the course to develop a comfortable environment for students and instructors.

- Clear communication channels through which students can engage with each other and with module tutors (e.g. messaging within Blackboard, discussion boards, Teams).
- High quality explicitly framed online activities that underpin summative assessment and which includes opportunities for collaborative learning as well as receiving timely, constructive, formative feedback to support student learning.
- A defined, regular social presence of module tutors to support continuous student/teacher communication and minimise potential feelings of studying in isolation.
- Online learning is both asynchronous and synchronous with discussions via VLE to encourage critical reflection in students.
- Active learning is facilitated through peer discussion formats and are intended to enable the application of learning through discussion and small group activities.
- Analysis of case studies and policy from health and social care and other settings relevant to the student's professional context.
- Critical reflective analysis of dementia practice in a range of settings.

This will facilitate an experiential learning cycle that will maintain student engagement and activity, require students to take responsibility for their own learning, and afford opportunities to relate and apply their learnings within their professional practice context.

For students who register to undertake a standalone module, module leaders will generally act as their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT), this will ensure specific support for students. Students who undertake the Postgraduate Certificate or transfer onto this programme from a standalone module will be allocated a PAT from the wider Association of Dementia Studies (ADS) course team to join a group of students who will be undertaking their academic journey together. This will ensure that these students receive support with academic development throughout the course. The course leader along with members of the course team will meet regularly to ensure a consistent approach to students support in order to develop awareness of strengths and weakness, identifying goals to support students to complete postgraduate study. PATs will support students to develop a reflective approach to both their study, practice experiences and the feedback they receive on their academic work. Personal Academic Tutors will have regular contact with students throughout each module.

The University places emphasis on enabling students to develop the independent learning capabilities and academic achievement that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment. A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from Student Services and Library Services, and also Personal Academic Tutoring enables students to reflect on progress and builds a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help students to flourish and be successful.

Contact time

Synchronous sessions

Contact time with tutors will vary between modules. There will be synchronous (live) tutorials and teaching activities using the VLE. Scheduled online teaching may be held in the evening to accommodate students' work schedules. For fully online modules, a normal pattern of synchronous contact time will be around 1 hour per fortnight over 12 weeks, thus 6 hours per 15 credit module, although additional sessions may be added if a tutor identifies a need.

Asynchronous sessions

Students are expected to participate fully in the programme of study, engage actively with learning opportunities including any scheduled sessions. If unable to engage with a scheduled session students would be expected to contact the module leader in advance where possible. At times engagement within modules will be monitored through the VLE. Contact time will be 2 hours per week asynchronous over 12 weeks, thus 24 hours per 15 credit module.

Additional contact time will be through chat rooms and discussion boards which will be flexible.

This will allow students to have access to a range of material and learning resources which they can access at a time convenient to them but remains a means of sustaining contact with tutors.

Independent self-study

In addition to the synchronous sessions and asynchronous activities, students are expected to undertake a significant amount of self-directed study. Typically, this will involve 6 hours per week per 15 credit module across the course. Independent learning will be supported with a range of excellent learning facilities including library resources, the VLE and extensive electronic learning resources.

Teaching staff

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course, the team includes senior lecturers and a Dementia Practice Development Coach. People living with dementia and their families are involved in curriculum development and delivery.

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy through a variety of academic teaching staff available to students, including a number of lecturers who have a higher education teaching qualification or are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy. As part of the Association for Dementia Studies this will also include research fellows and PhD students.

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or ‘formative’ assignments helping students to achieve the learning outcomes and provide scaffolding towards their summative assessments. Each module has one or more formal or ‘summative’ inclusive assessments which are graded and count towards the overall module grade and is an opportunity for students to apply learning into practice within their professional context.

The precise assessment requirements for an individual student in an academic year will vary according to the optional modules taken. The range of assessments within the modules represent a pedagogical approach of application of knowledge and self-directed study.

Assessment methods include:

- Practice based exercise
- Reflective practice report
- Reflective Case Study
- Action Plan
- Academic essay

14. Assessment strategy

The overall approach is based upon the course's key feature of application of theory to practice and therefore assessment reflects the practical application and utility of knowledge alongside the understanding students gain from the range of learning opportunities. Students and teaching teams are partners in the learning, feedback and assessment processes and engagement in a dialogue about these processes is essential. During each module, support is provided to emphasise the critical assessment and analysis necessary to develop thinking and academic writing at Master's level.

All of the assessment items allow the student to match their interests, needs, role, and professional contexts. Students are encouraged to identify topics which will enable them to explore issues and questions from their own professional contexts with a view to innovating and enhancing dementia care practice. The assessments are powerful opportunities for individualised learning and developing self-management and self-direction; they are a central aspect of the learning process.

The formative and summative assessments allow students to build level 7 skills and increase their knowledge in order to support the completion of the summative assessments and support them in applying the Learning Outcomes.

Work Based Learning
The Postgraduate Award in Professional Development in Expert Practice in Person-Centre Dementia Care (Module MDEM4003) is subject to the University's work based learning policy as students are required to be in a workplace in order to achieve their summative assessment. Students' work-based learning is undertaken in their place of employment. Students undertaking this module are supported by a module lead and competent professionals experienced in practice. Students can utilise examples from practice situations as a context or contribution for any of their assignments.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Table 6 award map for each level of the course

		Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)		
Module Code	**Module Title**	**Credits** (Number)	**Postgraduate Award in Professional Development**	**PG Cert**
MDEM4001	Person-Centred Leadership: the VIPS Approach	15		M
MDEM4003	Expert Practice in Delivering Person Centred Dementia Care	30	M	O*
MDEM4005	Enabling Environments for People Living with Dementia	15		O
MDEM4006	Engagement and Empowerment in Dementia Studies	15		O
MDEM4007	Families and Care Partners in Dementia Studies	15		O

* MDEM4003 has additional entry requirements.

PG Award in Professional Development To be awarded the Postgraduate Award in Professional Development in Expert Practice in Person-Centre Dementia Care students must successfully complete 30 credits at Level 7: MDEM4003: Expert Practice in Delivering Person Centred Dementia Care
PG Certificate To be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate in Person-Centred Dementia Studies students must successfully complete 60 credits at Level 7.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at Level 7 of the OfS sector recognised standards. and the following sources have been usedthroughout this programme.

- *FHEQ qualification descriptor (Feb 24)*
- *Master's Characteristics Statement*
- *Dementia Training Standards Framework*
- *QS for Flexible and Distance Learning*

17. Support for students

There is extensive course information on the UW webpages, VLE and in the course handbook. Module leaders and personal academic tutors will provide a high level of individual academic support and encouragement to students. The course team within the Association for Dementia Studies are aware of the competing pressures on students who are also in full time work, who may be new or returning to level 7 study and who may also be new to online course delivery. Therefore, special attention has been paid to considering the needs of students studying online, with students receiving prompt advice and support from the University helpdesk. Each module will commence with structured induction activities which will support student's digital capabilities and familiarisation with the VLE and encourage peer interaction with the aim of fostering a student identify and community.

The Course Leader is available for contact throughout the course. Contact with the university tutors will be available via email, dedicated module discussion forums and video (Teams) with all material made available to students a week before teaching begins. Tutorial support will therefore be flexible and proactive within a supportive online learning environment which will enable students to learn from and with each other to develop professional networks.

All students are allocated a Personal Academic Tutors (PAT) and are encouraged to meet formally, in person or via the VLE, with them at least once each semester to discuss their individualised learning, feedback on assignments and to discuss module choice

University based support is available from:

https://www2.worc.ac.uk/firstpoint/
https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx
https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/

18. Admissions

Policy

The University aims to provide fair and equal access to university education to all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it. The course benefits from a programme of students working together and alongside each other using technology within distance learning to ensure that this happens. Although students will primarily be from the health and social care professions, a

diverse range of students from charities and businesses will be actively encouraged to apply.

Entry requirements

Applicants will require current experience of working with or supporting people with dementia, either through employment, regular voluntary work or caring.

Applicant should normally have:

EITHER

- An honours degree at 2:2 level or above

OR

- Qualifications and experience considered to be equivalent to the above. All students applying via this route will be assessed by the Course Leader and/or module leaders

When assessing a non-standard entrant's suitability for entry onto the course, candidates will need to demonstrate their potential to achieve the aims and outcomes of the course. The candidate will also need to demonstrate that their experiences are equivalent to having achieved a 2.2 at undergraduate level. The following criteria may be taken into consideration:

- Evidence of successful academic study at level 6 or equivalent.
- Experience of working in a health or social care setting, the roles undertaken and the level of decision making undertaken
- Ability to write in a clear, coherent and critical manner
- Awareness of the demands of studying at postgraduate level
- Interest and motivation for successful study on the programme
- Support from employer to undertake programme

Students whose first language is not English will be expected to have reached a sufficient standard on admission to the programme (e.g. IELTS 6.5, with a minimum of 5.5 in each element, or equivalent).

Students being sponsored by their employer must provide evidence of employer approval and payment agreement.

It is essential that applicants have access to a PC, tablet or mobile device with a reliable internet connection.

Module specific entry requirements:

MDEM4003: Expert Practice in Delivering Person Centred Dementia Care. Course participants must have extensive experience delivering training, education and professional development and be in a position to deliver training and support to staff working in health and care organisations.

See Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at
http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm

Admissions procedures
Following completion of the UW application form, applications will be reviewed by a member of the course team to check eligibility. There is no expectation that perspective students will need to attend interview, offer and contact will be made via email and through registry.

Admissions/selection criteria
Students are offered a place when the Course Leader confirms that that the applicant meets the entry criteria.

The application form includes a section for 2 references. It is normally expected that one of these would be an employer's or equivalent reference that details the applicant's experiences and current (or previous) role(s).

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules
- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment to pass a module
- Modules with more than one assessment use a compensatory approach, whereby the overall module mark is calculated across all assessments.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items
- A student is required to submit assessment items by 3pm on the due date and in accordance with the published process described in the module outline.
- A student may request an automatic extension of up to seven days up to six times in an academic year (depending on the number of credits studied) as described in the Delayed Assessment Procedures.
- A student who submits work late will not have work marked unless they have an approved claim of exceptional circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Retrieval of failure
- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Awards

Table 6 award map for each level of the course

Award	Requirement
PG Certificate	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map

PG Award in Professional Development	Passed a minimum of 30 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map

PG Award in Professional Development and PG Certificate awards are unclassified.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

Almost all students are already in employment therefore the focus is on introducing more effective ways of working within their employing organisations. As part of the journey of professional and role development we will encourage students to continue their academic journey through access to a range of higher degrees including MA in Professional Development, PhD, clinical doctorate and other taught doctorates.

Student employability

The provision offered through the course equips students to develop in their existing roles with the potential to progress into strategic and leadership roles. Emphasis upon a practical application of knowledge and skills within the programme will support the development of enhanced person centred services for people living with and affected by dementia.

Links with employers

The course leader and course team work closely with partners in the local NHS, social care and charities and business both locally and throughout the UK. The relationship between the University and in particular, the Association for Dementia Studies with practice partners and employers is a mature one that have developed over a number of years through a sound track record of delivering bespoke courses form many of these providers.

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 they take 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 associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.