Module Descriptor

Title	Leading Professional Inquiry		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	new module
Code	CHPS09001	**SCQF Level**	9
Credit Points	60	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	30
School	**Education and Social Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	C Gollek		

Summary of Module

This module develops students as leaders of practitioner enquiry who can critically evaluate and improve practice within early learning and childcare and related services, drawing on evidence-based information and considering the relationship between local and global issues. The module positions practitioner enquiry as a core leadership activity, supporting evidence-informed decision-making, professional learning and collaborative service improvement and evaluation.

The module supports students to develop a critical understanding of childhoods, curriculum, pedagogy, organisational frameworks, policy and legislation, and to use this understanding to inform leadership of practice. Through reflective, practice-based learning and work-based enquiry activity, students will enhance their leadership capability, professional accountability and capacity to sustain improvement within their service. Students will use their understanding of childhood in society, applying an ecological perspective to analyse the professional roles, responsibilities, attributes and approaches to working with children, families and other professionals and agencies and build the capabilities of individuals, families and communities. As leaders students will take account of their team and explore inclusive practise, supporting neurodiverse colleagues.

The module is explicitly aligned with the SSSC Standards for Childhood Practice, supporting students to demonstrate leadership, teamwork, professional reflection and responsibility for high-quality, inclusive and ethical practice. Here, students are encouraged to develop critical knowledge and understanding of educational models and best practice in Scotland, by comparing the Scottish approach with international case studies, e.g. Skandinavia; indigenous and bicultural curricula. By exploring the diversity of global education systems, students will be encoutaged to adopt a critical, anti-racist approach to their understanding of effective childhood practice. The module will examine current influences on childhood services, childcare and education, such as sustainability and citizenship within outdoor learning, and look at widers models and practices of education e.g. out of school care (OSC), playwork and community learning, linking these to global and local government priorities.

Drawing on learning and development from previous modules, students will analyse practice to lead an equitable project in collaboration with children, families and other stakeholders. Supporting students becoming practitioner researchers, students will explore traditional research methods and reflect on ethical considerations of undertaking research with colleagues, children and families, as well as the wider commmunity. Research skills will be explored in the context of improvement and evaluation, and also consider funding applications. The module is underpinned by UN SDG4.

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☐	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☒	Work -Based Learning[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley	☒ Online / Distance Learning ☒ Other (specify) New College Lanarkshire; West College SCotland	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☒	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Critically apply a range of practitioner enquiry tools to evaluate and improve professional practice in early learning and childcare and related services.
L2	Demonstrate a critical understanding of childhoods, curriculum, pedagogy, organisational frameworks, policy and legislation, and use this understanding to inform leadership of practice.
L3	Apply an ecological system model to plan, lead and evaluate collaborative practitioner enquiry activity, demonstrating effective leadership, ethical judgement and professional accountability.
L4	Analyse evidence generated through practitioner enquiry to support evidence-informed decision-making, service improvement and positive outcomes for children and families.
L5	Critically reflect on leadership practice, professional identity and responsibility, including working with others, supporting professional learning and sustaining continuous improvement.

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 9** Students will develop a critical understanding of practitioner enquiry as a leadership approach to professional learning and service

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

	improvement, informed by knowledge of childhoods, curriculum, pedagogy, policy and organisational frameworks. This knowledge will be used to support ethical, evidence-informed leadership of practice within early learning and childcare and related services.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 9** Students will apply practitioner enquiry tools to plan, lead and evaluate improvement activity within complex professional settings. They will exercise initiative and professional judgement when using evidence, ethical frameworks and leadership approaches to support high-quality practice.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 9** Students will analyse and evaluate complex professional issues using evidence generated through practitioner enquiry and critical reflection. They will synthesise theory, professional standards and practice knowledge to inform reasoned, evidence-based decisions and improvement strategies.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 9** Students will communicate enquiry processes and outcomes clearly and effectively to a range of professional audiences, facilitating dialogue and collaborative learning. They will use digital tools to support professional communication, reflection, documentation and the interpretation of practice-based evidence.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 9** Students will demonstrate autonomy and accountability in leading practitioner enquiry and supporting professional learning within teams. They will work collaboratively with others, exercising ethical leadership, supporting colleagues' development and contributing to sustained service improvement.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours. In line with current UWS learning and teaching principles, a 60-credit module includes 300 learning hours, including a minimum of 96 Lecture / Core Content Delivery hours. Learning and teaching strategies are designed to promote critical enquiry, reflexivity and the integration of theory, research and professional practice, consistent with SCQF Level 9 expectations. Learning and teaching approaches will include: - Lectures and critically dialogic seminars - Case-based and problem-based learning focused on complex practice scenarios

- Workshops developing analytical and evaluative approaches to inclusive practice

- Critical engagement with practitioner narratives and policy texts

- Guided independent, collaborative and work-based learning

Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	96
Work-based Learning	300
Independent Study	204
Please select	
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	600

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Bamsey, V., McNair, L., and Campbell, N. (2025) Anti-racism in Early Childhood Education. Bloomsbury.

Bolshaw, P. and Josephidou, J. (2019) Introducing Research in Early Childhood. Sage.

Groundwater-Smith, S., Docket, S. & Bottrell, D. (2015) Participatory Research with Children and Young People. Sage.

Hayes, N., O'Toole, L., & Halpenny, A.M. (2017) Introducing Bronfenbrenner: A Guide for Practitioners and Students in Early Years Education. 2nd Ed. Routledge.

Mukherji, P. and Albon, D. (2023) Research Methods in Early Childhood. 4th Ed. Sage.

SSSC (2024) Codes of Practice. Scottish Social Services Council.

SSSC (2015) The Standard for Childhood Practice Revised. Scottish Social Services Council.

Whalley, M. and Pen Green Centre Team (2017) Involving parents in their children's learning. 3rd Ed. Sage.

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

80%

Equality and Diversity
The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code. This module aligns with the Equality Act (2010) and the UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code. Inclusive learning and teaching approaches are embedded throughout the module, with reasonable adjustments made where appropriate to support student learning.
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Education**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	Early Years
Moderator	D Armstrong
External Examiner	tbc
Accreditation Details	SSSC
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	1

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
A work-based project integrated portfolio (approx 9,000 words equivalent) that evidences the planning, leadership, implementation and evaluation of practitioner enquiry within a professional context. The submission should demonstrate the student's ability to identify an appropriate area for improvement / development and lead enquiry with others, apply enquiry tools to improve practice, and critically reflect on leadership, professional responsibility and service improvement.
Assessment 2
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1

Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Work-based Portfolio	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	100	96

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	48 hours

Change Control

What	When	Who
New Module	Feb 26	D Armstrong
Update following ILQR feedback	July 26	D Armstrong