



Notes to Applicants for Admission in September 2016

Thank you for your interest in the BA Course we offer. The following notes have been prepared to provide you with as much information as possible so that you can make an informed decision concerning your application to join our course in the light of the requirements and finances involved.

CYM Admissions System

In order to join the course, applicants need to successfully complete a UCAS form (University and Colleges Admissions Service).

Codes are as follows:

University of Gloucestershire - G50

- Youth & Community Work and Practical Theology: VL65

All applicants who meet the entry criteria will be asked to complete an Information Form which must be returned before attending interview.

You should distribute the Reference Forms to your referees, after you have filled in your name, and ask them to return their forms directly to CYM. Reference forms can be sent in by post or by e-mail. Forms which are posted must be signed, if sent by email application forms must come from the applicants email address and references from the referees email address.

Open Days

Formal Open Days taking place will be advertised on our web-site, you are encouraged to contact us to register your interest. Open Days will usually take place when students are in class. The students and the staff can give you more of an idea as to the course contents and you can experience part of a teaching day in the Centre.

Work Experience

Applicants need to have been involved in at least 400 hours of work with young people during the past two years. If you add up all the time you have spent, including preparation and staff meetings, over the past two years, it should come to at least 400 hours. This would be equivalent to an evening a week for two years for example.

Interviews

Upon receipt of your UCAS Application form, we will select those who will be called for Interview. You will normally hear by email, within two weeks of the receipt of your Application Form. If you do not hear within two weeks of applying through UCAS please call us to check that your form has arrived. You will be sent by email an Information Form which must be completed prior to attending interview.

All applicants offered an interview will be expected to take with them to interview a current CRB enhanced disclosure, Access NI or ISA Registration. You will be informed, following the interview, whether or not a place on the course will be offered and the conditions of that offer, however this offer will not be made until CRB, Access NI or ISA Registration has been seen.

Professional Practice Agency

If you have a Professional Practice Agency in mind, you will need to ask them to complete and return the Professional Practice Agency Form which has been attached or available from the website. The Professional Practice Agency can be either a church or group of churches - in which case they should be able to subscribe to the Apostles' Creed; or a Christian Youth Work agency/organisation - in which case it should have the advancement of the Christian religion as one of its charitable objects.

Education Authority / Student Support

We would recommend that you contact your local Education Authority office, to determine whether you will be eligible for Student Support. Please be clear with them that you are applying to study a full-time University of Gloucestershire undergraduate degree. (This is in accordance with Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) instructions to Local Authorities).

Experience has shown that it takes time to work through Student Loans Administration. If you are seriously considering applying for the course you should contact them without delay.

Course Structure

- ❖ To qualify as a full-time course, according to Government regulations, students on courses which involve Professional Practice Agency-based learning are required to spend at least nineteen weeks each year in 'academic' study, where 'academic' means college-based learning. DIUS defines a week as being the time between 9am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. Our BA Honours Degree courses have been designed to fulfil this requirement thus entitling students to government-funded tuition fees.
- ❖ Each academic year starts with an Introduction Week and then three eleven week terms.
- ❖ During the first two years of the course, the student will have regular Professional Formation Group tutorials for 2 ½ hours and one-to-one supervision with their Professional Practice Tutor. There are normally three professional formation groups during each term and four practice tutorials.
- ❖ Students should contact their Regional Teaching Centre for delivery timetables.
- ❖ The usual termly structure is one day of academic teaching per week and 14 hours per week in placement. The dates for the year are published during the preceding summer term, in order to give Professional Practice Agencies sufficient time to plan the work accordingly.

Teaching Structure:

- ❖ Each year students take 8 modules, each consists of a notional 150 hours of learning.
- ❖ In each of the first two years there is a double professional practice module which relates to the work in the Professional Practice Agency. In the final year there is a single Professional Practice module.
- ❖ The remaining six modules are taught at the Regional Delivery Centre.
- ❖ This means that students can expect to spend 40 hours a week on the course during term time. Over a fortnight this consists of:
 - 12 hours teaching at the Regional Centre
 - 2½ hours area professional formation group (3 x 2 ½ hrs during the term)
 - 1 hour of one-to-one professional practice supervision (4 during the term)
 - 5 hours preparing for tutorials, doing recordings, journal and professional practice assessment preparation
 - 24 hours work with young people, children, families and/or schools (which would include some preparation and relevant meetings)
 - 36 hours private study
- ❖ Students are also expected to do two lots of 111 hours of practice in two Alternative Professional Practice Agencies during their time on the course. These can be undertaken in blocks or concurrently and can be started at any time from the end of Term 2 in the first year.
- ❖ Professional Practice Agencies need to be willing to release their student/employee to fulfil these course requirements.

Finances and Fees

For the Academic Year 2015/2016 the fee for this course for United Kingdom and European Union students was £5,995. The fees usually rise each academic year and are normally confirmed by May.

The fees are to be paid directly to the validating University at the start of the academic year, or split between the start of the first and second Semesters. If you have not accessed a Student Loan before, then

you may be eligible for one. Whatever your situation, you should contact your Local Education Authority office as soon as possible. You will not have to pay back any debt that you incur until you have completed your course and are earning in excess of approximately £21,000 per annum.

Students domiciled in Northern Ireland but studying an English University course are currently only eligible to receive a student loan of £3805 per year towards their tuition fees. This means that there is a shortfall of £2190 per year. Youth Link:NI and the CYMI programme are committed to funding this shortfall through the placement payment plan and some limited bursary sources where possible, however students should be aware that this may not always be possible.

Funding the course

There are three ways in which students can organise the financing of their course.

- ❖ An **"SLC funded"** student is someone who is in receipt of Student Support from the Education Authority Student Loan Company. This normally takes the form of payment of tuition fees and eligibility for a student loan. SLC-funded students cannot be paid for work undertaken as part of their studies. Professional Practice Agencies are able to pay for travel costs, expenses, book allowance and fund the fees shortfall as outlined above. SLC-funded students can be paid for youth work undertaken during the vacations. Generally, if you live in the UK and have not received an award for a degree before then you will probably be eligible.
- ❖ A **"self-funded"** student is someone who is not in receipt of Student Support or a Student Loan and who funds themselves through the course.
- ❖ An **"employer-funded"** student is someone who is being sponsored by their employer and who is not in receipt of Student Support or a Student Loan. Further details follow below.

And, yes, it is possible to mix the above ways of funding except that a student in receipt of SLC Student Support/Student Loan cannot be "employed".

Other Work

Most students, including those receiving an award/loan from their SLC, find that they need to undertake some form of paid part-time work in order to survive financially. We recommend that this does not exceed 10 hours per week during term time. CYM recommends that all students think through the issues carefully if they wish to engage in part-time work alongside their course. The evidence from the University is that the more time spent working outside of the course the lower the resulting grade.

It may be possible for students to undertake part-time work outside of their course hours with their Main Professional Practice Agency. This would be positive for the work linked to the course.

Pattern for currently employed workers:

- 1 A student may become an **'employer-funded'** student. The student remains an employee and the employer seconds the student to the course for the 40 hours per week required. Within this pattern the Professional Practice Agency then becomes responsible for paying the tuition fees of the student in addition to the financial requirements of Professional Practice Agencies indicated in the Professional Practice Agency Handbook. The student is not eligible to apply for SLC Student Support. The student will use their employment as their main Professional Practice Agency, spending the equivalent of 14 hours each week in work with young people, of which at least half should be face to face. Outside term time the employee will be free to work their normal hours. For most people this will be around 12 weeks per year, allowing for six weeks of holidays. During term time, the student would be able to take a 1 or 2 days off (Saturday and/or Monday being the most realistic day in respect of course requirements) and still be available to do youth work on Sundays.
- 2 The alternative is for the student to cease to be an employee and become a full-time student, able to apply for Student Support. The Main Professional Practice Agency could be the student's current employer, although it would be important for the church or agency to recognise the reduced hours available. It would be possible for the student to work for the church or agency in their spare time, as all other students need to these days. The course recommends not more than 10 hours, which can be evenings and/or weekends. The student can also work for the church or agency in the vacations.

Some employers using this system then average out the pay to the student over the year to assist budgeting and finance.

Students and Employers need to consider the issues very carefully and we recommend consulting an independent financial adviser. There are advantages in staying employed – legal, financial, etc. – and there are advantages in becoming a full-time student – benefits, tax advantages, Student Support, etc.

Individuals who have not previously been in receipt of Student Support may wish to explore whether it would be more cost effective to become a full-time student. The figures change each year and further information can be gained from the booklet ‘How to get Financial help as a student’ published by Aim Higher student finance, or from the Student Loan Company’s web site.

For more information

Student Support and Loans contact Student Loan Company

Teaching, Learning and Professional Practice Agencies contact your Regional Teaching Centre (phone numbers are found on our web-site)

Admissions Procedures contact:

CYM Ireland
Youth Link:NI
Farset Enterprise Park
638 Springfield Road
BELFAST
BT12 7DY
Phone: 028 9032 3217
E-mail: lyndsay@youthlink.org.uk or info@youthlink.org.uk