University of the
West of England
BRISTOL

Programme Specification

Approved at PMAC
24/5/07 for further
validation.
PM07.5.89 –
PM07.5.99

Section 1: Basic Data

Awarding institution/body	University of the West of England
Teaching institution	University of the West of England/Stroud College Gloucestershire
Faculty responsible for programme	Social Sciences and Humanities
Programme accredited by	UWE
Highest award title	Foundation Degree Higher Level Teaching Assistants
Default award title	Dip HE Education (this award is delivered at UWE, not Stroud College)
Interim award title	Certificate Certificate HE Education
Modular Scheme title (if different)	
UCAS code (or other coding system if relevant)	
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	Education Studies QAA Guidance on Foundation Degrees
On-going/valid until* (*delete as appropriate/insert end date)	
Valid from (insert date if appropriate)	September 2007
Authorised by…Validation Panel	**Date:…**

Version Code

1

For coding purposes, a numerical sequence (1, 2, 3 etc.) should be used for successive programme specifications where 2 replaces 1, and where there are no concurrent specifications. A sequential decimal numbering (1.1; 1.2, 2.1; 2.2 etc) should be used where there are different and concurrent programme specifications

Section 2: Educational aims of the programme
This programme has been developed in partnership with two local education authorities to support those working in primary, secondary and special schools who seek access to higher education and professional recognition as higher level teaching assistants. It is built around the TTA (now TDA) Standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants (either TTA 2003 or TDA 2007) and seeks to enhance those standards with due regard to broad social and educational concerns within the professional context. The overall aims for the programme are to:
- provide a coherent and relevant programme of study that enhances the ability of teaching assistants (HLTAs) to work effectively within a range of educational settings;
- achieve the TTA (now TDA) professional standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) building upon participants previous and current experience and qualifications to ensure recognition and formal accreditation of professional work where possible;
- provide participants with rigorous study of educational processes and perspectives, embedded within their cultural, political and societal context;
- locate study and professional practice within an understanding of the significance of educational values and ethics, alongside a commitment to social justice;
- provide access to opportunities and awards for a group of learners who may hitherto have not been able to access higher education;
- make full use of the opportunities and experiences in the workplace.

Section 3: Learning outcomes of the programme

The award route provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas: …

A Knowledge and understanding

Learning outcomes | Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies

A Knowledge and understanding of:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**
As a result of this programme, students will have knowledge and understanding of: 1. relevant theories and established principles within education policy and practice and an awareness of the way in which policy is developed; 2. ethical perspectives in relation to policy and practice relating to the role of Teaching Assistants ; 3. a range of contextual factors surrounding policy, including sociological and environmental, that have influence upon the role of the teaching assistant within educational settings; 4. their own value positions compared to those of other professionals and organisations working to support teaching and learning in schools; 5. how their work impacts upon wider educational policy and practice, recognising the limits of their own knowledge; 6. issues of equality, diversity, inclusion and social justice related to education policy and the practice of assisting teaching and supporting learning.	Acquisition of 1 is through lectures, seminars and tutorials enhancing professional reflection. Acquisition of 2, 4 and 5 are through lectures, seminars and workshops and in particular through the emphasis on values in professional work. Acquisition of 3 is through practical work in educational settings and through consideration of research and inspection evidence. Support and teaching is provided through the SCG's VLE (Moodle) as well as UWE Online, with further support from the technical support team. It is also intended that ICT will be addressed within the content of most modules for example UTTGAF-20-1. Throughout, the learner is encouraged to undertake independent reading both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught/learnt and to broaden his or her individual knowledge and understanding of the subject they are investigating **Assessment:** The programme models good practice and promotes a personal and intellectual understanding of assessment processes. Assessment is diagnostic, formative and summative, as appropriate. Strategies deployed include tutor-assessed group and individual written and oral assignments together with self-assessment and peer-assessment.

	Achievement of credit is gained through written assignments based on professional work - reports, essays, portfolios of directed tasks, evaluations or reflective accounts and through oral or poster presentations.

B Intellectual Skills

B Intellectual Skills	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
As a result of this programme, students will be able to: 1. use and organise coherently, relevant ideas and perspectives to interpret and/or explore the area of study; 2. compare and contrast some methods and techniques for obtaining data and solving problems; 3. select appropriate techniques to critically evaluate the relevance and significance of data collected in identifying and resolving problems; 4. apply underlying concepts and principles in a range of contexts; 5. use reflection in the learning process to develop personal theories and refine professional practice; 6. discuss how ethical issues can be addressed in their area of study.	Intellectual skills 1, 2 and 4 are developed through engagement in learning and teaching about professional and pedagogical knowledge. Strategies deployed cater for a variety of preferred learning styles and include: lectures; seminars; tutorials; directed study tasks including use of literature and reflective activities; research tasks; use of videos, case-studies, role-play, games and simulations; use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) and on-line materials; project work; group work and individual activity. Students will be encouraged to reflect upon their own professional practice to meet 5, 3 and 6 through a work based learning approach. **Assessment** A variety of assessment methods are employed. All test the students' ability to demonstrate reflective skills and refine professional practice (5). These cover compilation of portfolios of directed tasks conducted within the workplace, evaluative reports on interventions initiated in the workplace together with library based research study to combine insights that relate theory and practice. (1, 2, 3 and 6) Assessment is diagnostic, formative and summative, as appropriate. A bank of common assessment criteria is used throughout the programme to aid transparency and consistency in the assessment process. The matching of specific domains for assessment is defined within module specifications where appropriate. Assessment criteria are decided upon in relation to the approach taken by the participant in reaching the intended learning outcomes of the module which are mapped against the intended learning outcomes for the programme.

C Subject, Professional and Practical Skills

C Subject/Professional/Practical Skills	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
As a result of this programme, students will be able to: 1. meet the requirements for the recommendation of HLTA status as set out by the TDA in the relevant circular (2003 or 2007); 2. perform professional tasks exercising personal responsibility and a capacity to make decisions appropriate to the role of the HLTA; 3. identify appropriate theoretical, professional and/or research based sources and use appropriately in the practice of assisting teaching and supporting learning; 4. plan and execute a small scale enquiry in a systematic manner discussing the suitability of alternative approaches; 5. identify overall important aspects of work-based experience and compare, contrast and discriminate between aspects of the experience; 6. articulate a reflective and effective orientation to their professional practice as HLTAs.	Professional and practical skills will be developed and enhanced within the work place and throughout the programme participants will be encouraged to reflect on professional practice during lectures, seminars, tutorials and workshops. Reflection and research into professional practice is encouraged throughout the programme. **Assessment** Where appropriate, the assessment will be conducted in compliance with TTA (now TDA) requirements for the award of HLTA status. There is one professional practice module within the programme at level 2 (40 credits). This module is designed to provide accreditation for HLTA status gained outside the university framework together with an additional reflective commentary.

D Transferable Skills and other attributes

D Transferable skills and other attributes	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
As a result of this programme, students will be able to	These skills will be gained through the experiential nature of learning and teaching modelled in the Faculty. Groupwork and debate is encouraged in seminars, workshops and tutorials to refine professional pedagogical knowledge (1, 3 and 8). Participants are encouraged to make full use of the ICT facilities available to them in learning and teaching sessions alongside work-based use of ICT strategies and presentations.
1. interact effectively within a group, giving and receiving information and ideas, modifying responses where appropriate and developing effective professional relationships;	
2. locate and use effectively the full range of learning resources, including ICT across a range of contexts;	
3. evaluate own strengths and weaknesses, challenge received opinion and develop own criteria and judgement;	**Assessment**
4. communicate effectively with children, young people and parents/carers and colleagues;	These skills and attributes will be assessed through written assignments, professional practice, oral and poster presentations, group discussion and debate supported by prepared papers.
5. organise and present ideas, concepts and numerical information using a variety of presentational modes;	
6. take responsibility for own learning, accommodating new principles and understandings;	
7. communicate effectively in a manner appropriate to the area of study and report on procedures in a clear and concise manner in a variety of formats;	
8. identify key elements of problems, applying appropriate methods to their solution.	

Section 4: Programme structure
Use next page to provide a structural chart of the programme showing:
* *Level and credit requirements*
* *Interim award requirements*
* *Module diet, including compulsory/core/optional modules*

ENTRY ↓	level 1	**Compulsory modules** Nil	**Interim Awards:** • 60 credits at level 1 for a Certificate
		Core modules • UTLGHR-20-1 Introduction to Education Policy • UTTGAF-20-1 Thinking and Learning • UTL GHS-20-1 Supporting Learning: assessing, planning and recording • UTLGH3-20-1 The Voice of the Learner	
		Optional modules 20 credits to be selected from the following; • UTLGDD-20-1 Behaviour for Learning • UTLGDB-20-1 Counselling and Related Skills for Reducing Barriers to Learning • UTLGA7-20-1 Independent Study	
	level 2	**Compulsory modules** • UTLGHU-40-2 Teaching Assistants: Professional Practice	**Interim Awards:** • Credit requirements 120 credits level 1 or above for a Cert of HE • Other requirements
		Core modules • UTLGHV-20-2 Understanding Diversity and Social Context • UTLGHT-20-2 Inclusion: meeting the needs of children and young people **Optional modules** Select 60 credits from the following: • UTLGCF-20-2 Foundation for meeting Special Educational Needs • UTLGHW-20-2 Assisting Teaching in Language and Literacy • UTLGJ3-20-2 Enhancing Subject Knowledge • UTLGA7-20-2 Independent Study • UTLGA7-40-2 Independent Study	

Students on this award who are unable to achieve 40 credits for assessed work-based learning will be eligible to transfer to the Dip HE Education delivered at UWE.

Progression from the Foundation Degree into the BA Hons Education in Professional Practice can take place once the participant has achieved 240 credits (at least 120 of which are at level 2). A further 120 credits at level 3 are required to attain the BA Hons Education in Professional Practice.

Section 5: Entry requirements
Applicants must provide evidence which demonstrates to the University's satisfaction that they can benefit from study at levels 1 and 2 and are likely to achieve the required standard.

Applicants will normally need to have completed two years work with children or young people in an educational setting and have achieved a qualification in English/literacy and mathematics /numeracy, equivalent to at least Level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework.

Applicants will normally need to have achieved HLTA Status before starting on the programme. Certificate of such will be required.

This evidence will normally take the form of:
-   five subjects at GCSE / O level standard
−   two subjects at GCE Advanced level supported by three subjects at GCSE at Grade C or above
−   BTEC National Diploma
−   GNVQ Level III
−   Validated Access Course
−   European or International Baccalaureate
−   Evidence of experiential learning not previously assessed by or contributing to the awards of other institutions or bodies which is open to scrutiny and where necessary assessment. Such evidence may take the form of reports which the candidate has prepared as part of their professional duties

Students who do not meet the minimum academic entry requirements but have significant life and/or work experience will be considered on the basis of evidence of personal, professional and educational experience which indicate an applicant's ability to meet the demands of a Foundation Degree.

We give such applicants every opportunity to show that they have the motivation and ability to succeed in their chosen programme of study.

Section 6: Assessment Regulations
a) **MAR 3.1**

Section 7: Student Learning: Distinctive Features, Academic and Pastoral Support

The programme of study will be taught and assessed in Stroud College and other centres of learning in the region linked to Stroud College where relevant and appropriate. All participants will on entry to the programme be based in educational settings throughout their programme. Thus the programme provides opportunities for learning for work, learning *at* work and learning *from* work. Such work based learning takes every opportunity to draw out the experience of the workplace by enhancing participants' skills in evaluation and enquiry, underpinned by the professional knowledge required to support and assist in the education of students.

Effective partnership between such educational settings i.e. the college delivering the qualification and local schools and educational settings will be required. This work based approach to student learning is mindful of the UWE Bristol Policy on Work-Based Learning (2003) and as such forms a development within the area of continuing professional development for a group of educationalists currently operating in nurseries, early years settings, schools and colleges. It is intended that the programme of contact time will be delivered one day per week, or equivalent, thus minimising time spent away from the workplace.

Prior professional experience
Participants may wish to gain credit for previous achievements through the process of AEL

(Accreditation of Experiential Learning) and Accredited Learning (AL) in line with the university procedures. The programme of study is intended to be responsive to individual training needs and this is offered through a range of strategies. On entry to the programme, details are sought of individual's experience that could be accredited. Students are encouraged to discuss their individual learning needs with their module leader and/or programme leader to ensure they are able to access appropriate support for their study needs.

Learning Resources
All teaching and assessment will take place in SCG (Stroud College Gloucestershire) but students will have access to certain facilities within the School of Education of UWE which is located in a building on the Frenchay campus that is purpose built to meet the Faculty's teaching and learning requirements. . The building enjoys a range of ICT suites supported by and located next to the Faculty based centre for ICT.

UWE Online will be open to students from Stroud College and provide them with an educational websites directory portal, an ICT skills audit, ICT skills guidance and electronic discussion fora. Students will have access to the University library facilities and a specific collection of education resources which may support workplace learning on site at UWE Bristol.

Students will have access to SCG library facilities in a newly built and well-resourced building. This is open from 8.30am to 8pm Monday to Thursdays, closing at 4pm on Fridays; it is also open on Saturday mornings.

Virtual Learning Environment
Students will have access to the Stroud College Gloucestershire (SCG) virtual learning environment – MOODLE. It is intended to make a link through to the UWE online system in order to enable students to gain access to both VLEs. Tutors will be supported in servicing both environments. It is intended that staff and students will make use of Podcasts and IM (Real Time Chat) to access weekly individualised learning sessions.

Pastoral Care
Students have access to the SCG Student Advisers working to the Customer Services Manager who supports students in welfare matters. There is a full-time counsellor at SCG, and students will also have the support of the Adult Skills Unit for any disabilities.
The University Student Advisers support SCG students with regard to regulatory matters and matters related to late work and extenuating circumstances.

Students will have access to the University central Career Development Unit providing advice on enhancing their professional pathways and career progression.

The University and SCG will make available details of available financial support and of Student Welfare Services in both institutions. SCG has developed leaflets explaining routes to financial support (see Appendices)

Students on the programme are supported by a designated Programme Leader, and a team of skilled tutors based at SCG. The Programme Leader and/or Head of Higher Education will provide advice about module choice and study pathways.

Section 8: Reference Points/ Benchmarks

In designing this programme, the University and Stroud College have drawn upon the following external reference points
1. The QAA Foundation degree qualifications benchmarks
2. The QAA Guidelines for preparing programme specifications.
3. The QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

4. The QAA Benchmark Statement for Education Studies
5. UWE's Learning and Teaching Strategy.
6. TDA HLTA standards (2003 or 2007)

The QAA foundation degree qualifications benchmarks features of a qualification at this Intermediate level, its purpose, general characteristics and generic outcomes. In particular the following characteristics of the foundation degree have been considered: employer involvement, accessibility, progression, flexibility, partnership, assessment and monitoring/review. The TDA, through Gloucestershire County Council, offers financial support to Teaching Assistants undertaking this course as it delivers the underpinning knowledge and skills required for HLTA status.

The QAA Guidelines for preparing programme specifications are not intended to be prescriptive but do offer a framework around which to write the programmes' specifications. In many instances there are differences between these guidelines and exemplar specifications provided by UWE. This specification attempts to form a working amalgamation of the two.

The QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland describes the attributes and skills expected of graduates. Care has been taken to equate the level of individual modules, the programme of study at each year and the level of the Foundation Degree to the criteria in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

The QAA Benchmark Statement for Education Studies is demonstrated in Section 3 of this specification.

HLTA Standards were originally published in 2003 and the programme has been based on such standards. Recent revisions took place and draft standards published in May 2007. The programme presented here for validation is mindful of these standards and the programme leader will be aware of them throughout. The gaining of HLTA Status remains the responsibility of the specific organisation given the authority to grant this by the TDA. Currently in the locality this is Best Practice Network, Victoria Street Bristol BS1 6AX . Verification of external completion of HLTA status (normally evidenced at the point of the admission process) together with a reflective commentary will enable participants to complete the professional practice module (UTLGHU-40-2 Teaching Assistants: Professional Practice)

UWE / SCG CONTEXT
Other UWE Bristol policies for example the Racial Equality Action Plan (REAP) and the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2001)   are taken into account through the design of this programme and may serve to encourage a wide range of students to apply for inclusion on the programme.

The programme has been developed in the context of the University Learning and Teaching policies and explicitly meets the requirements set out therein. The focus on an approach to pedagogy, underpinned by values and based on evidence is commensurate with the approach to learning and teaching set out in the Faculty Statement of Pedagogic Principle.

The programme in its design and development has been shared with colleagues attending the SW Regional Learning Supporters Group all of whom support the training and professional development of support staff in educational settings. This group includes colleagues from Further Education Colleges including Stroud College Gloucestershire.

The FDHLTA is currently being run at UWE Faculty of Education in partnership with City of Bristol and South Gloucestershire local authorities. This enables colleagues at Stroud College to have a team of tutors already available at UWE to support them in developing the

programme in Stroud College.

Staffing

Programme Leader   : Barbara Imrie

Module Team :
Barbara Imrie, Pete Windell, Marian Winckles, Mike Dobson, Robin Lewis and contributions form SCG SMT.

Module Tutors

Module Code	Module Title	Module Tutor
Core Modules Level 1		
UTCGHR-20-1	Introduction to Education Policy	Mike Dobson, Barbara Imrie, SMT
UTSGAF-20-1	Thinking and Learning	Barbara Imrie
UTCGHS-20-1	Supporting Learning : assessing planning and recording	Pete Windell, Barbara Imrie
UTCGH3-20-1	The voice of the learner	Marian Winckles, Barbara Imrie
Optional Modules		
UTCGDD-20-1	Behaviour for Learning	Barbara Imrie
UTLGDB-20-1	Counselling and Related Skills for Reducing Barriers to Learning	Robin Lewis, Barbara Imrie; + Future appointment tbc
UTTGA7-20-1	Independent Study	Barbara Imrie
Compulsory Modules		
UTLGHU-40-2	Teaching Assistants; Professional Practice	Barbara Imrie
Core Modules Level 2		
UTLGHV-20-2	Understanding diversity and social context	Barbara Imrie, Pete Windell, Marian Winckles
UTLGHT-20-2	Inclusion: meeting the needs of children and young people.	Barbara Imrie, Pete Windell, Marian Winckles
Option Modules		
UTLGHW-20-2	Assisting teaching in language and literacy	Marian Winckles, Barbara Imrie
UTLGJ2-20-2	Enhancing subject knowledge	Barbara Imrie
UTLGA7-20-2 & 40 credits	Independent studies	Barbara Imrie
UTLGCF-20-2	Foundation for Meeting Special Educational Needs	Pete Windell, Marian Winckles, Barbara Imrie

CVs for module leaders

See supporting materials

Career development role for teaching assistants

The programme aims to provide professionals already working in educational settings opportunities to gain a degree and have the potential to progress to one of the two following routes:

•   BA Hons Education in Professional Practice with an additional 120 credits at level 3, and onto Qualified Teacher Status if so desired. If participants wish to progress to QTS they should be reminded that they also require GCSE/O levels in English and Mathematics and Science and be able to offer 2 national curriculum subjects

Demand for the programme
SCG (Stroud College in Gloucestershire) has worked closely with Gloucestershire County Council in preparing this Foundation Degree. The County Council receives funds for professionalisation of the Teaching Assistant workforce and has indicated its involvement in this programme by inviting all of its Teaching Assistants, both those already holding as well as those without HLTA status to a meeting delivered jointly by one of its officers and the Head of Higher Education at SCG. From this has come applications supported by schools and the county in general.

Liaison with employers
Partnership with Further education colleges is integral to the design and implementation of this programme. It is intended that our colleagues from these colleges will deliver part or the entire course and will stand on relevant PACs and provide evaluative feedback to inform the monitoring and review process for future development.
It is hoped and intended that this programme will be offered in conjunction with the Foundation Degree Teaching and Learning Support in FE to make a suite of qualifications suitable for Learning Support workers across all sectors from school to Lifelong Learning Sector. The senior management of SCG (Stroud College in Gloucestershire) fully support this course as developmental activity for its staff.

Work based learning Policy
Teaching and learning approaches will follow principles as outlined the UWE Bristol Work based learning policy (see Appendices)

Students brief cameos
Teresa has been working as a Teaching Assistant in school for several years. She started as a volunteer once her children had become old enough to go to secondary school on their own, and has since progressed to a full-time role. She is ambitious and sees her role developing beyond the Higher Level Teaching Assistant status which this programme will help her to achieve, eventually to becoming a Qualified Teacher. She left school with only a few GCE's at O level and would not have been able to aspire to becoming a teacher through traditional routes.

Staff Development
Staff development events take place at SCG in July and September 2007 where tutors will be encouraged to develop a range of knowledge and skills to support them in the teaching on this Foundation Degree.

Management of Standards and Quality Assurance
A member of SCG Programme Team will attend termly Programme Advisory Meetings (PAC) at the University to enable them to gain information about factors such as - external

examiner feedback; success rates and progression of students through the programme; provide regular feedback about the teaching and learning on the programme; develop and enhance the teaching and learning on the programme; and most importantly enhance the student experience.

Programme Team meetings will take place each term in SCG, informed by factors such as student progression and destination data; complaints, complements and suggestions from students; teaching and learning observations; feedback from SCG Academic Board. The Programme Team Meetings will take reports to and from each other across UWE / SCG.

Standards for Quality Assurance will be managed in accordance with the University's agreement with the College.