Postgraduate Programme Specification

Session	2026/27	**Last Modified**	
Named Award Title	MSc Career Guidance and Development		
Award Title for Each Award	MSc Career Guidance and Development PG Dip Career Guidance and Development PG Cert Career Guidance and Development (exit award)		
Date of Approval	July 2026		
Details of Cohort Applies to	All new students commencing in, or after, September 2026		
Awarding Institution	University of the West of Scotland	**Teaching Institution(s)**	University of the West of Scotland
Language of Instruction & Examination		English	
Award Accredited by		Pg Dip award accredited by the UK Career Development Institute	
Maximum Period of Registration			
Duration of Study			
Full-time	Pg Dip: 9 months (two academic terms)	**Part-time**	MSc top-up: one year (three academic terms)
Placement (compulsory)	Students undertake a three-week placement in Term 2		
Mode of Study	☒ Full-time ☐ Part-time		
Campus	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☒ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)
School	**Education and Social Sciences**		
Divisional Programme Board	**Social Sciences**		
Programme Leader	Dr Marjorie McCrory		

Admissions Criteria

Candidates must be able to satisfy the general admission requirements of the University of the West of Scotland as specified in Chapter 2 of the University Regulatory Framework together with the following programme requirements:

Appropriate Undergraduate Qualifications:

Applicants will typically possess a degree or equivalent. In the absence of a degree, where entry requirements do not conform to the general entry requirements, other evidence can be considered on an individual basis in line with Regulations 2.13 – 2.36 (Recognition of Prior Learning – RPL / Recognition of Credit).

Applicants should normally hold an honours degree or equivalent level of qualification (SCQF Level 10) in any subject. Applicants who hold a three year degree or equivalent level of qualification (SCQF Level 9) will be considered for entry where they can evidence relevant work experience as part of their application.

Applicants to the MSc top-up must hold a Pg Diploma in Career Guidance and Development, or an equivalent qualification suitable for credit transfer.

Other Required Qualifications/Experience

Applicants will be required to submit a reference from an appropraite professional attesting to the applicants' suitability for postgraduate-level study and for work with individuals and groups in helping and teaching contexts.

All successful applicants to the Pg Dip Career Guidance and Development will be required to become members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme and will be required to become student members of the Career Development Institute.

Further desirable skills pre-application

General Overview

The accredited Pg Dip in Career Guidance and Development prepares students for a range of professional roles in the career development and employability sector.

In Term 1, students undertake foundational academic and practice learning delivered on the UWS Paisley Campus, with additional synchronous (live) online sessions. In Term 2, students are explicitly prepared for professional roles in the career development and employability sector, underaking campus-based activities and a three-week work-based learning placement.

Pg Dip graduates have been successful in securing professional roles in Scotland, RUK and internationally, for example with Skills Development Scotland, (which may include working in local authority primary and secondary schools and FE institutions), as well as in HE institutions, local authorities, a wide range of organisations providing career development and/or employability services, and in third sector organisations and the private sector.

Our innovative MSc top-up module allows any applicant holding a Pg Dip in Career Guidance/Development (or a qualification deemed equivalent and suitable for credit transfer) from any university in the UK to top-up their qualification to a full Masters. Our Masters top-up module is delivered on a part-time basis over three terms and is designed primarily for professionals working in the career development/employability sector who wish to complete a research project in an area of interest.

Typical Delivery Method
The Pg Dip is delivered in Terms 1 and 2 (September -May).

Pg Dip students attend the UWS Paisley Campus on one day per week and attend additional scheduled online synchronous (llve) sessions on a separate day of the week. Synchronous online sessions allow students to undertake certain practice tasks that require real-time feedback and/or to be recorded.

Pg Dip students attend a three-week work-based learning placement in Term 2 . Applicants should note that during the three-week placement, students are required to attend from Monday- Friday within normal business hours.

The Msc top-up is delivered on a part-time basis across Terms 1, 2 and 3 (September-August).

MSc top-up students have the opportunity to attend Campus-based sessions, synchronus (live) online sessions and will have their research project supported by group and individual academic supervision.

All students will require to have access to a suitable device for online learning and teaching which supports commonly-used educational software and platforms including Microsoft Teams. Further information about these additional requirements will be made available to students during their programme induction.

Any additional costs
Pg Dip students are required to join the Career Development Institute as student members (cost for 2026/27 to be confiemd).

PgDip students are required to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme.

All students will require to have access to a suitable device for online learning and teaching which supports commonly-used educational software and platforms including Microsoft Teams.

PgDip students must bear the cost of travel associated with attending the compulsory three-week work-based learning placement in Term 2.

Graduate Attributes, Employability & Personal Development Planning

The Pg Dip Career Guidance and Development is an accredited, vocational programme explicitly designed to enable graduates to enter professional roles in the career development/employability sector and beyond. Members of the programme team are professionally qualified in career development and place strong emphasis on students' professional development.
In addition to undertaking a work-based learning placement, students develop a range of professional and transferrable skills across their programme of study. These are explicitly embedded in module learning activities.
The Pg Dip Career Guidance and Development aligns fully with the UWS Graduate Attributes Fraemwork.

MSc top-up students develop a range of research skills, augmenting the professional and transferrable skills developed as part of a Pg Dip qualification.

Work Based Learning/Placement Details

Pg Dip students are required to attend a three-week work-based learning placement at a prescribed time and location.

Attendance and Engagement

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 programme, academic engagement equates to the following:

Students are required to attend all scheduled classes, to engage fully with all module learning activities, including practice and work-based (placment) learning and to submit all required module assessment on time.

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.

Aligned with the overall commitment to equality and diversity, learning resources will be presented electronically in formats that allow flexible access and manipulation of content. The programme complies with UWS regulations and guidance on inclusive learning and teaching practice. Specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS regulations and policy.

Programme structures and requirements, SCQF level, term, module name and code, credits and awards (Chapter 1, Regulatory Framework)

Learning Outcomes

SCQF LEVEL 11 - Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of concepts and/or theories relevant to career development service delivery and/or professional practice.
A2	
A3	
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	Apply a sophisticated appreciation of theories and/or concepts to career development professional practice scenarios and/or contexts.
B2	
B3	
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	Communicate effectively in ways that demonstrate mastery of key concepts and/or theories relevant to career development professional practice and/or service delivery.
C2	
C3	
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	Deploy skills of critical analysis and evaluative judgment.
D2	Evaluate and synthesise new ideas and/or experiences.
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	Demonstrate the ability to effectively plan and execute academic and/or practice assessment tasks.
E2	
E3	
E4	

E5	

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
11	CGAD11001	Career Development Ethical and Inclusive Practice	20	☒	☐	☐	
11	CGAD11002	Career Development Professional Practice	20	☒	☐	☐	
11	CGAD11007	Career Development Theory	20	☒	☐	☐	
11	CGAD11009	Contexts for Career Development Professional Practice	20	☐	☒	☐	
11	CGAD11010	Career Development Work-Based Learning	40	☐	☒	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 11- Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) **Criteria for Award** *Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations*
There is no progression within stages at SCQF Level 11 and no Distinction is awarded at PgCert level (Regulation 3.23). In line with the UWS Regulatory Framework, for the award of

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Career Guidance & Development, at least 60 credits must be achieved of which a minimum of 40 are at SCQF Level 11 and none less than SCQF Level 10.

Students who successfully complete three optional modules will be eligibel for the award of Pg Cert Career Guidance and Development. Note that the Pg Cert is an exit award only.

SCQF LEVEL 11 - Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of legislative and ethical underpinnings of career development professional practice.
A2	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts, models and approaches relevant to career development professional practice.
A3	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of a range of theories of career decision-making and/or career development.
A4	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of key socio-economic and labour market issues relevant to contemporary CEIAG service delivery and professional practice.
A5	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of key aspects of career development service delivery and career development professional roles.
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	Apply principles of ethical and inclusive practice to career development professional practice scenarios.
B2	Demonstrate ability to appropriately apply knowledge to career development professional practice scenarios.
B3	Apply understanding of career development theories appropriately to a career development case study.
B4	Demonstrate ability to apply understanding of CEIAG policy to the anlysis of CEIAG service delivery and professional practice.
B5	Demonstrate professional competence by completing the professional practice tasks required to achieve the Career Development Institute accredited Postgraduate Diploma in Career Guidance and Development.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	Demonstrate critical awareness of aspects of effective communication in career development professional practice contexts.
C2	Convey complex academic conclusions to an expert audience in appropriate written forms.
C3	Demonstrate ability to communicate complex information and conclusions appropriately in presentational format.
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	Evaluate and synthesise new ideas and experiences.
D2	Demonstrate evaluative judgment in relation to sources of information relevant to career development professional practice.
D3	Demonstrate ability to synthesise complex ideas and information across domains.
D4	Synthesise academic and experiential learning to identify and analyse complex issues arising in service delivery and professional practice
D5	

Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	Demonstrate reflective insight into aspects of inter-professional and collaborative working.
E2	Demonstrate capacity to critically refect on own career development professional practice.
E3	
E4	
E5	

Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
11	CGAD11001	Career Development Ethical and Inclusive Practice	20	☒	☐	☐	
11	CGAD11002	Career Developpment Professional Practice	20	☒	☐	☐	
11	CGAD11007	Theories of Career Development	20	☒	☐	☐	
11	CGAD11009	Contexts for Career Development Professional Practice	20	☐	☒	☐	
11	CGAD11010	Career Development Work-Based Learning	40	☐	☒	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 11- Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip)
Criteria for Award
Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations

There is no progression within stages at SCQF Level 11. In line with the UWS Regulatory Framework, for the award of Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Career Guidance & Development, at least 120 credit points must be achieved (including all core modules) of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF Level 11 and none less than SCQF Level 10.

Distinction will be awarded in line with University Regulations and no imported credit can be used. (Regulations 3.23 - 3.26)

Successful completion of all core modules will result in the award of the Pg Dip Career Guidance & Development.

SCQF LEVEL 11 – Masters Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading)	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	Demonstrate extensive and detailed critical knowledge and understanding of an aspect of career guidance, development or education.
A2	
A3	
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	Demonstrate the ability to apply understanding of research methodology to research design.
B2	
B3	
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	Communicate research ideas and findings in ways appropraite to a range of audiences (which may include professional peers and/or experts).
C2	
C3	
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	Critically review, synthesise and extend knowledge and undersatnding in an aspect of career guidance, development or education.
D2	
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	Demonstrate the ability to work independently and constructively in the context of an academic research supervision relationship.
E2	
E3	
E4	
E5	

Masters Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
11	CGAD11008	Career Development Masters Dissertation	60	☒	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Masters Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 11- Masters
Criteria for Award
Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations

In line with the UWS Regulatory Framework, for the award of Masters in Career Guidance & Development at least 180 credit points must be achieved of which a minimum of 150 are at SCQF Level 11 and none less than SCQF Level 10.

Distinction will be awarded in line with University Regulations and no imported credit can be used. (Regulations 3.23 - 3.26)

Students who successfully complete the core Masters Dissertation module may exit with an MSc Career Guidance & Development.

Regulations of Assessment
Candidates will be bound by the general assessment regulations of the University as specified in the University Regulatory Framework. An overview of the assessment details is provided in the Student Handbook and the assessment criteria for each module is provided in the module descriptor which forms part of the module pack issued to students. For further details on assessment please refer to Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework. To qualify for an award of the University, students must complete all the programme requirements and must meet the credit minima detailed in Chapter 1 of the Regulatory Framework.

Combined Studies
There may be instances where a student has been unsuccessful in meeting the award criteria for the named award and for other more generic named awards existing within the School. Provided that they have met the credit requirements in line with the SCQF credit minima (please see Regulation 1.21), they will be eligible for a Combined Studies award (please see Regulation 1.61). For students studying at Level 11, they will normally be eligible for an exit award of PgCert / PgDip / Masters in Combined Studies.

Version no: 1

Change/Version Control

What	**When**	**Who**
Changes proposed from session 2026/27; to be validated at ILQR (June 2026)	April 2026	Marjorie McCrory