The Social Work Specialist level Awards in working with Adults or Children and Young People
'Changing Practice'

Developing effective and creative, critically analytical practitioners

Safeguarding and working to enable change in the lives of service users and carers.

Bucks New University have worked with employers and service users to validate Post-qualifying Specialist level Awards for those working in Children and Adult services. The Specialist level, beginning with Consolidation is the first level of the new P.Q framework and is followed by Higher Specialist and Advanced levels.

The awards are designed to:

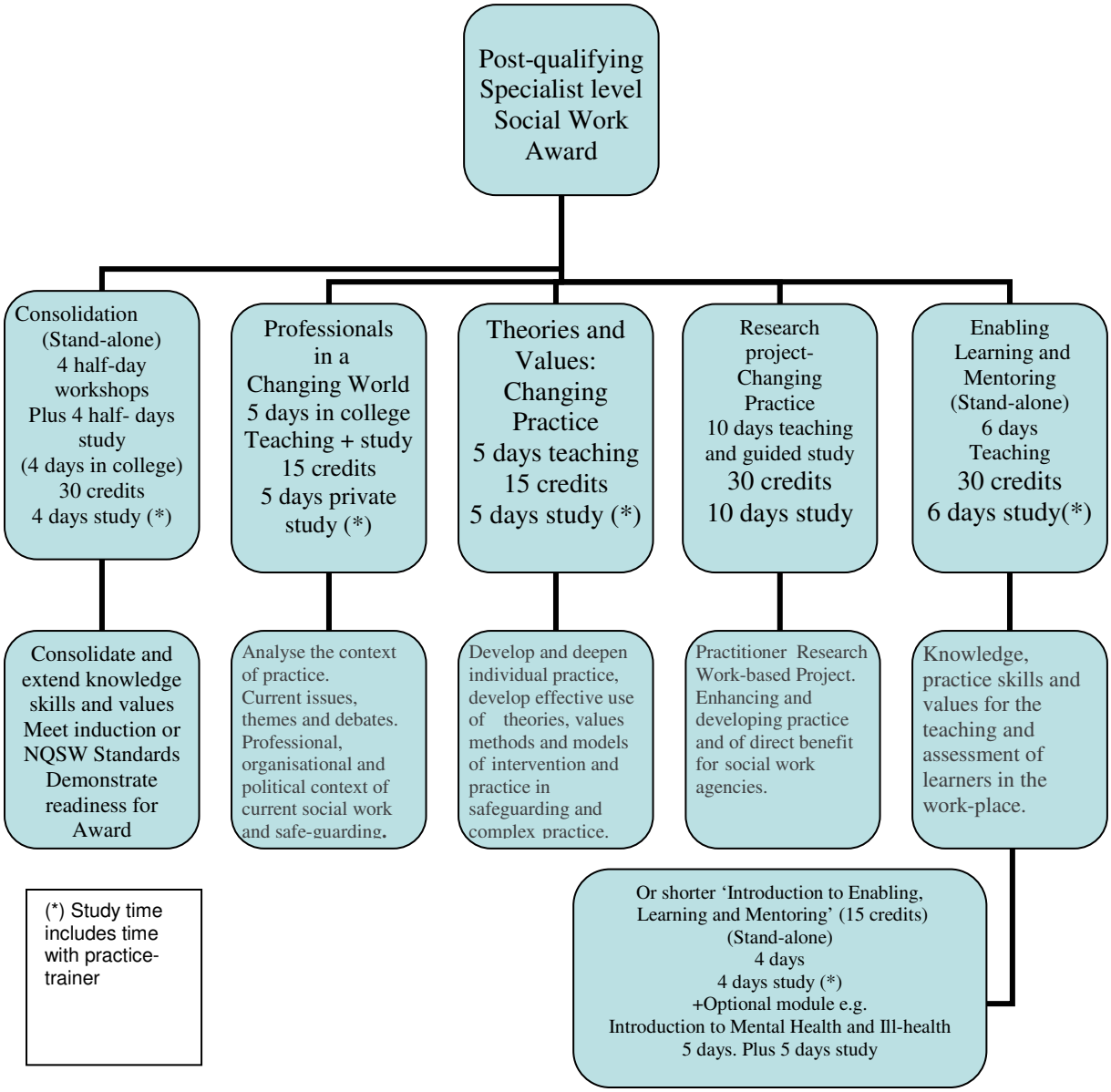
- Reflect **current provision** and be geared towards **change and development aimed at increasing effectiveness and quality of practice**
- Reflect **service-user, employer and inter-professional perspectives**
- Meet the appropriate **standards and requirements** set by the G.S.C.C and other bodies and **consolidate, extend and deepen** pre-qualifying learning to provide in-depth **specialist learning and assessment**
- Provide **local, relevant, interactive, evolving and flexible** learning that **integrates academic and practice** knowledge and skills.
- Utilise themes of the '**context' of practice** and **skilled 'individual' practice** to allow consistency of approach between Adults and Childrens services whilst enabling **specialist** study within the general themes.
- Enable **work-based practitioner research** and the skills required for enabling students and other **learners in the work place.**

Candidates must be:

- Professionally qualified social workers and have been qualified for six months
- Be supported by employers
- Those with a Dip.He (Dip.SW or other) can use the course to make up the credits necessary to be awarded the B.A (Hons.) in Practice Development.
- Applicants who already have a first degree can study for the Graduate Diploma in Practice Development.

Course overview

- Both Adult and Children and Young Peoples' Pathways are available
- All courses are provided on a modular basis leading to maximum flexibility.
- There are approximately 30 days of University–based teaching – depending on which modules are chosen.
- Recommended private study time should equal the university-based teaching time. Private study time includes the time spent with the practice assessor. (approximately 3 days in total) Employers should agree what percentage of the study time they will provide and what percentage the student will provide. One model is that the

employer provides half a day study leave per day spent at University – this equals 15 days in total and is equal to half the study time recommended.

- The whole award provides 120 credits and a total of 1200 hours of study made up of University based teaching (approximately 30 days) practice (approximately 100 days), time with a practice trainer assessor (approximately 3 days) and private study. (a further 27 days)
- Candidates can join the programme in September or February and take from 18 months to 4 years to complete
- Consolidation must be successfully completed prior to other modules being undertaken
- Accreditation of previous learning is available through the University's procedures this will apply particularly to those candidates who already hold P.Q.I or the Practice Teaching Award.
- The Blackboard ™ virtual learning environment provides information, resources, extra reading and interactive material and discussion.
- Academic and practice learning and assessment are combined throughout and there is no separate 'practice' module or portfolio.
- Candidates are supported by the work place by practice-based P.Q assessors. Assessors can be employer or university based. There are three direct observations of practice based within the programme.
- Managers /supervisors provide a brief report on practice for each module