

Foundation Degree for Integrated Youth Support: a draft framework

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Introduction

This document describes a framework for a foundation degree for practitioners who work with young people within the wide range of universal, targeted and specialist roles that constitute Integrated Youth Support, whether statutory, voluntary, private or independent. There are relatively few Higher Education qualifications for practitioners in Integrated Youth Support and access to qualifications differs across sectors and work settings. The aim of the foundation degree is to offer a broad qualification that will support individuals within their career development whilst promoting closer working, shared skills and knowledge and quality work with young people. The purpose of this document is to outline the study and work based learning characteristics of this foundation degree framework. Alignment with the framework will act as a quality measure for those within Integrated Youth Support – signaling that programmes and those who successfully complete them have met a common standard.

Who should read this document?

The document is intended for all those with an interest in designing, promoting or participating within foundation degrees for Integrated Youth Support. Foundation degrees are, by definition, developed in partnerships - between employers, Further and Higher Education and learners – and the framework document includes information for each of these groups. It is also informed by the views of young people and the potential for their inclusion in a partnership. The framework has two primary purposes – Part 1 gives a general overview while Part 2 can be used as planning guidance. One way of visualising the framework is as an outline specification against which foundation degrees can be developed and evaluated. A specific endorsement process is being explored in tandem with this document; however, the ideas in the framework can be used informally by learners, employers, providers and partnerships as a guiding standard for existing and developing foundation degrees for Integrated Youth Support.

Why has the framework been developed?

The framework has been developed following a Children's Workforce Network sponsored feasibility study in 2009. This study found that respondents from across the sectors involved in work with young people supported the idea of a foundation degree that would provide a shared underpinning of values, skills and knowledge for all practitioners, whilst, at the same time valuing and promoting specialist expertise. They saw the potential for this to promote quality practice, simplify career pathways and encourage effective integrated working. The recommendations of the feasibility study were subsequently endorsed by the Young People's Workforce Programme Board and this framework has now been developed under the expert guidance of a reference group representing key stakeholders within the sector. The framework emphasises the importance of inter disciplinary training and flexible opportunities for employers, providers and learners. In addition it aims to encourage transferability between sectors by ensuring common approaches that are understood across the workforce.

What is meant by “Integrated Youth Support” within this framework?

Models of integrated youth support vary widely across the country and are likely to continue developing and changing in response to local determination and national policy directives. This framework takes integrated youth support to mean ways of working when *“everyone supporting children, young people and families works together effectively to put them at the centre, meet their needs and improve their lives”* (CWDC definition of integrated working, 2008).

It is a description of the orientation, culture and ways of working that individuals use and promote when supporting young people. It should not be taken to imply specific organisational structures or funding arrangements for the delivery of services to young people. As such, the framework is applicable to those working within a wide range of delivery models, including integrated and multi-agency provision, joint commissioning and joint working,

How should I read this document?

This document aims to achieve a number of objectives:

- It outlines the contribution to quality provision for young people that a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support can bring
- It suggests potential benefits for young people, learners, employers and training providers of being involved in a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support
- It takes the reader through the characteristics of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support and the development of shared and specialist options

Part 1 gives a general overview of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support:

- Section 1.1 describes how the framework supports quality and the development of programmes
- Section 1.2 suggests benefits of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support.

Section 1.2, although addressing different stakeholder interest groups, has embedded within it a substantial amount of background information about the foundation degree and the framework within which it sits. For those considering the development of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support we recommend that you read through this section before progressing on to Part 2 of the document.

Part 2 takes a more technical approach and describes the characteristics of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support:

- Section 2.1 outlines the general specification for the qualification
- Section 2.2 gives a framework for generating curriculum
- Section 2.3 discusses delivery arrangements.

Part 1: General overview

Section 1.1: The framework and quality provision for young people

What is the purpose of the framework?

A major impetus for the development of this framework is support for the quality of work with young people within the context of Integrated Youth Support. Young people often lead complex lives and the last few years have seen the growth of closer working relationships between different professionals in universal and targeted services and recognition of the specialist support provided by many services and practitioners. Increasingly, in local areas, people are working together in an integrated way; supported through common induction processes and the sharing of work practices and values. In addition, funding is becoming scarcer and the direction of travel seems to be towards mixed provision for young people supplied by a range of services, employers, organisations and workers. It will become increasingly important to consolidate and strengthen skills and understanding in ways of working together and provide appropriate quality measures, which should result in more efficient and effective services.

The Young People's Workforce and the framework

The young people's workforce is broad and diverse. It includes paid staff and volunteers who work with young people aged 13-19 (and up to 25 for young people with learning difficulties or disability). Work with young people, particularly in universal and targeted services, may be a practitioner's primary professional calling. However, many job roles require additional specialist expertise as practitioners work with young people within settings such as sport, justice, health or the arts. The diagram on the next page establishes the scope of the Young People's Workforce¹ and gives a pictorial sense of the range of practitioners whose role engages with young people.

Although workers represented within the diagram are situated within widely differing contexts, the foundation degree framework could contribute to the career development of many of them – particularly those in the core young people's workforce in the darker blue segments. It aims to:

- support them in the development of specialist expertise and 'day to day' skills required for their current role
- offer opportunities to develop capacity for working with others from different sectors and with different approaches and 'language'
- offer opportunities for multi disciplinary training that will support dialogue and enhance understanding across the young people's sector

¹ See *A Picture worth millions: State of the young people's workforce (2009) CWDC*
http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/7827/Executive_summary_SYPW_report.pdf

- enable them to transfer more easily between different parts of the young people's workforce – particularly after study at Level 4
- help prepare them for current and future leadership roles within Integrated Youth Support

Respondents in the feasibility study highlighted the importance of joint training with the opportunities for sharing and debate that this can provide – building on the practice of others to create new 'practices'. Below we provide two exemplars to demonstrate how these ideas might be put into practice.

Newtown University delivers foundation degree study within a school setting. Learners include staff at the school (learning mentors, pastoral tutors, school counsellor, sports coach, IT support workers) and students from other educational and voluntary settings (primary school mentors, church youth workers, support group for young Muslim women). The students from the school setting are partially funded, whilst those in the voluntary sector or working in primary schools are mostly self-funding. Teaching takes place on 2 evenings a week throughout the year from 4 – 7pm. Students enjoy the experience of learning together with others from different work contexts to their own. This makes for stimulating (and often challenging) discussions.

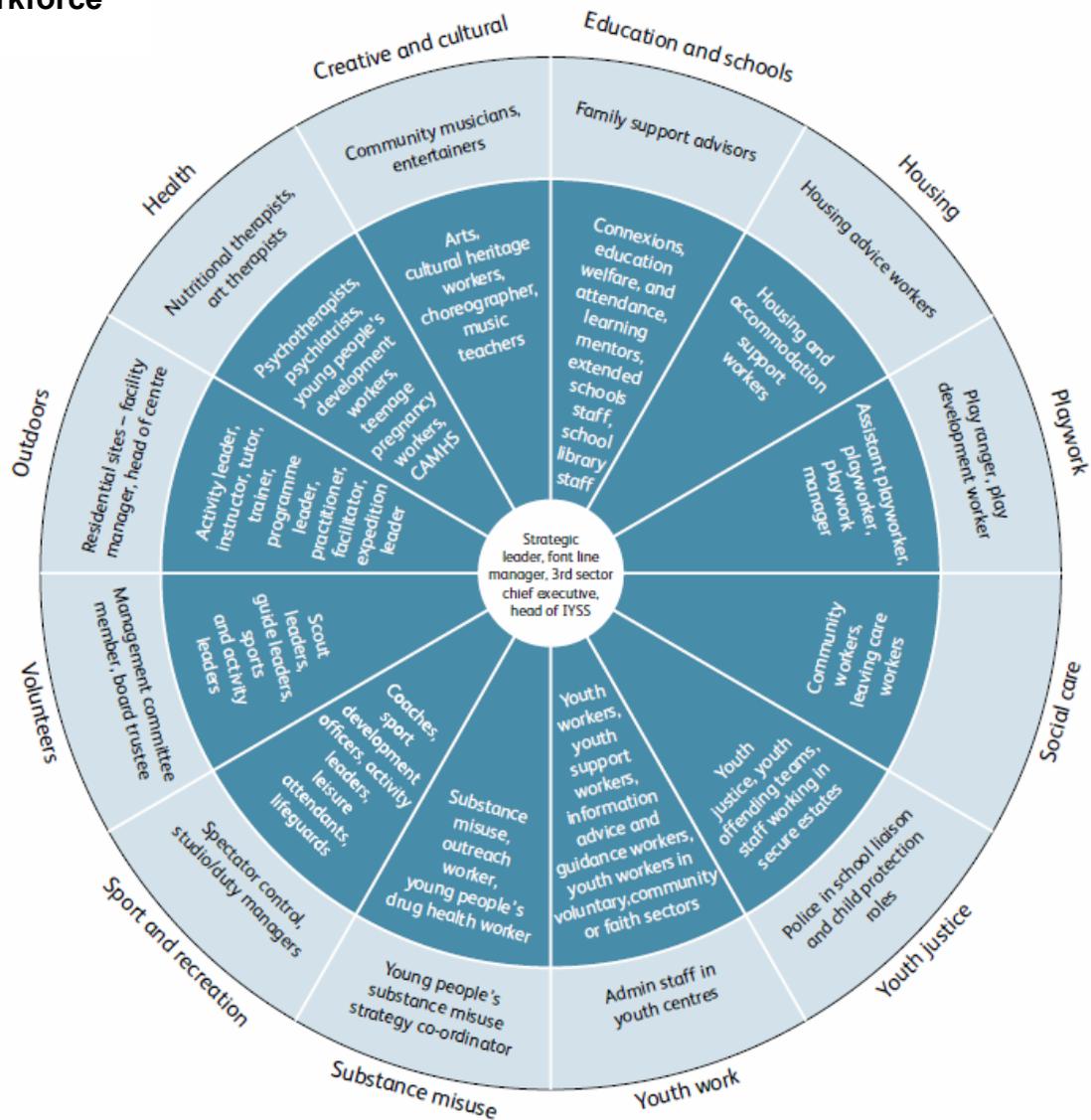
Oldchester University offers a foundation degree for all those in the area who work with children and young people. Learners need to be in work or to secure a voluntary placement. They attend the university for one twilight/evening session each week and continue their work based learning over the summer period. This means that they can complete the foundation degree within two years. Learners include those within youth work, Connexions, youth justice, Early Years, play and school settings.

Diagram 1 Overview of the Young People's Workforce

The central white section describes leaders and managers of front line services for young people

The paler blue sections represent the wider young people's workforce –those whose work sometimes involves young people, their parents or carers and families

The darker blue sections represent the core young people's workforce-involved in the holistic development of young people. Their role mainly involves face to face contact with young people, their parents or carers



How the framework supports the development of programmes

The framework is intended to provide information both for those who currently offer foundation degrees for the young people's workforce and those who wish to develop new qualifications. It explains how programmes can support integrated learning opportunities of similar quality whilst retaining the individuality of the institution and partnership within which programmes are designed. The framework encourages a diversity of approaches giving opportunity for learners to study via different modes – for example, distance or part time learning - or to specialise in areas of particular interest – for example, social care or information and guidance. However, the incorporation of the Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children and Young People's workforce² and alignment with the Skills Development Framework³ ensure consistency of approach and educational experience. This consistency, particularly if it is recognised through an award of Certificate for successful study at Level 4, will help learners to move between institutions and specialisms thus giving greater flexibility for them and for their employers. Diagram 1 shows how the framework can help a learner negotiate a study pathway that supports their career progression. Features of the framework that support learners include:

- Clear study progression pathway
- Supervised and assessed work based learning throughout the programme
- Learning and understanding that is shared with and preferably studied alongside others within the young people's workforce
- Potential to change specialism
- Option to bring in relevant prior credit
- Potential for a break during study
- Possibility of movement between programmes and institutions

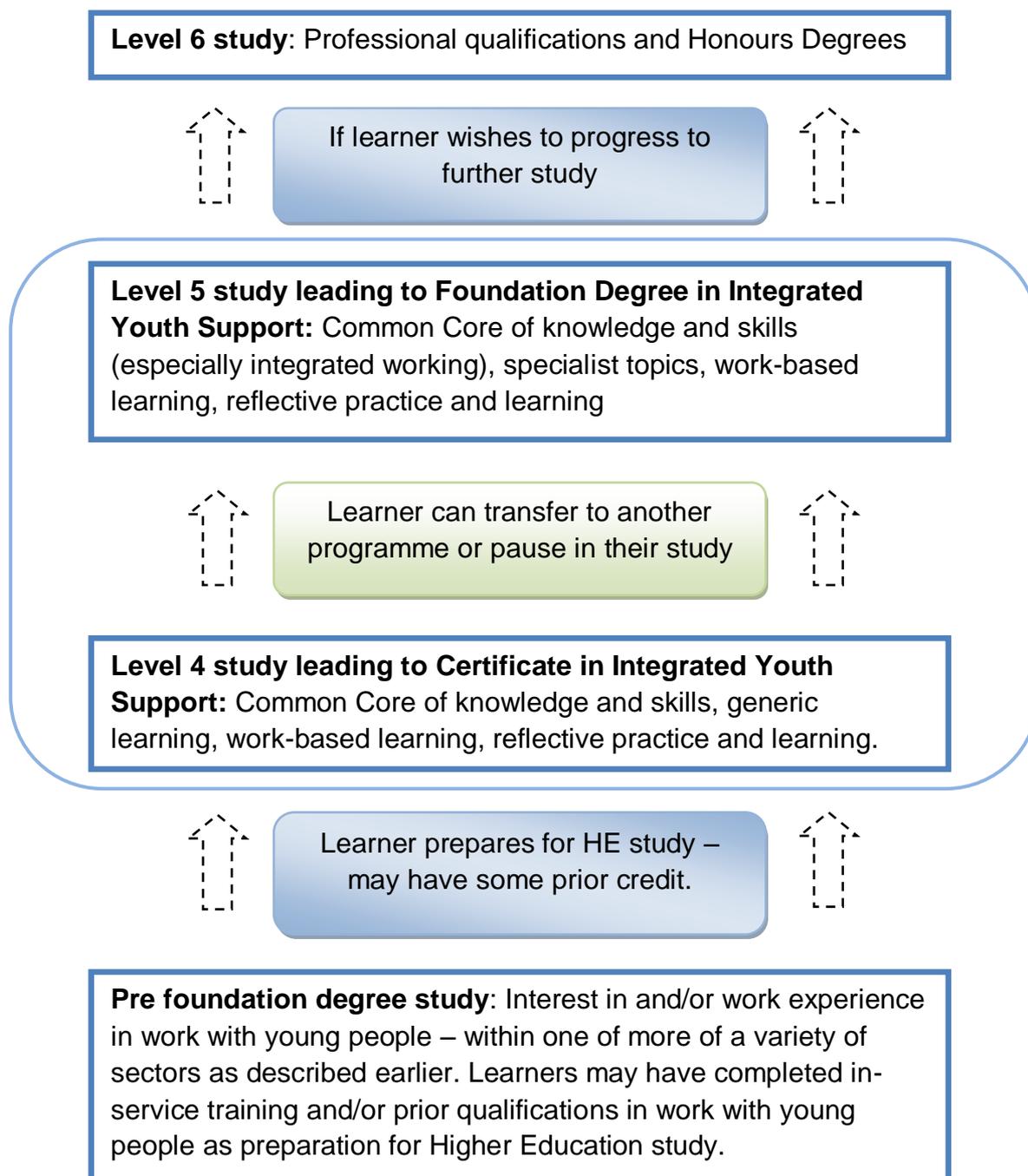
² For more information on the *Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children and Young People's workforce* see

http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/9289/CWDC_Refreshing_Common_Core7.pdf

³ For more information on the Skills Development Framework see

http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0001/0487/Skills_Development_Framework_phase_one_24_August_2010.pdf

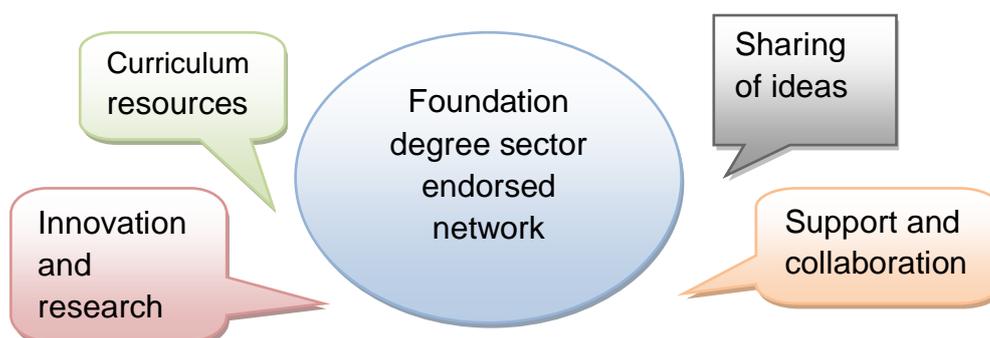
Diagram 2 Study pathways



A network for foundation degree providers and partnerships

CWDC is currently exploring a sector endorsement process that will be available to all providers of foundation degrees for Integrated Youth Support. This may potentially support the development of a provider network, the sharing of practice and the development of curriculum resources and materials (both generic and specialist). Together these arrangements will encourage the development of a 'community of practice' within the area of foundation degree study for Integrated Youth Support – a community that will continue to develop and support innovation.

Diagram 3 A network for partnerships and providers



How will we judge the success of this framework?

The overall success of the framework will be judged by:

Its ability to promote the development of foundation degrees that contribute to confidence in practitioners and consistent quality practice with young people across the range of sectors within Integrated Youth Support.

Section 1.2: Benefits of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support

Benefits for young people

(This may develop after the young people's review day)

This framework supports the development of qualified practitioners who enjoy working with young people and understand how to make meaningful relationships with them. The framework describes a qualification that is based on the principles of 'social pedagogy'⁴; this means that practitioners aim to put the life, concerns and interests of young people at the centre of what they do whether it is in a club, a school, a residential setting, the street, a community centre or a leisure centre. Qualified practitioners will be aware of the need for safety and confidentiality and will be committed to involving young people in decisions about their own lives.

Young people will benefit because the framework makes it easier for practitioners to choose this type of working as their first choice profession and to gain a qualification. This may be something that young people themselves are interested in pursuing for their own career. It also encourages others who have worked for years with young people without qualifications to return to study. These people will come together in a training programme and share ideas about what works best for young people – and when they finish they will have a better understanding of their own work, the work of others and ways to work more effectively together.

Benefits for learners

A foundation degree is a Higher Education qualification that brings together the worlds of study and employment. Employers, colleges and universities are all involved in the development of foundation degrees and one of the key benefits for the learner is that it is usually possible to continue in employment at the same time as studying; the time spent in the workplace counting towards the overall hours of study required for the qualification. In line with this thinking, the foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support gives structured opportunities to reflect and learn from work (whether paid or unpaid) and thus takes into account the experience that many learners bring to their study. It is also appropriate for those who wish to begin a career with young people and can be studied alongside a voluntary work placement. The foundation degree also recognises that learners who return to study after a long gap may lack confidence with study and builds in support to help with this transition.

⁴ For more information on social pedagogy see Petrie et al (2009) Pedagogy – a holistic, personal approach to work with children and young people, across services, Briefing Paper – Update 2009 Thomas Coram Research Unit

http://eprints.ioe.ac.uk/58/1/may_18_09_Ped_BRIEFING_PAPER_JB_PP_.pdf

Taken overall, successful study with this foundation degree can give:

- a widely recognised qualification
- greater confidence in practice situations
- greater confidence with study
- more awareness of relevant theory and different approaches to practice
- the opportunity to progress to higher levels of study either within academic or professional fields
- a recognised step on the career ladder

In particular the foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support includes supervision/mentoring within the work place, experience of at least one additional work setting outside of the chosen specialism and learning that supports working with others in integrated settings.

Feedback from practitioners suggests that qualifications within the young people's sector can be confusing and the foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support aims to introduce a more consistent and yet flexible approach. It gives one single starting point for Higher Education study from which practitioners can develop their career and recognises that a range of prior experiences and qualifications can prepare practitioners for study and may even contribute to the credit. When considering registering for a foundation degree it is important for practitioners to first discuss prior education and work experience with their employer and the foundation degree provider. This will ensure that they start their study at the right point and have access to a work based learning setting which makes the most of learning from the programme. Those not yet in work will need to discuss this with the training provider and be prepared to undertake voluntary work.

The framework encourages providers to build preparation activity into their programme – short courses for example within the workplace - but also to recognise when an applicant has covered relevant material within a different qualification. For example, those who have successfully completed the CWDC induction programme and those who have successfully completed the Learning and Development Support Services Level 5 Diploma may be offered some credit on the foundation degree.

The foundation degree also allows learners to take a break from study or to move from one sector to another. Half way through the programme, there may be an award of Certificate in Integrated Youth Support which, as well as being a qualification in its own right, can be transferred to other training providers. This should prevent the need to re-start study in the event of a change in specialism or a move from one area of the country to another.

Another advantage of the framework is that it encourages training providers to offer foundation degrees flexibly – perhaps considering different times of day for attendance, or through the use of on-line resources or distance learning. Different learners and employers have different needs and this framework aims to give learners confidence to take part in negotiating a programme that will suit them. For example, if there are a number of people in one organisation who would be interested in studying for a foundation degree then it may be possible for practitioners to help organise sessions within that work place.

Overall, the purpose of this framework is to enable learners to have a greater sense of ‘ownership’ of career development through engagement with foundation degree study. It aims to give ideas for more flexible and creative approaches, to ensure the provision of a quality work based learning experience and to encourage ease of access into study and ease of progression onwards within a career. Whether for a young person making an early career decision to work with young people or an experienced practitioner who would like to enhance their practice, this framework creates an avenue to future career fulfilment and potential leadership within Integrated Youth Support.

Benefits for employers

- Foundation degree study can provide five key benefits for employers:
- Capacity building amongst the workforce
- The tailoring of provision to specific needs
- Opportunities for Continuing Professional Development for staff
- Partnership with Further and Higher Education
- Networks with other employers

The first benefit is concerned with the up-skilling of the workforce within Integrated Youth Support. This framework can support employers in their relationships with training providers so that they achieve the training that they need in their particular young people’s settings. The foundation degree provides a common grounding and quality measure for all those working with young people so that they can work more effectively together in support of young people. It draws on ideas of social pedagogy⁵ – a field of practice that is attracting increasing interest with a focus on the reflective and communicative qualities of the worker and promotion of the holistic well-being of young people. The foundation degree aims to enhance the quality of the day to day practice of practitioners and also to support their capacity for higher level thinking and future leadership. Whether a staff team learns in a group together or studies alongside those from other work places, they will benefit from the engagement with ideas, reflection on practice and debate that forms a central part of study on this degree. They will also learn about workplaces in other

⁵ See reference in footnote on page 10.

sectors within Integrated Youth Support and will be encouraged to reflect on this and to consider how it might benefit practice within their own setting.

The second benefit concerns the ability of the framework to help employers receive the workforce training support that most suits their organisation and locality. The framework encourages flexibility of design and delivery; as a key partner within the process, an employer may be able to negotiate curriculum and influence delivery arrangements - such as timing and location - to suit the requirements of their workforce. It may be possible for an employer's staff team to deliver parts of the teaching programme or for the taught programme to take place within the work place. In addition, the employer may be able to build in activity that will help people prepare for study or secure exemption for learners from some parts of the programme if there is relevant in-service training in place.

Employers are important partners in the delivery of the foundation degree. The suggested curriculum includes a taught programme and supervised work based learning which will form part of the assessment. The employer is in the best position to provide supervision or mentoring for learners and will need to work with the training provider to agree assessment procedures. Respondents in the feasibility study into the 'common foundation degree' carried out in 2009 were clear that quality work based learning, where connections were made between the workplace and the taught programme, would be crucial to the success of the foundation degree if it was to play a part in raising the quality of work with young people. This resonates with the Quality Assurance Agency Foundation Degree benchmark⁶ which states that:

... 'working' is in itself not sufficient. Work-based learning requires the identification and achievement of defined and related learning outcomes.

This framework suggests that this is most effectively achieved through a reflective approach, which is supported both within the workplace and within the taught programme. In addition, the foundation degree requires learners to understand more than one setting, ideally through work based learning. Employers may be able to work together (or to make arrangements within their own structures) for short 'placements' or 'projects' that will help learners develop this understanding.

Employers may feel that their organisation needs to develop capacity for appropriate support of learners – particularly if they are within a small organisation or if working with young people is only a small part of its remit. The framework suggests that providers should work with employers to provide support and continuing professional development in, for example, supervision skills. This will

⁶ See <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/foundationdegree/benchmark/fdqb.asp>

give individual supervisors confidence within their role and the mutual reflection involved in the process will hopefully be enriching for both learner and supervisor with learning feeding back into and benefiting the wider organisation. Alternatively, it may be possible, in a spirit of partnership, for larger employers to take on support roles with, for example, small private, voluntary or community organisations.

The framework emphasises the importance of a three way relationship between employer, learner and training provider. This partnership can be rewarding for all concerned. Many employers appreciate closeness with a Higher Education provider where there might be opportunities for shared conferences, seminars, research or evaluation. This can be stimulating for employers and keeps the curriculum of training providers up to date as it helps them to retain familiarity with the world of practice.

Finally involvement in the delivery of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support will help to develop relationships and networks amongst employers. This may help organisations achieve strategic objectives of partnership and integration on a wider scale, as well as efficiency and effectiveness.

Benefits for providers

The main benefits of this framework and the foundation degree that it describes for providers are:

- Opportunity to deliver an attractive and nationally recognised qualification that has credibility with employers
- The simplification of career pathways (and qualifications) for working with young people with the introduction of a single starting point within Higher Education
- An opportunity to contribute to strategic organisational targets
- The potential for innovation, new directions and knowledge transfer
- The potential for local agreements and collaboration
- Opportunities for articulation with other programmes

The foundation degree will provide a single starting point for Higher Education for all those who work with young people. Many providers already offer foundation degrees for those who work with young people; others offer foundation degrees where graduates may work with young people even though the foundation degree is not promoted on this basis. A further group of providers would like to move into this curriculum area but would welcome some support. This document presents an opportunity for all these providers to come together within a nationally recognised framework which will add credibility, promote work with young people as a career and contribute towards a quality curriculum. The foundation degree aligns with the

Integrated Qualifications Framework⁷ and the Skills Development Framework⁸. These two mechanisms will give credibility to linked foundation degrees and make it more attractive to potential learners who are looking to develop their career in work with young people.

This framework aims to encourage a network of nationally recognised training providers who will offer programmes for different parts of the young people's sector. The network could enable providers to share practice and ideas, collaborate over new developments and make mutual agreements over transferability of credit – the sector wide nature of the group encouraging innovation and the sharing of practice. At present, CWDC convenes a small network of sector endorsed programmes and it is possible that a wider grouping might develop from this.

In addition, the framework encourages innovative possibilities for working with employers and suggests a flexible and inclusive approach that will make it more attractive for those who are returning to learn, are working and studying at the same time or have domestic responsibilities. For those who have successfully achieved qualifications in the past it encourages the accreditation of prior learning; and it supports articulation with other programmes to enable learners to be fully prepared on entry and to have opportunities for progression on completion. It also recognises that many practitioners working with young people meet widening participation criteria helping institutions to meet strategic objectives. As these learners often lack confidence with study, the framework offers suggestions for promotion, preparation and curriculum that take this into account. The framework also offers opportunities for providers to bring together learning and teaching that is already available within different parts of the institution – combining it to provide a cross disciplinary programme that offers a recognised qualification valued by employers and learners.

As well as the foundation degree qualification, the framework suggests a transferable Award of Certificate representing 120 CATS points at Level 4. This may provide a staging post for some practitioners in terms of their professional career and it will also make it easier for students to take a break or to transfer to another specialist subject within Integrated Youth Support. Collaboration with other providers within a local area will help increase this transferability as it is

⁷ See <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/iqf>

⁸ The Skills Development Framework is a model to aid the development of integrated working skills. Skills are defined progressively from Level 3 through to expert practitioner. The skills defined at each level are relevant to integrated working, regardless of the precise role or profession of an individual. See http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0001/0487/Skills_Development_Framework_phase_one_24_August_2010.pdf

unlikely that one provider can offer specialisms to meet the needs of all sectors within the young people's workforce but a regional 'consortium' approach will increase choice for learners.

The foundation degree emphasises the importance of quality work based learning that makes links between theory and practice and gives guidance on the development of partnerships between employers, learners and training providers that will enable this to happen. Employers may welcome support with, for example, supervision or mentoring skills and this could be part of a continuing professional development programme. In general, partnership arrangements should help institutions develop local employer relationships and create knowledge transfer partnerships. Finally as the framework recognises the importance of specialisms within a core programme it gives opportunities for institutions to respond to local needs and interests and to branch out into delivery of linked programmes that share modules but also deliver specialist material.

Part 2: Planning a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support

Section 2.1 Specification for a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support

The outline that follows summarises the essential elements of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support. This is developed within the next few sections as the document lays out in detail the parameters which partnerships developing foundation degrees need to consider.

This outline ensures that the generic defining characteristics of foundation degrees – employer engagement, accessibility and participation, articulation and progression, flexibility and partnership - as specified within the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) foundation degree qualification benchmark are in place. In addition it ensures that the foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support is able to demonstrate its own special characteristics in support of career progression in the young people's workforce. In particular the inclusion of the shared practices of social pedagogy, the centrality of the Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge and alignment with the Skills Development Framework should ensure there is consistency of learning outcomes with other foundation degrees for Integrated Youth Support at Level 4.

The outline provides a specification for a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support. The next two sections offer partnerships who are considering designing a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support ideas on how to meet this specification.

Foundation degree framework outline

Taught modules giving 120 CATS (Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme) points at each of Levels 4 and 5 based on a curriculum derived from:

- *The Principles and Values Statement within the CWDC Induction Standards*
- *The Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce*
- *The skills, knowledge and understanding (associated with integrated working) at Levels 4/5 within the Skills Development Framework*
- *Reflection of the aspirational nature of Youth Professional Standards*
- *Knowledge, skills and practices associated with social pedagogy*
- *Specialist skills, knowledge, benchmarks and occupational standards as appropriate*
- *Structured opportunities for reflection on practice and learning and an emphasis on the relationship between theory and practice*

Work based learning with young people that is supervised/mentored and assessed. Successful achievement of this part of the programme should contribute between 40 and 60 CATS points at each of

- *One sixth of the work based learning in an alternative setting wherever possible. (If this is not possible then learning outcomes need to require practical understanding of more than one setting)*
- *Support to be offered to employers to ensure a quality work based learning experience for learners*

Evidence that learners study alongside and engage with practitioners from across the sector

Curriculum at Level 4 to be comparable with that in other programmes so that learners are able to transfer between programmes at the mid point

Opportunities for progression to at least one (preferably more) related Honours Degree programme

Opportunities for accreditation of prior learning available – for example, credit associated with the Common Induction at Level 3/4 or the Learner Development and Support Services Diploma at Level 5

Programmes developed and managed within inclusive partnerships between learners, employers and training providers to ensure:

- *articulation with other local training opportunities at Level 2/3/4*
- *supported work based learning environments*
- *ease of access for learners and widening participation*
- *flexible and creative delivery opportunities*

Involvement of young people within the delivery and management of the programme (*more on this after the young people's review*).

Programmes have processes for staff who contribute to learning and teaching to update their knowledge and skills and to participate within local and wider networks

Section 2.2: Curriculum for a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support

This section considers how to develop a curriculum in support of the specification.

Content

A foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support needs to prepare developing practitioners to be able to meet recognised objectives in the young people's workforce. These objectives are:

- Enable and support young people in their holistic development.
- Work with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development.
- Enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society
- Support them to reach their full potential.
- Help to remove barriers to young people's progression and to achieve positive outcomes and a successful transition to adult life. (CWDC, 2009)

The framework suggests that these objectives are appropriately met through a curriculum that puts the practice of social pedagogy at its heart. In addition the curriculum needs to be underpinned by the key principles and values that underpin the CWDC Induction Standards⁹ and to include the following indicative content which derives from the feasibility study into a common foundation degree:

- A common core curriculum which is compliant with the Integrated Qualifications Framework
- Quality assured assessed and supervised practice within more than one setting
- Integrated working skills
- The potential for specialist options
- Reflection upon personal and professional learning
- Application of the principles of reflective and evidence informed practice

Generating learning outcomes

Due to the nature of work with young people, learning outcomes and content for the foundation degree will be multi-disciplinary in nature-drawing on ideas from, for example, psychology, sociology, biology, education, health, social policy, culture, law and management. The learning outcomes need to be in line with the generic learning descriptors for a foundation degree taken from the QAA Framework for higher education qualifications in England Wales and Northern Ireland (2008)¹⁰.

⁹ See http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/0429/CWDC_Induction_Standards_Sept_06.pdf

¹⁰ See <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI08/FHEQ08.pdf>

More specific ideas can be derived from the Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the children's workforce. To underpin this learning, the curriculum will need to include an explicit statement of values alongside material that helps learners understand the complex nature of relationship building with young people and the social context of work within their particular field. For the development of specialist material, reference to specific National Occupational Standards and QAA subject benchmarks¹¹ may be useful.

It is important that Level 4 study within each foundation degree meets consistent learning outcomes that are comparable with those in other institutions so that learners can transfer to another provider or specialism without the requirement to repeat study. Close alignment with the skills, knowledge and understanding at Levels 4/5 outlined in the Skills Development Framework will enable this.

Structure

The structure of each foundation degree will vary depending on the mode and circumstances of delivery. On page 19 we illustrate a sample structure in Diagram 3 based on six modules each consisting of 20 CATS (Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme) points at the relevant Level:

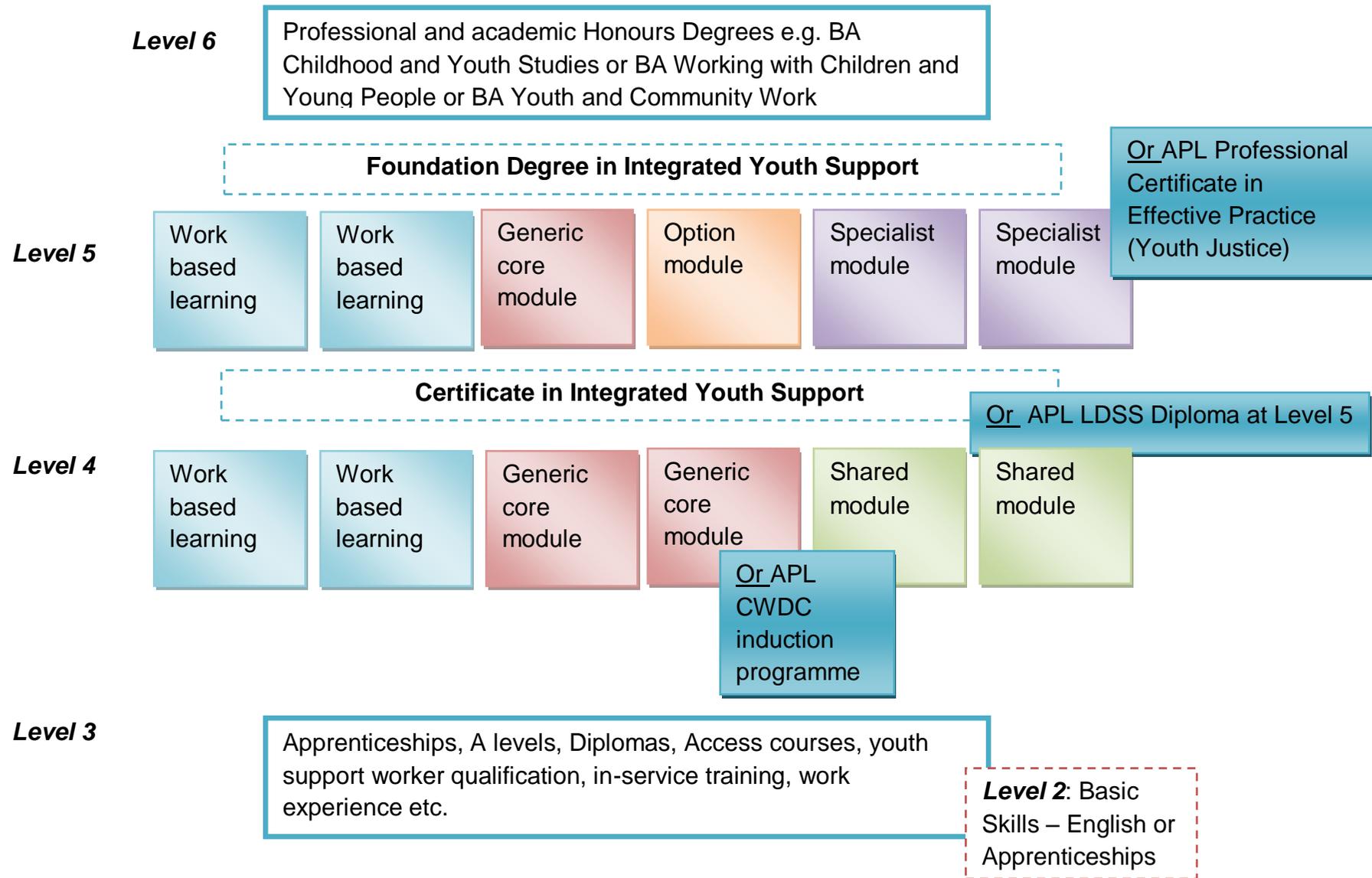
- generic core modules relevant to the whole young people's workforce
- further core modules that could be shared with other programmes (for example health, social work or youth work)
- work based learning modules
- specialist modules
- option modules

Please be aware that this is only one way to organise the delivery – it is purely illustrative and there is no necessity to follow this particular pattern. This particular example has two modules of work based learning per Level and examples of exemptions due to Accreditation of Prior Learning at Level 4 (CWDC Induction Training Programme) and Level 5 (Certificate of Effective Practice (Youth Justice)). (*Note –plus other qualifications?*)

Diagram 4 also allows entry to the Level 5 programme for those with the Learning Development and Support Services Diploma at Level 5 and gives an indication of potential progression pathways from Level 2/3 through to Level 6 or Honours Degree. The work-based learning aspect of the programme spans each level and in this example is the only opportunity for a specialist module at Level 4. However, learners can be encouraged to apply learning from generic modules to their particular context or practice and can be given opportunities to complete specialist assessments or projects within generic learning.

¹¹ See <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/honours/default.asp>

Diagram 4 Sample structure



Section 2.3: Delivery of a foundation degree for Integrated Youth Support

Delivery arrangements

This section looks at the delivery arrangements that will support partnerships in meeting the foundation degree specification described in Section 2.1. Partnerships developing foundation degrees in alignment with this framework will need to consider:

- a. Arrangements for governance and management of the foundation degree and the nature of partnership between learners, employers and providers including the roles that each takes in design, delivery, assessment, management and evaluation
- b. Availability of appropriately qualified staff who are available to deliver the foundation degree and who have opportunities for staff development and updating
- c. Arrangements for encouraging access for a diverse group of learners including promotion, employer/provider relationships, pre-entry support, study skill support
- d. Arrangements for articulation with pre-entry qualifications, Honours Degrees and professional qualifications
- e. Arrangements that will increase flexibility such as mode of delivery, delivery location and arrangements, accreditation of prior learning, interim Awards such as a Certificate
- f. Detailed arrangements for quality assured assessed supervised work-based learning with young people; including the nature of learning agreements that support this
- g. Arrangements for learners to experience practice with young people in more than one setting or, where this is not possible, for the demonstration by learners of practical understanding of work with young people in more than one setting
- h. Arrangements for ensuring employer capacity to deliver supervision and support within the workplace
- i. How they will enable transferability for learners – particularly any local collaboration that they have developed or local relationships they have in place
- j. How they will organise the curriculum so that learning outcomes of the appropriate level and nature are in place
- k. How they will demonstrate alignment with the skills, knowledge and understanding at Level 4/5 within the Skills Development Framework
- l. How they will incorporate the Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge and, in particular, explain how they will offer exemption for the CWDC induction programme and offer entry to Level 5 study for those with the LDSS Diploma

- m. How they will introduce underpinning values congruent with those in the CWDC Induction Standards and reflect Youth Professional Standards¹²
- n. How they will provide opportunities for learning alongside and engaging with practitioners from across the sector
- o. How they will embed a reflective approach to learning and practice within the programme
- p. Any specialist material that they will include and reference to any particular professional or other requirements that this needs to meet
- q. Arrangements for involving young people within the governance and delivery of the programme.

¹² See <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/young-peoples-workforce/common-platform-of-skills-and-competences/yps>

Table 1: Notes to support delivery arrangements

Delivery arrangements	Notes to support delivery
<p>Arrangements for governance and management of the foundation degree and the nature of partnership between learners, employers and providers including the roles that each takes in design, delivery, assessment, management and evaluation</p>	<p>Partnerships will need to consider the involvement of different partners within validation, management and consultative committees and in particular give space and emphasis for the voice of the learner. They will need to consider the nature of the relationship between the learner, the employer and the provider – perhaps with the use of learning agreements to support work based learning or the programme overall. Partnerships will also need to consider responsibilities in relation to assessment – particularly assessment of work based learning and access to student submissions and results.</p>
<p>Availability of appropriately qualified staff who are available to deliver the foundation degree and who have opportunities for staff development and updating</p>	<p>Partnerships will need to ensure that the programme is delivered by a range of suitably qualified and experienced staff. These people need to understand the practice environment and ideally have experience of working with young people within the settings considered within the programme. Staff teaching on the programme can be employed by the provider or one or more employers and should have opportunities for staff development that contribute to the quality of their teaching and research in this curriculum area.</p>
<p>Arrangements for encouraging access for a diverse group of learners including promotion, employer/provider relationships, pre-entry support, study skill support</p>	<p>Many programmes will attract people who have little previous study experience and may lack confidence. Partnerships need to consider how they will reassure learners. Some ideas to consider are: appropriate and encouraging promotion materials, prior contact with employers with possible joint preparatory activity, delivery that engages with people’s experience and delivery that is easy for learners to physically access. Partnerships may also wish to consider how they will encourage younger learners –perhaps through relationships with schools and colleges. Once registered on a programme, many learners will appreciate a sensitively delivered programme of study support.</p>

<p>Arrangements for articulation with pre-entry qualifications, Honours Degrees and professional qualifications</p>	<p>Foundation degrees are required to demonstrate articulation to at least one Honours Degree. Partnerships are encouraged to consider a range of potential progression opportunities that will give learners options. For example it would be helpful to offer at least one professional progression opportunity and one academic opportunity. It would also be helpful to learners and employers to understand entry requirements and in particular, which prior qualifications are welcomed. Partnerships may also be able to negotiate some local arrangements with partners and others within their area.</p>
<p>Arrangements that will increase flexibility such as mode of delivery, delivery location and arrangements, accreditation of prior learning, interim Awards such as a Certificate</p>	<p>One of the key characteristics of this foundation degree is its flexibility which aims to encourage potential learners and meet the requirements of employers wishing to up-skill their workforce. Partnerships need to consider how their delivery arrangements support this aim: for example through a mix of delivery modes (part time, distance learning, virtual learning environments) or through delivery in work locations. Partnerships should also consider where and how they can include exemption from study for individuals with prior qualifications and whether they can offer delivery in 'bite size chunks' so that length of study for particular learners can vary. Partnerships could also offer some modules as 'stand-alone' for those learners who would like to update or to gain specific skills.</p>
<p>Detailed arrangements for quality assured assessed supervised work-based learning with young people; including the nature of learning agreements that support this</p>	<p>The inclusion of good quality assessed and supervised work based learning is a central characteristic of this foundation degree. This can, at times, be difficult to achieve but was seen as essential by respondents on the feasibility study.</p> <p>It is important that learners are aware of work based learning requirements before they register for a programme and they may need some help in negotiating work place support to ensure that they get the most from their work based learning. A learning agreement that supports and monitors learning and arrangements that support reflection on practice are two mechanisms that have been found to support quality learning on programmes.</p>

<p>Arrangements for learners to experience practice with young people in more than one setting or, where this is not possible, for the demonstration by learners of practical understanding of work with young people in more than one setting</p>	<p>This foundation degree broadly qualifies practitioners to work across Integrated Youth Support and it is important that they experience practically a setting other than the one in which they work on a day to day basis. The framework encourages learners to spend about one sixth of their work based learning within a setting which will give them a different experience. All parties within the partnership will need to be encouraged to support this arrangement.</p> <p>For example, a learner may secure a short term or part time job which would fulfil this requirement; or employers may be able to help by agreeing to job swaps or by moving a practitioner between departments. The provider may have a wide range of relationships and be able to make arrangements for a learner. If these arrangements are not possible then partnerships need to consider how else learners might demonstrate 'practical understanding' of another setting; this could be achieved through assessments that include research or project work that crosses boundaries.</p>
<p>Arrangements for ensuring employer capacity to deliver supervision and support within the workplace</p>	<p>It is mutually helpful for partnerships to produce guidance for work place support and supervision training where appropriate. Partnerships also need to consider how they will support learners within small organisations – perhaps through partnership arrangements with larger organisations where practitioners offer their services as supervisors or workplace supporters.</p>

<p>How they will enable transferability for learners – particularly any local collaboration that they have developed or local relationships they have in place</p>	<p>Transferability at the end of Level 4 is an important part of the foundation degree as this will enable people to move more easily within the young people’s workforce. The award of a Certificate with 120 CATS points will help learners, employers and other providers recognise the equivalence of credit and it may be that this will then have professional currency for practitioners (advancement on a pay scale, for example). In addition, partnerships could consider how transferable the study at Level 5 is. For example, could there be local arrangements whereby learners with a foundation degree in one specialism could take specialist modules in another specialism to gain expertise within both areas and/or could someone transfer within their study of Level 5 without repeating all the modules?</p>
<p>How they will organise the curriculum so that learning outcomes of the appropriate level and nature are in place</p>	<p>Partnerships need to keep the practice of social pedagogy at the heart of the curriculum and map content and learning outcomes of modules against the various resources and frameworks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation degree benchmark • QAA Qualifications Framework • Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children and Young People’s Workforce • Skills Development Framework • Indicative content derived from the feasibility study into a common foundation degree • In addition specialist foundation degrees may wish to consider: • Relevant National Occupational Standards • Relevant QAA subject benchmarks

<p>How they will demonstrate alignment with the skills, knowledge and understanding at Level 4/5 within the Skills Development Framework</p>	<p>The Skills Development Framework includes skills of integrated working and outlines the underpinning knowledge needed to achieve these skills. Alignment with these indicators will ensure that the curriculum across different programmes within different institutions is comparable. As the Skills Development Framework becomes increasingly embedded within working and training practices it will also help learners and employers to relate to the language and expectations within foundation degree programmes.</p>
<p>How they will incorporate the Refreshed Common Core of Skills and Knowledge and, in particular, explain how they will offer exemption for the CWDC induction programme and offer entry to Level 5 study for those with the LDSS Diploma</p>	<p>The Refreshed Common Core is particularly important for ensuring transferability and compliance with the Integrated Qualifications Framework. This, in turn, is an important indicator of quality and relevance and gives the qualification currency and credibility for employers. Partnerships will need to pay particular attention to the ways in which this is incorporated such that it aligns with other qualifications and programmes that are already in the system.</p>
<p>How they will introduce underpinning values congruent with those in the CWDC Induction Standards and reflect the Youth Professional Standards</p>	<p>The feasibility study emphasised the importance of a curriculum that is underpinned with values. The CWDC Induction Standards provide a good starting point for this and partnerships can use these to consider how the curriculum and learning and teaching approaches encourage the development of these values. For example, learning approaches that encourage the value of listening and sharing and/or understandings about confidentiality or self awareness will be congruent with the statement within the Standards.</p> <p>Youth Professional Standards have been developed in partnership with the sector and offer a 'beacon of excellent practice' within Integrated Youth Support. Partnerships should be aware they are equivalent to Level 6 but they can serve as both an aspiration and an inspiration for programmes and practitioners.</p>

<p>How they will provide opportunities for learning alongside and engaging with practitioners from across the sector</p>	<p>Meeting and sharing with other practitioners is an important part of learning for integrated practice. Partnerships need to consider how this is to be encouraged. The meeting and sharing can be face to face within the classroom or within the workplace but much useful discussion and sharing can take place within virtual environments and partnerships may consider how they might encourage this.</p>
<p>How they will embed a reflective approach to learning and practice within the programme</p>	<p>Although work based learning is a fundamental part of the curriculum for the foundation degree, partnerships will need to consider mechanisms for encouraging reflection on practice so that learners make the connections between theory and practice and start to develop their own theories-in-use. Reflection can be encouraged in a number of ways. Some examples are through supervision within the workplace, through reflective writing for assessment or for a learning journal or e-portfolio, through professional development portfolios or learning journals. Reflections can be personal or shared depending on how they are used within the programme.</p>
<p>Any specialist material that they will include and reference to any particular professional or other requirements that this needs to meet</p>	<p>Programmes that wish to articulate with particular professional programmes or requirements will need to consider these in depth so as to ensure clarity and ease of progression opportunities for learners. For example, it might be important to include the study of particular modules or to meet particular learning outcomes within work based learning.</p> <p>Partnerships may find it helpful to use Appendix 1 of the Skills Development Framework where examples are given of knowledge and understanding relevant to specific specialisms.</p>
<p>Arrangements for involving young people within the governance and delivery of the programme.</p>	<p>Partnerships are encouraged to consider how they might involve young people within their programmes. Young people may be able to deliver certain sessions, for example, or they may be able to act as a shadow advisory group.</p>