Programme Specification

Career Development [Distance]

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Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Career Development [Distance]

Highest award: MA Career Development

Interim award: PGCert Career Development

Interim award: PGDip Career Development

Awarding institution: UWE

Teaching institutions: UWE

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CHSS School of Education and Childhood, College of Health, Science & Society

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies:

Career Development Institute (CDI)

Modes of delivery: Distance without attendance

Entry requirements:

For implementation from: 01 September 2025

Programme code: L55012

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: This Level 7 part-time programme aims to provide a comprehensive understanding and application of contemporary career development practice, and to equip participants with the professional practitioner skills that are recognised by the career development profession. In addition, it will equip participants with the knowledge and skills to develop further as a researcher practitioner through the undertaking of a practice-based research project.

At Postgraduate Diploma level the programme meets the academic standards for the CDI-awarded Qualification in Career Development.

As well as developing a critical awareness of contemporary and ethical issues related to career development, the programme aims to provide participants with theoretical perspectives and practical models and techniques to enable them to provide career guidance and support their clients' needs related to career development, career decision-making and career planning.

The programme includes two unique features not found explicitly in other comparable programmes: how to design and deliver career and enterprise activities to large groups of learners, addressing the need to develop better informed and more confident learning and teaching skills; and how to design and deliver enterprise education, reflecting the need for career development practitioners to have a stronger understanding of enterprise, both as a future-proofing skill-set in demand by employers, and as a viable employment option in a modern economy.

The programme provides an opportunity for participants to additionally register with the Career Development Institute (CDI) and work towards achieving the CDI-awarded Qualification in Career Development (QCD) alongside the Postgraduate Diploma. The QCD is a separate professional qualification for career development practitioners which is awarded by the CDI upon successful completion of a Professional Report and when 120 credits have been achieved from a suitable Postgraduate Diploma. (The QCD Professional Report is an online record of separate, additional, work-based skills assessments which meet the requirements for

the QCD.) The academic assessments from the Postgraduate Diploma may be included in the QCD Professional Report to demonstrate underpinning knowledge and understanding.

The programme is also available to participants who are not registered for the QCD, as the programme has been designed to incorporate the skills required for guidance practice and delivery of career-related learning underpinned by academic reasoning, although the practical skills are not formally assessed within the academic assessments. Therefore, the programme is most suitable for those who are already employed in a career development role and have access to clients for individual careers guidance and have the opportunity to deliver career-related learning to groups. However, the programme may also appeal to those who are aspiring to enter the field of career development and wish to gain a postgraduate qualification in career development which incorporates some skills practice within an academic programme.

At MA level the programme provides the opportunity to develop critical awareness and comprehensive knowledge of a specific area of career development. This comprises two elements: a taught module developing research skills relevant to the field, and a supported practice-based research project module. Undertaking these two modules develops in participants the skills to critically evaluate relevant research in the field as well as research methodology and methods. This then supports them to cultivate the ability to develop an original research proposal and conduct their research independently under academic supervision. There is also a focus on communicating research findings effectively to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Features of the programme: A forward looking approach to career development equipping participants for current and future developments in the field, including a strong focus on how to design and deliver enterprise education. This reflects the need for career development practitioners to have a stronger understanding of enterprise, both as a future-proofing skill-set in demand by employers and as a viable employment option in a modern economy.

Co-design and delivery of the programme between the departments of Careers and Enterprise, and Education, drawing on subject and pedagogic expertise. In particular, there is a focus on how to design and deliver careers and enterprise activities to large groups of learners, addressing the need to develop better informed and more confident learning and teaching skills.

Online learning, central to which is the development of a community of practice, so participants learn from each other as well as from course input and their own reflections.

Accredited learning (AL) permitted for the first 120 credits of the MA where applicants bring a relevant CDI approved PG Diploma from elsewhere. This allows applicants to 'top up' a PG Diploma to a full MA Career Development. Note: the AL process allows applicants to gain the credit, but they are not able to transfer their marks, and therefore their qualification will be based solely on the modules completed under UWE regulations. If applicants have a postgraduate diploma related to career development from another country, further guidance will be sought from the CDI prior to accrediting prior learning.

Educational Aims: The MA builds on the learning at Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma levels. In an individual capacity and in the context of participants' practice, the programme aims to further deepen and apply their understanding of career development theory, frameworks for practice, and relevant policy and legislation to inform professional practice.

The programme also aims to develop knowledge, understanding and application of research practices appropriate to the field, the different avenues for disseminating findings, and how to package research findings for an audience.

Furthermore, the programme aims to foster in participants a critical approach to:

Develop higher level professional skills and knowledge to stand out in the field;

Contribute to the innovation and evidence-base of the career development

profession;

Enhance their practice through evidence based enquiry;

Research an area of specific interest and deepen expertise;

Contribute to a research community and help shape the discipline; and

Further their own career development.

Programme Learning Outcomes:
On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1.   Postgraduate Certificate

Critically evaluate theory related to career and enterprise development to inform practice

PO2.   Postgraduate Certificate

Evaluate own values and beliefs and their impact on own practice

PO3.   Postgraduate Certificate

Critically review, organise and use labour and career-related information in order to best support the needs of clients appropriate to context

PO4.   Postgraduate Certificate

Apply appropriate theory to help clients to access, interpret and utilise information relating to employment, education and training options

PO5.   Postgraduate Certificate

Conduct client-focused career-related interactions with a range of individuals

PO6.   Postgraduate Certificate

Design and deliver career-related learning activities in groups with a range of clients

PO7.   Postgraduate Certificate

Interpret and apply within their own context the principles, scope and practice of referral

PO8.   Postgraduate Certificate

Appraise own professional practice and plan for continuing professional development

PO9.   Postgraduate Diploma

Conduct inclusive client-focussed career guidance interviews based on a comprehensive understanding of relevant models and theory;

PO10.   Postgraduate Diploma

Plan, design and deliver inclusive career-related learning activities to large and small groups, based on relevant theories of learning and teaching;

PO11.   Postgraduate Diploma

Justify and explain social mobility and social justice within a changing UK and international context

PO12.   Postgraduate Diploma

Critically appraise own role, including personal values, unconscious bias and ethical issues in promoting the value of career development

PO13.   Postgraduate Diploma

Critically reflect on the scope of different careers and enterprise models, and their applications within a changing UK and international landscape

PO14.   Postgraduate Diploma

Critically review and evaluate the use of professional networks and partnership working

PO15.   MA

Demonstrate advanced comprehensive knowledge and critical awareness of an area of career development

PO16.   MA

Critically evaluate current research in the field, methodologies and methods

PO17.   MA

Develop an original research proposal

PO18.   MA

Frame their research within appropriate ethical guidelines

PO19.   MA

Conduct research independently under academic supervision

PO20.   MA

Communicate research findings clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences through different mediums

Assessment strategy: This programme employs an assessment strategy which reflects the design of the programme as a coherent whole by enabling participants to develop academic and professional knowledge and understanding, combined with personal and professional skills and competence.

The assessments balance the academic standards of higher education study with the creation of practice-oriented assessment outputs which demonstrate professional ability and competencies, including technological and digital skills.

The assessment tasks align to the programme learning outcomes in that they will enable participants to demonstrate contextual knowledge and understanding, underpinned by academic theory, related to relevant policy and career-related learning. At the same time, they will retain a strong focus on professional skills development, as participants will demonstrate a client-centred approach to their practice that is ethical, reflexive and ensures professional integrity.

For those participants who opt to additionally register with the Career Development Institute (CDI) and work towards achieving the CDI-awarded Qualification in Career

Development (QCD), the assessments support the QCD learning outcomes, and the assessments may be included in the QCD Professional Report. (The QCD Professional Report is an online record of separate, additional, work-based skills assessments which meet the requirements for the QCD.) The CDI recommends that all academic assessments are included in the Professional Report to demonstrate underpinning knowledge and understanding.

By aligning the assessment tasks to the aims and philosophy of the programme as a whole, it is expected that this will have a positive impact on learning gain and engagement with the learning process. Furthermore, the varied assessment tasks will develop a range of core professional skills and behaviours which underpin the specialist skills and knowledge, such as ethical and inclusive guidance skills, designing engaging group sessions, creative design and technological skills, professional communication and analysis, research skills, networking, and commitment to reflective practice and professional development.

It is intended that the assessment tasks will promote new ways of thinking about career development practice and challenge preconceptions and existing practice. This in turn should encourage practice which is forward-thinking and critically engages with developments related to career and enterprise development policy and practice. By linking assessment tasks to real world practice, the authenticity of the assessments will aid the professional identity of participants and the production of digital artefacts will increase participants' digital capacity as an in-demand professional skill.

Authentic and varied assessment tasks will foster participant engagement and success, and this variety will enhance the inclusivity of the learning experience. Effective support through the online learning and interaction environments will ensure that participants are provided with the support required to enable assessment success.

Student support: Participants on the course are eligible for student membership of the Career Development Institute, providing access to a range of further professional

development opportunities.

If participants are intending to work towards the CDI-awarded Qualification in Career Development (QCD), then the CDI requires that student membership of the CDI is applied for at the beginning of the programme. Participants must also register with the CDI if they intend to work towards the QCD. This is because the CDI is responsible for moderating and awarding the QCD.

Please note that CDI membership and QCD registration fees incur separate costs and must be paid directly to the CDI. More information can be found here: https://www.thecdi.net/Membership-Categories

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1
The student must take 90 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules
Students are required to achieve the three 30 credit modules associated with the MA Year 1 - 'Frameworks for Career and Enterprise Development' (UTLGVP-30-M), 'Careers and Enterprise in Practice' (UTLGVQ-30-M), and 'Careers Guidance Theory and Practice' (UTLGXA-30-M). Exceptions to this may apply if applicants provide sufficient evidence of prior learning and experience.

In order to achieve the PG Diploma Career Development, a student must have passed: 'Frameworks for Career and Enterprise Development' (UTLGVP-30-M), 'Careers and Enterprise in Practice' (UTLGVQ-30-M), 'Careers Guidance Theory and Practice' (UTLGXA-30-M), and 'Careers and Enterprise in Context' (UTLGXB-30-M) in Y2. Exceptions to this may apply if applicants provide sufficient evidence of prior learning and experience.

In order to achieve the PG Certificate Career Development, a student must have passed: 'Frameworks for Career and Enterprise Development' (UTLGVP-30-M) and 'Careers and Enterprise in Practice' (UTLGVQ-30-M).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UTLGVQ-30-M	Careers and Enterprise in Practice 2025-26	30

UTLGXA-30-M	Careers Guidance Theory and Practice 2025-26	30
UTLGVP-30-M	Frameworks for Career and Enterprise Development 2025-26	30

Year 2
The student must take 90 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Please note that module: UTLGXD-30-M Professional Development Project is started in Year 2, but students have 6 months to complete and will hand in their project in January of the following year.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules
Participants are required to achieve the three 30 credit modules associated with the MA Year 2 - 'Careers and Enterprise in Context' (UTLGXB-30-M), Researcher Practitioner' (UTLGXC-30-M), and the 'Professional Development Project' (UTLGXD-30-M).

Please note that the 30 credit module: UTLGXD-30-M Professional Development Project is started in Year 2, but students have 6 months to complete and will hand in their project in January of the following year.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UTLGXB-30-M	Careers and Enterprise in Context 2026-27	30
UTLGXC-30-M	Developing as a Researcher Practitioner 2026-27	30
UTLGXD-30-M	Professional Development Project 2026-27	30

Year 3
Students complete module UTLGXD-30-M Professional Development Project.

Year 3 Compulsory Modules
The student must complete the 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UTLGXD-30-M	Professional Development Project 2027-28	30

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Completion of this practice-oriented programme, which is approved by the CDI (subject to validation) means that graduates are equipped with personal skills and professional competencies, underpinned by research-informed academic knowledge and understanding. With a focus on appraising and further developing their own professional practice, this programme provides graduates with the opportunity to seek professional futures where they may have a positive impact on the lives of others. In keeping with the UWE 2030 strategy, the programme prepares graduates to be ambitious, collaborative, innovative, inclusive and enterprising in their mind-set, ready and able to face future challenges and seek innovative solutions.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

In the absence of a QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Career Development, we have chosen to align the learning outcomes to the current National Occupational Standards for Career Development, as maintained by the CDI, and also to the learning outcomes for the CDI-awarded Qualification in Career Development. The QCD learning outcomes also align with the 'Blueprint for Professional Roles in the Career Development Sector.'

Part E: Regulations

Approved to UWE Academic Regulations and Procedures.