

Course Information Sheet

BA (Hons) Social Work

Mode and course length – Full-Time (4 years)

Location – ARU Cambridge Campus

Awarding Body – Anglia Ruskin University. As a registered Higher Education provider Anglia Ruskin University is regulated by the Office for Students.

Overview

If you thrive on the unexpected and want to make a difference in people's lives, social work could be the career for you. Social work is about empowering people and supporting them towards being independent. Social workers help people to function, participate and develop in society.

Our course provides the knowledge, values and skills you will need to qualify as a social worker. But social work isn't just about what you learn: it's also about who you are. You will need qualities such as patience, honesty, sensitivity, tolerance, persistence and sound judgement.

As a student, you will train to assess people's circumstances and needs. Working alongside other professionals, you will plan, provide, review and evaluate services. You will become skilled in problem-solving, and understand how to set up supportive activities with individuals, families, groups and communities. Learning to assess the risks facing vulnerable children or adults, and how to set up and measure protection plans for them will be key. You will also gain a thorough understanding of your legal powers and duties.

Our course features presentations and role play as well as more traditional lectures and seminars. We work closely with our SUCI (Service User and Carers Involvement) group. This gives you a chance to discuss with people who have experience and opinions about social care and use their feedback to improve your practice.

All of our students do two practice placements. One of these placements will involve statutory tasks, including legal interventions. Both placements are an invaluable opportunity to learn in the workplace and you will cover a range of topics such as engagement, assessment, interpersonal skills, interventions, safeguarding and the appropriate use of authority.

If you study in Chelmsford, your placements will be anywhere in Essex, including Thurrock and Southend authorities. If you are a Cambridge student, your placements could be anywhere in Cambridgeshire and possibly in Peterborough. We have limited access to statutory placements outside these areas. You cannot choose your placement but rather it is assigned by the university.

We will make sure that you get a range of settings to best support your training. It's likely that you'll have to travel as part of your placement, so you'll need your own transport to visit service users in the community, where public transport may not be available.

Course Delivery

Our courses are delivered through teaching and learning methods which provide students with the widest possible exposure to a modern and innovative higher education experience.

These methods vary and could include attendance at lectures and seminars, undertaking laboratory exercises or work-based activities, practical work, performances, presentations, field trips, other relevant visits and e-learning through Canvas, our online learning management system.

Each course is divided into a number of 'modules' which focus on particular areas, each of which has a specific approach to its delivery. This information is published to students for each module they take via the Module Definition Form (MDF) and Canvas.

Assessment

Assessments are your opportunity to show the skills and knowledge that you are gaining in your journey to become a social worker. We use a variety of assessment methods which include assignments, presentations, learning journals, portfolios, patchwork texts (short pieces of writing, or 'patches', built up week-by-week), poster design and placements.

Fees

Information about your course fee including any annual fee increases or deposits (if required) can be found in your offer letter.

Additional Costs

Up to £500 for travel.

Modules

Core Modules

Year 1: Foundation in Social Work

This module will provide students with the necessary skills to begin studying at level 4 in courses related to Social Work.

Students will be introduced to the core skills necessary to succeed in higher education, including thinking critically, researching and referencing appropriately, demonstrating appropriate numeracy and ICT skills, and communicating effectively verbally and in writing.

Students will also be introduced to specific concepts related to their degree programmes including the structure of health and social care provision in the United Kingdom, and the various professional roles within the sector. Students will also be introduced to intercultural studies. Students will practice applying theoretical frameworks to case studies and experiments.

The module is made up of the following 8 constituent elements:

- Interactive Learning Skills and Communication (ILSC)
- Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- Critical Thinking
- Core Maths
- Ethics
- Psychology
- Intercultural Studies
- Preparing for a Career in Caring

Year 2: Ethics, Values and the Legal Context of Social Work

Understanding the legal and ethical framework of social work is important as it underpins and provides the profession with its ethical/moral and legal authority. The module will examine the relationship between ethics, values and the legal context of social work. The purpose of the module is to equip students with a broad base understanding of the centrality of ethics and values to the profession and the tensions and conflicts that are inherent when considering also the legal context within which the profession must operate. A key component of the module will be to develop an informed understanding of how personally held values and belief systems can shape and influence the way that people think and act and how in turn these values and beliefs systems shape societies values and governments ideologies and in turn the legislation that is used to structure society. The module will further expect students to have some understanding of the importance of the use of moral and philosophical ideas that influence the way we make decisions and resolve ethical conflicts. The Professional Capabilities Framework 2012 from The College of Social Work and the Health and Care Professions Council point to the importance of students engaging in learning that incorporates the legal context of practice as well as the ethical context of practice and point to the research and legal reports.

Year 2: Knowledge, Evidence and Practice

This module is designed for students on social work qualifying programmes. Students will examine how knowledge is created

and applied in the activity of social work. The module prepares students in evaluating the quality of knowledge whether as evidence, research or in the interpretation of professional practice. Research as a means of collecting and interpreting knowledge is explored through research methods and current examples. The following sources of knowledge will provide examples: -organisations -practitioners -the policy community, that is, knowledge gained from the wider policy context -research, gathered systematically with a planned design -service users and carers. Reflective practice is a means of evaluating practice knowledge. Theories and methods of reflection are identified and applied to practice and skill situations. In disseminating and applying practice knowledge, the module introduces Plain English standards of report-writing and case description together with balanced and evidence-based writing techniques. Academic referencing is clarified and applied as an essential skill promoting balance and accountability in arguing from knowledge. Effective social work knowledge relies on personal and organisational learning. Learning, as an activity and a theory, is a thread throughout the module and students will identify and engage with their professional learning needs and the learning strategies necessary at higher education level.

Year 2: The Application of Theory to Social Work Practice

This module has two main components, which are designed to fit together to provide a basic foundation for observing, reflecting on and understanding social work in a variety of settings. Students will be introduced to core theories and concepts including those relating to human development, which will provide essential theoretical underpinnings for various social work interventions. Building on the concept of the reflective practitioner, this module will also provide students with an opportunity to develop their observational skills and apply relevant theories, so that they can better interpret diverse behaviours, experiences and practices.

Year 2: Social Work in Society

This module will help social work students understand how service user's lives are influenced by their social and policy context. Poverty, inequality and social exclusion are key factors shaping the lives of most of the people that social workers engage with in their practice. To be able to uphold professional values such as social justice and equity it is important that social workers have a keen awareness of individual and social explanations for the growing divide between rich and poor in the UK and internationally. Alongside the global dimension the importance of local factors: neighbourhoods and social networks will also be examined. Social policy will be considered in relation to how, for better or worse, it influences social inequalities of (e.g.) class, ethnicity, gender and disability. We will also consider the policy framework in which social workers seek to address poverty and exclusion. In keeping with the emphasis on social context, students will be introduced to two social work methods, group work and community oriented social work, which take a more collective approach than the traditionally dominant individualist focus of British social work practice. Students will have the opportunity to gain familiarity with the theory and practice of both methods. In particular group work will be integral to teaching and learning on the module.

Year 2: Assessed Readiness for Direct Practice

It is a requirement of the professional regulator that all social work students evidence readiness and suitability before entering direct practice with service users; to this end, the module will prepare the student for undertaking their first placement by ensuring that each student has experienced appropriate preparation opportunities. By means of 20 days of practical input and experiential learning, students will be supported to be ready to gain as much as possible from their first placement and the university will be able to confirm that each student is safe to undertake direct work with vulnerable people. In order to make effective and safe use of the first practice placement, by the point of assessment of readiness for direct practice (ARDP) prior to first placement, students should demonstrate:

- core communication skills and the capacity to develop them
- the ability to engage with people in order to build compassionate and effective relationships
- awareness of a range of frameworks to assess and plan intervention
- basic ability to produce written documents relevant for practice
- initial awareness of risk and safeguarding.
- Willingness to learn from feedback and supervision
- Demonstrate basic social work values and skills

Learning for this module will be undertaken in interactive groups led by academics, social work practitioners and service users and carers, by observation and by on-line learning. There will be ample opportunity for practising skills in a safe and supportive environment. Students will maintain a record of reflection on their learning across the 20 days.

Students need to demonstrate that they are 'safe to practice'. In accordance with the requirements of the PSRBs.

Year 3: Social Work with Children and Families

Child and family social work is a complex area of practice that requires a high level of skills and capabilities to promote the wellbeing of children, young people, their parents and carers. Social Workers must learn to collaborate in complex multidimensional systems that exist to protect and safeguard children and support families. Social Workers must understand how to work within guidance and the professional boundaries of their role in a way which ensures the wellbeing and best interests of children at the centre of decision making processes. The module guides an understanding of the context of child and family intervention and how to recognise signs, symptoms and consequences of child abuse. The module also looks at the complexities of balancing the rights and responsibilities of parents within the dynamics of respectful partnership working, wellbeing and social justice whilst upholding the safety and protection of children. The social worker in Children and Families work needs to act responsibly and use supervision effectively to help them understand the values and knowledge base underpinning their work and to examine how to manage themselves within a dynamic professional system. Understanding how to record, analyse and report effectively within set procedures, guidelines and legislation governing children and families work is an essential skill. Further, social workers should critically reflect on their practice to consider the potential impacts on and influences of self where issues of judgement and decision making require highly professionalised and responsible approaches. This module expects to address the above complexities in the assessment tasks.

Year 3: Social Work with Adults

The term adult has very broad meaning and it applies to a number of client groups across the adult spectrum. This module recognises that management of the life transition cycle and the ageing process doesn't neatly fit into any age category and as a consequence seeks to provide students with a generic and seamless understanding of working with adults whilst challenging age demarcation. The module will give an overview and will critically examine five key areas, mental health, disability, age, gender and culture and examine the inter-relationships between these dimensions and the notion of safeguarding of vulnerable adults. Key features of the module will include an exploration of the medical and social model, the Community Care Act 1990, aspects of the Mental Health Act 1983, interprofessional working, direct payments and choice, dignity and independence as recognised by the Human Rights Act 1998. It will also critically examine the low, medium and priority criteria for assessing need and is designed to encourage creativity and innovative practice whilst exploring the implications of theoretical knowledge, research findings and anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice.

Year 3: Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 1

It is a requirement of HCPC that all social work students evidence readiness and suitability before entering direct practice with service users. The module will maximise student learning in regard to their stage two placement learning opportunity, by means of 10 advanced skills days of practical input and experiential learning.

The aim is to build on the skills gained in module 003637 by developing a greater skills base related to the statutory duties linked to stage two placement learning opportunities. For example:

- advanced communication skills and to take a professional leadership role in communication;
- the ability to perform professional tasks with people in order to build compassionate and effective relationships, including assessment and intervention in partnership with service users and carers;
- Using of a range of frameworks to assess and plan intervention
- Advanced awareness of risk and safeguarding.
 - Use of supervision models to learn from feedback and supervision
 - Demonstrate social work values and skills concordant with the statutory stage two placement learning opportunity.

Learning for this module will be undertaken in interactive groups led by academics, social work practitioners and service users and carers, through observation and on-line learning. There will be opportunity for practising skills in a safe and supportive environment. Students will maintain a record of reflection on their learning across the 10 Advanced Skills days which will be assessed in demonstrating their 'safety to practice' in accordance with the requirements of HCPC.

In order to enable students the maximum amount of time to complete their advanced practice learning, the placements are split across two modules, Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 1 and Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 2. The

advanced skills placement is an essential component of both the BA (Hons) Social Work and the MA Social Work. Final sign off is made via Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 2 when the module leader is satisfied that the student has completed the required number of placement days in order to pass the relevant course.

The hours that students spend on teacher managed learning (lectures and online days) and student managed learning can be flexible, as long as the total number of hours totals 30.

Study hour requirements: Up to 30 hours concluding with final sign off in ASSWP2 (ASSWP 1 and ASSWP 2 must add up to 60 hours over the two modules to reflect 10 taught days of 6 hours)

Year 3: Practice 1, Communication Skills and Partnership Working

Professional social work encompasses facilitative and protective activities with individuals (including children), families, groups and communities and takes place in individual, organisational and community settings. Social workers need to be able to communicate thoughtfully and effectively within the context of professional and inter-professional relationships, and advanced communication skills are an essential component of sensitive and accurate assessment and management of risk in social work. This practice module helps students learn how to critically analyse and put these skills into practice with the aim of maximising the choices available to people who have faced difficulties in society, including abuse, disadvantage, discrimination, marginalisation and poverty. Students will attend a practice placement for the duration specified by the social work professional body, and workshops will provide the theoretical framework on which work must be founded. Within their practice placements, students are expected to develop an ability to conceptualise, reflect and analyse competing theories, methods and models of social work within a framework of anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice. This module is restricted to students in supervised practice placements in a social work-related setting. Attendance on placement in accordance with professional body requirements. The module is designed to allow students to demonstrate competence with regard to the newly introduced Professional Capabilities Framework and mapped appropriately to the Standards of Proficiency.

Year 3: Power, Duties and Accountability in Social Work

The aim of the module is to examine the legal and professional context that underpins the role of the social worker in a variety of settings. The student will be required to examine and evaluate the sources of professional power, structures of accountability and their duties when making professional decisions and judgements. The module will give priority and emphasis to duties relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The module will explore the quality assurance mechanisms which apply to professional social work practice, as well as the responsibilities and role boundaries inherent within multi disciplinary and multi agency models of working. Whilst concurrently on placement, students will reflect on a range of policy and legislation and the impact that it has on the lives of service users and the implications for practice. Students will also be required to explore ethical and professional dilemmas arising from the exercise of professional power, and the complex and conflicting demands which can arise. The module will be delivered through a sequence of module lectures and seminars/workshops, considering the practical skills required in social work. The academic learning of the module and associated assessment is designed in conjunction with the general placement experience of the student group.

Year 3: Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 2

It is a requirement of HCPC that all social work students evidence readiness and suitability before entering direct practice with service users. The module will maximize student learning in regard to their stage two placement learning opportunity, by means of 10 advanced skills days of practical input and experiential learning.

The aim is to build on the skills gained in module 003637 by developing a greater skills base related to the statutory duties linked to stage two placement learning opportunities. For example:

- advanced communication skills and to take a professional leadership role in communication;
- the ability to perform professional tasks with people in order to build compassionate and effective relationships, including assessment and intervention in partnership with service users and carers;
- Using of a range of frameworks to assess and plan intervention
- Advanced awareness of risk and safeguarding.
- Use of supervision models to learn from feedback and supervision

- Demonstrate social work values and skills concordant with the statutory stage two placement learning opportunity.

Learning for this module will be undertaken in interactive groups led by academics, social work practitioners and service users and carers, through observation and on-line learning. There will be opportunity for practising skills in a safe and supportive environment. Students will maintain a record of reflection on their learning across the 10 Advanced Skills days which will be assessed in demonstrating their 'safety to practice' in accordance with the requirements of HCPC.

In order to allow students the maximum amount of time to complete their advanced practice learning, the placements are split across two modules, Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 1 and Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 2. The advanced skills placement is an essential component of both the BA (Hons) Social Work and the MA Social Work. Final sign off is made via Advanced Skills for Social Work Practice 2 when the module leader is satisfied that the student has completed the required number of placement days in order to pass the relevant course.

The hours that students spend on teacher managed learning (lectures and online days) and student managed learning can be flexible, as long as the total number of hours totals 30.

Study Hour requirements: Up to 30 hours depending on the required hours still outstanding from ARDP 1 (ARDP 1 and ARDP 2 must add up to 60 hours over the two modules to reflect 10 taught days of 6 hours)

Year 4: Well-being Across the Life Course

The introduction of the Care Act 2014 has underlined the importance of well-being as a key concept informing social work policy and practice in both adults' and children's services. Accordingly this module provides an opportunity for students to examine different dimensions of well-being, in particular, mental health and social inequalities in health. Students will use a life course perspective in analysing well-being, not least because this approach can be used to highlight factors that influence human growth and development from birth through to old age. Theoretical understanding of these two concepts, well-being and life course, are critical underpinnings of social work interventions. The module promotes a holistic approach, drawing on ecological theory, to enable students to understand how service users' well-being is influenced by social inequalities, for example of class, ethnicity, gender and disability. From this students will consider how well-being can be damaged by the psycho-social impact of stigma and discrimination. Students will be encouraged to relate these theoretical issues to practice by considering how social workers can work with service users to counter the effects of social inequalities and injustice. Methods and approaches discussed will include empowerment and resilience, the recovery model and anti-oppressive practice.

Year 4: Undergraduate Major Project

The Undergraduate Major Project module allows students to engage in a substantial piece of individual research and/or product development work, focussed on a topic relevant to their specific discipline. The topic may be drawn from a variety of sources

including:

- Anglia Ruskin University research groups
- The organisation/Trust in which they are currently working
- Previous/current work experience (CPD students only)
- An Anglia Ruskin University lecturer suggested topic (CPD students only)
- A professional subject of their specific interest (CPD students only, if suitable supervision is available).

The project topic will be assessed for suitability to ensure sufficient academic challenge and satisfactory supervision by an academic member of staff.

The chosen topic will require the student to identify/formulate problems and issues, conduct literature reviews, evaluate information, investigate and adopt suitable development methodologies, draw conclusions and make recommendations , process data, critically appraise and present their findings..

Regular meetings/contact with the project supervisor should take place, to guide and support students to progress with their projects .

Year 4: Transition in Professional Practice

This module prepares qualifying students for transition into the Assessed and Supported Year in Social work (ASYE) of professional social work practice. The module is supported by the College of Social Work (TCSW) Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards of Proficiency (SOP). The module engages an informed analysis of the professional within the complex and competing demands of social work practice. The module is designed to facilitate critically informed insights about the implications of powers, duties and responsibilities arising from the internal and external environments, such as legislative frameworks, policy and stakeholder/service user and carer expectations within the social work role, quality assurance frameworks and performance management. The module will be informed by the criteria within the PCF facilitate the development of capable practitioner skills and underpinned by the HCPC proficiency guidelines in readiness for professional practice. The module will be delivered in collaboration with local employers, service users and carers who will both inform the module and be involved in co-delivery wherever possible. The overall aim of this module is to prepare students for the social work profession and to bridge the gap between university and local workforce agencies.

Year 4: Practice 2, Analytical Thinking and Decision Making

The module is supported by the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards of Proficiency (SOP). This module aims to develop the understanding and skills needed to undertake effective assessments and care plans that lead to appropriate interventions, and to critique and analyse different approaches to assessment and intervention. It explores topics such as 'need', 'risk', professional judgement, decision - making, and the factors that inhibit and facilitate change. The module explores the concepts of assessment and intervention from the perspectives of different stakeholders with an emphasis on participation from service user and carer perspectives. It exemplifies the holistic nature of assessing and intervening in service users and carers lives. It examines the dynamic relationship between multi-complex systems that impact on service users lives such as working with diverse communities, partnership, ethical dilemmas and the application of anti - oppressive and anti - discriminatory principles. This includes the complexities of working with service users who could be resistant to intervention, the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children and complex decision-making within these contexts. Service Users and Carers will be involved in the teaching and learning components of this module. Students will attend a practice placement for the duration specified by the social work professional body, and workshops will provide the theoretical framework on which social work must be founded and sets this in the relevant social and political context. The PCF 'End of last placement' states that newly qualified social workers should have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and values to work with a range of user groups, and the ability to undertake a range of tasks at a foundation level, the capacity to work with more complex situations; they should be able to work more autonomously, whilst recognising that the final decision will still rest with their supervisor; they will seek appropriate support and supervision'. This includes a range of capabilities such as managing workload, responding to unexpected situations, ability to resolve issues, interpersonal and communication skills, report writing and reflective skills.