MA (Social Work)

COURSE GUIDE 2013/14
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About this guide
This Course Guide has been designed to help you plan your course. You are encouraged to read this Guide through now. It will be a considerable advantage to you to be familiar from the outset with the various aspects of your studies that are described. It may be that the relevance of some of the sections will not be immediately obvious. Keep it somewhere accessible, so that you can refer to it as needed.

Obviously even in a document like this we have not covered every query and problem that you might have about the course. The Course Guide should be read in conjunction with the Undergraduate Student Guide / Postgraduate Student Guide; the Student Charter; the University’s Policies and Regulations and the University Assessment Handbook. These documents should provide you with all the basic information that we think you will need for your period of study here.

If you find that there is something you need to know, please contact your Academic School Office or local Student Centre on the details included below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please enter the contact details for your Personal Tutor for your future reference:</th>
<th>The name of your Personal Tutor will be given to you at the beginning of your course and can be checked via e:Vision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your local Academic School Office is:</td>
<td>MH Building, City Campus, Mary Seacole Building Nursery Street, Wolverhampton</td>
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<td>Tele no: Reception 01902 518600</td>
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<td>Your Student Centre (Here to Help) is:</td>
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<td>E Mail <a href="mailto:Here2Help@wlv.ac.uk">Here2Help@wlv.ac.uk</a></td>
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Please note that in order to develop and improve the Course, it may be necessary on occasions to amend or revise the details given in this Course Guide. We are pleased to hear your views and welcome suggestions for ways of improving the operation of the Course.
Welcome
On behalf of the Course Management Team I should like to extend to you a very warm welcome and wish you every success in your studies at the University of Wolverhampton.

The University experience and academic success is all about the effort you put into learning and making the most of the wide range of opportunities available to you. We welcome students who are eager to think for themselves, to take control of their own learning and who are ready to get involved in developing the skills required in a highly competitive job market.

You will need to demonstrate good time management skills, independent learning, flexibility and discipline in order to achieve a study-work-life balance. We believe it is important that you are encouraged to make your own contribution to the effective operation and development of your chosen course. We are, therefore, keen to hear your views and would welcome any suggestions that you may have about ways of improving any aspect of your course and/or the student experience here at the University.

Vicky Price, Subject Head, Social Work and Social Care

Course Management and Staff Involved with the Course

Vicky Price: Head of Social Work & Social Care
Vicky Price is a Principal Lecturer with overall responsibility for the award. Her main areas of academic interest are learning disability and values & ethics. Since 2003 she has been a visiting lecturer at HSiNHolland, Amsterdam and has regularly presented papers at international conferences in her field of learning disability. She is a member of the Social Work Action Network.

Whilst her managerial responsibility often takes her away from the research arena she continues to work in the area of learning disability and has been involved in chairing the service-user and carer forum at the University of Wolverhampton. Her current research interests are in the Accommodation needs of (young) adults with Down Syndrome and Social work values in a changing economic context.

Selected publications and conference papers


Keith Edwards
Keith will be leading 7SO003 (Practice Placement 2) and contributing to other modules throughout the award. He qualified as a social worker in 1978 and was a social worker for the London Borough of Lewisham before moving into to management, first with Barnardo’ and latterly in Powys (Wales) and Warwickshire. He joined Warwickshire in 2002 to support the Quality Protects programme, and then the development of the Integrated Children’s System. Keith has worked at the University of Wolverhampton since 2008 and has previous experience on the DipSW and CSS programmes at Bilston Community College.

Selected publications


Liz English
Liz leads 7SO001. She has a first degree in sociology, as well as an MSc Social Work and an MBA. She is currently working towards a PhD in social work decision making. She has been a qualified social worker for 25 years, and has working across the full range of service provision in both Adults' and Children’s Services, as a practitioner, team Manager and senior Manager. Liz has worked as a senior lecturer for the last 11 years at Staffordshire University, Kingston University and Wolverhampton University. Teaching on and managing BA, MA and PQ awards. She has also worked as an advisor to The Open University Social work department on the ‘Values Exchange Programme’. Her professional and academic interests lie primarily in Social Work with Adults. In particular Personalisation, Safeguarding, Working with Risk, Mental Capacity and Community Care legislation.

Fiona Morgan
Fiona is a part-time lecturer and teaches Adult Law (7SO004) and the Adults input on 7SO007, and will also lead on the dissertation module (7SO025). She qualified as a social worker in 1998 and has worked across a number of local authorities in England with adult service users. She is currently undertaking a PhD part-time at the University of Bath. Her thesis is entitled ‘An analysis of the treatment of informal care as a social risk in England’. Her research is looking at the extent to which the welfare risks and poverty risks experienced by the informal carers of older people are recognised by the state across a range of policy areas, including cash benefits, care services and employment policies.

Fiona’s main research interests are: long-term care policies, informal carers and older people, comparative social policy, feminist theory and the way in which the devalued position of care in society impacts on individual wellbeing.

Selected Conference Papers


Ani Murr
Ani jointly manages the award and teaches on 7SO 001 and will lead 7SO002 (Placement 1). Prior to joining the University of Wolverhampton, she was a social worker in the field of Mental Health and her current areas of specialist knowledge are practice education and statutory mental health practice. She is a member of the JUCSWEC learning and teaching committee. A current research interest is in the use of ‘wellbeing’.

Selected Publications


**Graeme Simpson**

Graeme jointly manages the award and teaches on 7SO 005. After a career in children’s social work which began in 1978, he joined the university of Wolverhampton in 1997. He is a member of the JUCSWEC International Committee and has been a visiting lecturer at HS InHolland, Amsterdam and also the FH Dortmund, where he has developed a module with Prof Katja Nowacki comparing child care social work in Germany and England.

His main research interests are European social work; learning disability; and the application of Marxist theory to contemporary social work and its place in critical practice. He is a member of the Social Work Action Network.

**Selected Publications**


**Warren Smith**

Warren has worked in a number of social care and social work settings for over 14 years, before joining the University of Wolverhampton. His roles have included support worker, social worker, senior social worker and manager, predominantly within the youth justice and child protection field. He will be teaching on 7SO004 and may contribute to other modules.

Warren has completed an MA in Social Work Management in Children & Families, where he explored the experiences of ‘family & friends’ carers caring for 'Looked After' children.

Warren's other areas of interest include identity and white working class youth, sub culture theories and sociology.

**Anne Wright**

Anne has 18 years’ experience working with children and families, first as a Group Worker for Women and Children within a community setting and then in statutory social work. As a social work practitioner she completed various specialist training including children and young people who sexually abuse (Stephen Wolfe), group work with non-abusing parents (Joe Sullivan and Sue McKewan) and the Theraplay and Marschak Interaction Method (The Theraplay® Institute, USA).

Since joining the university in 2007 Anne's main contribution has been in developing the social work service user and carer (SU/C) hub group and forum now being extended as the model for SU/C involvement across the school. Anne’s main area of research interest is in Vygotskyian theory and its application in social work learning and practice.

**Selected Conference papers**

Other staff

Practice Learning Coordinator
The practice learning coordinator is responsible for the placement of students and ensuring that the quality of the learning environment meets the placement standards set by the professional, regulatory and statutory bodies. The practice learning coordinator for Social Work is Marvia Chambers who can be contacted by email at the following address marvia.chambers@wlv.ac.uk.

Special Needs Tutor
The special needs tutor has responsibility for students who has specific learning needs, and can advise on the support systems that are available to you. The special needs tutor for the School is Pauline Lim who can be contacted by email at the following address P.Lim@wlv.ac.uk.

Student Voice
The Student Voice is a partnership between the University and the Students' Union, put in place to make sure students opinions/feedback are heard at every level of university governance, from course level to the University’s governing body.

The main positions within the Student Voice are Course Reps, who are volunteer students on every course. They have meetings with lecturers on a regular basis, highlighting both positive and negative feedback to Heads of Department or lecturers within their course. School Reps are elected during the Spring Elections and have meetings with Senior Management in their Schools. They are an essential link between Course Reps, the Students' Union and management within each School.

If you ever wanted to get involved with the student voice, or need more information please contact the Engagement Team in the Students' Union - www.wolvesunion.org/voice/.

Engagement
The University recognises that you have made a significant investment in both time and money in choosing to study for a degree. The University is committed to helping you fulfil your potential. Your engagement with the study materials, and participation in the sessions, activities and assessment tasks are very important in ensuring that you are able to do so.

Your engagement will help you to:
- Understand the subject area you are studying;
- Acquire and develop the skills and knowledge needed to ensure success;
- Prepare for assessment tasks;
- Learn from and with your fellow students;
- Receive feedback from your tutors on your progress;
- Fully participate in sessions, forums, seminars and other activities;
- Develop your communication skills.
If you are unable to participate in any of the activities or sessions please let your tutor know that you are unable to do so. He/she will then be able to give you advice on what was dealt with during the session or activity, and what you need to do to catch up. Please do remember how important engagement and participation is to your success. You are encouraged to engage with the University’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Student Management System, further details of how to access these can be found here.

Contact time with teaching and associated staff is available to help shape and guide your studies. The term ‘contact hours’ refers to the amount of time that you spend learning in contact with teaching or associated staff, when studying your chosen course. The number of contact hours on a course is influenced by the subject, as well as how and where you are studying.

The Wolverhampton Graduate
The University provides a high quality teaching and learning experience supported by learning environments which are conducive to deep and interactive learning. The environment enables students to achieve their full potential and attain the best possible outcomes, to maximise employment opportunities and career advancement.

By the end of your course, the university expects you to be a Wolverhampton Graduate who is knowledgeable and enterprising, digitally literate and a global citizen.

- **Digitally Literate**
  Our graduates will be confident users of advanced technologies; they will lead others, challenging convention by exploiting the rich sources of connectivity digital working allows.

- **Knowledgeable and Enterprising**
  Our graduates will know how to critique analyse and then apply knowledge they acquire in an enterprising way.

- **Global citizens**
  Our graduates will bring informed understandings of their place and ethical responsibilities in the world.

Further information can be found on the University student webpage for Graduate Attributes.

About the Course
This Guide outlines the modules which are available, teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks. If there is anything you need to discuss further, please contact Graeme Simpson or Ani Murr, Course Co-ordinators

Social Work’s Core Values

**Valuing Diversity**
The Wolverhampton programme has a long history of meeting the needs of the region, drawing upon and respecting the diversity it offers. The course reflects the regional demographic in terms of ethnic diversity, and as a student on the award, you are joining this tradition.

Service-users and carers, detailed later in this section, play an important part in the programme. As a student social worker it is important to develop an understanding of service-users as people who possess their own strengths and capabilities and this will be reinforced when you study social work methods (7SO001) and 7SO007 (Social Work with Children, Adults, Families & Carers). You will develop skills in undertaking assessments, based upon a range of approaches, starting with service-user strengths and the identification of needs, through a process of open exchange.

Many of the service-users you will work with on placements will be experiencing difficulties related to their socio-economic position: that is, many of the difficulties they face are as much structural as
personal. The region is one of the most socially and economically deprived in England. Social workers deal with the poor and other marginalised groups who are often demonised by politicians and sections of the national and local media.

**Challenging own prejudices.**
Following from this, it is important as a social work student that you are aware of how negative stereotypes are created and sustained and that you examine your response to them, alongside other prejudices.

This area is first addressed through the work around critical reflection and values in action on 7SO005. This examines motivations for actions and prejudices, through direct work with students facilitated through small group work. This continues throughout the whole award and is a feature of the placements, where the call-back days examine values in action.

The concept of structural and professional power is a core area of social work values. You need to develop a clear understanding of power imbalances in the service-user carer relationship and the appropriate use of statutory powers in an ethical framework – for example in ensuring the protection of vulnerable adults and children and other interventions (7SO004 & 7SO007).

This work will continue throughout the award in all the modules wherever and whenever it arises, particularly in the skills development days and placement modules.

**Maintaining Probit and Integrity**
High standards of personal and professional behaviour are expected by the public (on placement) and in the university – for example, academic misconduct is not merely an ‘academic matter’ but is linked directly to your honesty and integrity. We expect good levels of attendance, and for you to contact staff if you are unable to attend. As a student, you will also demonstrate this in the placements and although you are not ‘registered’ with the HCPC the standards expected from you are the same. In extreme circumstances of poor conduct you could be referred to the ‘suitability for practice panel, which is made up of a number of professionals from social work and other groups.

**Preventing and Challenging Discrimination**
There are a variety of ways in which you can engage with this aspect of social work practice at personal, professional and political levels. The course seeks to encourage you to determine the type of social worker you want to be and how best you can engage in such challenges.

A starting point for this is set out in sections one and two, and, as you are entering a profession which has a long tradition of working with marginalised groups, and which has sought to engage in strategies to challenge discrimination and disadvantage. Modules in this award draw upon that tradition, notably 7SO005 (critical perspectives for social workers). The module is supported by members of the West Midlands Social Work Action Network and this will identify ways in which social workers, acting together with service-users/carers can successfully challenge aspects of discrimination in service delivery.

The award and the University also has a range of policies and statements which are designed to enable you to work in an environment which is non-discriminatory and you, along with all staff members, are encouraged to challenge discriminatory practices at all levels.

**Reflecting on Own Practice**
You are introduced to critical reflection upon practice early in the course, through skills development days linked to 7SO005. You will begin this process with an engagement with your pre-course experience(s), utilising models of reflection drawn from the work of Schön; Boud, Keogh and Walker; and Jan Fook’s work. This forms the basis of the exercise prior to the first placement, where you have to reflect upon learning to date, locating this within the PCF. The exercise will also help in identifying your future learning needs for the first placement.
The aim of critical reflection is to improve practice on a personal or, agency level - something which will assist in raising standards of professional practice. This connects with other aspects of social work’s core values in encouraging you to develop and engaged practice, for example in addressing people’s socio-economic circumstances and preventing and challenging discrimination.

The use of small group work allows you to work together with other students and thereby assist each other’s development. You will also find this to be a feature of the skills development days, as you comment upon your own (and others’) practice).

Finally, you will carry this forward into the 70 and 100 days in assessed placements, where you will demonstrate their ability to critical reflect and engage in actual practice settings and demonstrate how you can effectively learn in and from practice.

**Working Inclusively**

During the selection process, you should already have been interviewed by a service-user/carer as well as someone who works for one of partner agencies and these core relationships will be reinforced throughout the course.

There is a strong service user involvement throughout the programme, from their involvement in recruitment and selection, award management (through Course Management Committee) and teaching and learning. This includes the skills’ development days and, where applicable, teaching sessions. You will come to understand the experiences of those who use services as we seek to break down any false dichotomies between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. The nature of the School’s Service User and Carer Hub group is referred to elsewhere in the guide as being central to the running of the programme. In addition, many of the contributors to the award from the staff team are also carers and these perspectives are brought to bear throughout their teaching, again recognising and valuing the existing diversity within the staff team in this area.

There will also be sessions where you will be ‘taught’ by service-users, carers, practising social workers and also other professional groups – bringing you into contact with a range of people who are involved in the programme.

The educational aims of the course are: This graduate entry level course is designed to equip social work students with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for qualification. Upon successful completion of the course students will have met published professional standards and be ready to begin their first year in practice. Successful students will be able to register with the HCPC as a qualified and registered social worker.

The MA (Social Work) is an academic award dependent upon successful completion of a Masters level dissertation, as well as demonstrating capable practice. There is an ‘exit award’ of PGDip, which allows successful students to qualify and register with the HCPC. Students, who take this route, will be eligible to complete a Masters’ dissertation in social work studies.

The specific educational aims of the course are to enable student to meet:

- The required levels of the Professional Capability Framework (PCF)

and, to develop

- a knowledge base to underpin capable and effective practice
- core social work values as identified by The College of Social Work
- the necessary intellectual skills of critical thinking, inquiry and problem solving as applied to academic learning and to practice ethical, research minded and critically engaged practice
- to develop a social work practice committed to social justice, which recognises structural inequality and which seeks to counter-act this.
These feed into and support the 5 course learning outcomes.

The course learning outcomes are:
1. Demonstrate capability in social work practice, as specified by the HCPC, Requirements for Social Work Training and the PCF ensuring that social work’s core values are central.
2. Be able to reflect critically on evidence and information, apply and synthesise this knowledge to social work processes and interventions to become an engaged social worker, committed to social justice.
3. Confidently and consistently apply intra-personal and inter-professional skills and knowledge when working with professions, agencies and service-users to promote best practice with people, who are often vulnerable.
4. Demonstrate a critical commitment to a service-user and carer centred approach in practice, focused upon social work’s core values.
5. Be able to engage in and demonstrate a critical analysis of the legal, political and social influences impacting on social work practice in a complex and changing environment, often characterised by ethical dilemmas or conflict of interests.

These will be achieved through the following learning activities:
- formal lectures
- workshops
- individual and group tutorials
- seminar group discussions
- formative feedback
- On-line electronic support for learning through WOLF (Wolverhampton On-Line Framework), which is the University’s virtual learning environment. WOLF provides you with a forum in which to engage in dialogue with other students and your lecturers
- formative assessment

Service-users and carers will contribute to the teaching across a range of modules.

Placements represent 50% of the course and students will be given the opportunity to practice skills and apply knowledge in a variety of settings.

During the placements students will be encouraged and enabled to reflect critically on their learning, and personal & professional development, synthesising academic and practice modules.

Through a variety of approaches to learning the course team seeks to develop students into capable, critical and analytical social work practitioners, who are able to respond in an engaged manner to the changing face of social work practice within the statutory, voluntary and independent sector settings.

Students at the University are entitled to experience the opportunities afforded by blended learning where traditional learning and teaching is enhanced with the use of a range of technological approaches, such as online and interactive learning resources in a virtual learning environment, WOLF (the Wolverhampton online learning framework).

Technological equipment and extensive access to high quality desk top computers across the University is provided, and the Library and Information Services (LIS), rated very highly by our students in the National Student Survey, are also supported by high level technology. This allows students to access a support for learning, on the campus; at home; and on placements.
All modules have a WOLF topic where module related information and learning resources are located. There is access to electronic versions of lecturer produced documents, as well as opportunities to engage in online dialogue with fellow students and lecturers.

The course draws on a range of interactive learning methods, some enhanced with interactive technology, which may include collaborative forums in WOLF.

A feature of the skills days will be the use of recording to enable students to develop a critical knowledge and awareness of how they present during simulated interventions – a key practice learning tool.

Finally, as part of your use of blended learning opportunities we will expect you to use the technology and support available to research your own sources of information in order to meet the learning outcomes of the course.

The course is approved by the following professional body/ies:
The HCPC is the Professional Statutory Regulatory Body which is responsible for the approval and re-approval of all social work programmes. The course will also seek endorsement from The College of Social Work.

The external requirements that relate to the professional nature of the degree are stated in the following documents:

- The College of Social Work
- The Professional Capability Framework

A total of 170 days of assessed practice in a placement, which will meet the current PCF standards, must be successfully completed, along with 30 ‘skills days’, which are integrated throughout the two years of the course.

The main reference points are:
The Professional Capability Framework (PCF) and the College of Social Work (tCSW) good practice standards:
  - [http://www.tcsw.org.uk/professional-capabilities-framework/](http://www.tcsw.org.uk/professional-capabilities-framework/)


**External Examiners**
Dr Liz Fern, Senior Lecturer, Liverpool Hope University

External Examiners play a key role in helping the University to ensure that our standards are comparable with other institutions in the sector and are consistent over the years and that our assessment processes and regulations treat all students fairly and equitably. It is not part of their remit to communicate with individual students (it is to be noted that students are given access to External Examiner reports in their entirety in line with the HEFCE Publication 06/45 and some students may have the opportunity to meet with externals if they visit placement areas or attend for planned meetings or assessment). Students are therefore reminded that they must not make direct contact with External Examiners in respect of their assessed work or performance. Any student issues should be relayed either directly to the Module or Course Leader.

**Academic Regulations**
This course follows the University’s academic regulations. A full version of these regulations can be found on the University web page for Policies and Regulations. These regulations govern your
course and will be binding on you. It is, therefore, important that you read and become familiar with them. If you have any questions regarding the regulations you should raise your query by logging an e:Vision Helpdesk call.

The maximum period over which an award may be studied is detailed in the regulations appropriate to your course. Typically these are:

The MA (social work) is a professional award, and as such, stands outside the usual regulations. It is a 2 year course, and, in exceptional circumstances only students can have up to 4 years to complete their study.

Other important exemptions are:

P.4.3 Students who do not pass Practice Modules have no automatic right to repeat once. (See D.3.13 – the general right to retake is withdrawn, unless exceptional circumstances apply).

P.6 To continue to the second year of the course, students must first have passed all first year modules.

P7.2. Exit awards. Students are eligible for a PGDip (SW) after 120 credits. This will allow them to become a registered and qualified social worker. They may return and complete a MA award.

The regulations are correct at the time of writing – the exemptions have all been approved.

There are additional requirements to be incorporated for this professional award:

Academic Misconduct.
Academic and professional conduct is inextricably linked, and consequently any proven academic misconduct is a potential breach of professional standards, which could result in the module and/or course learning outcomes not being met. The assessment board will normally exercise regulation point D3.12 for any students found guilty of academic misconduct, and will not support the right to reassessment or to retake the module: thus, the student will be deemed to have failed the course.

Attendance.
Students must have 100% attendance for practice placements and the integrated ‘skills days’ in addition, students are required to attend lectures.

Academic calendar.
The course will more closely follow a custom calendar, as opposed to the 3 x 9 week term post-graduate calendar. Crucially variations to the timings of board are being requested, primarily to meet regulatory requirements (see P7.2. and section 12 ‘dissertation’). The Boards would broadly follow those which are already in existence for social work.

The above maximum registration periods do not include time away from study approved under the Leave of Absence procedure.

Please be aware that to be eligible to continue on your course you must pass at least one module in your first year of study.

As a professional award, you must pass all of the modules in the first year to progress to the second year of study. By doing this you will have fulfilled the requirements of the PCF – see exemptions listed earlier.
Course Information
The Course Structure is included later in the document.

Course Assessment Strategy

The modules will be assessed through a combination of examination, presentations, essays and the application of learning to case studies. Full details of all the assessment tasks will be provided by the module leader and posted on WOLF (an on-line portal for learning & teaching materials).

As a graduate you will have developed study skills and you will need to apply these at Master’s level. We expect a high level of reading to be undertaken throughout the whole of the course and of particular importance at this level is the use of up-to-date peer reviewed journal material. Reading lists and journals will be posted on WOLF and staff will refer you to suitable articles during lectures. We want you to develop your critical thinking and analysis and so discussion and questioning are a vital aspect of the course. To do this effectively you will need to ensure you are fully prepared for the sessions and all of this will feed into the work you need to undertake to successfully complete your assessed tasks – for which, of course, guidance and support (commensurate with M level study) will be provided.

All the dates for handing in the assessed work will be confirmed by module leaders. A full calendar will be provided at the beginning of the course.

A core aim is to develop a range of transferable skills through a range of learning, teaching and assessment formats employed throughout the course to engage students with both practice and theoretical perspectives. The assessment strategy used includes assignments, reports, presentation summaries and a Practice Educator’s report which is based upon students’ work on placement and gives an account of skills, knowledge and values in practice.

Service user and Carer involvement
An overarching commitment to service user and carer involvement is embedded throughout the curriculum. This is supported in key modules in each year of study by service-users and carers drawn from the SHaW SUC Hub-group, which has proved to be a highly successful forum. As indicated in earlier sections the intention is that service-users and carers will be involved in the recruitment and selection for the programme; to contribute to learning and teaching activities (taught module and themed workshops); to engage with students around formative assessments in skills days and to be involved in assessing the students appraisals of their own learning against the PCF in ‘readiness for practice’.

Knowledge & values through academic modules:
The academic modules are assessed primarily through a combination of student presentations and written pieces – usually in essay form. These will develop core practice skills in written and verbal communication as well as being a sound vehicle to assess analysis and synthesis at M level in preparation for the dissertation. The academic modules will also enable students to demonstrate their theoretical understanding and analysis of social work’s core values.

Skills and the application of knowledge and values in practice
Good Practice Placements are the core of social work education. Students will have the opportunity to undertake 170 days of assessed practice in two placements of 70 and 100 days.

The placement modules will be assessed through two components. The first is a Practice Educator’s report based upon how the student has developed through their practice. This will be supplemented by direct observations of practice and students reflections – including service-user feedback (where appropriate). The second component will be an integrated case study where the student will draw upon a case they have worked and demonstrate an informed and critical understanding through analysis of the necessary skills, knowledge and values, thereby synthesising knowledge form the taught modules.
Dissertation
The dissertation will be broadly related to a field of practice. It may be possible (and would certainly be desirable as a longer term aim) to identify placements, which could have a research component.

The dissertation module will be supported in a number of ways. First there will be a series of workshops which introduce key social science methodologies for social work, alongside research ethics. At the conclusion of these workshops students must produce a short literature review and an outline research place to enable the allocation of a dissertation supervisor. The aspiration is that all students will have a supervisor with expertise in the area of study and/or the chosen methodology.

The dissertation supervisor will be responsible for making contact with the student prior to the second placement and will support them throughout all the phases of the research. There will also be additional dissertation workshops at the beginning of Semester 1 in Year 2.

The structure of the award should allow most students to complete their dissertation within 2 academic years, in readiness for the July Examination Board. Some students, however, may not be in a position to complete their dissertation until either the September or November of the following academic year.

Support for Learning
Students and their learning will be supported through a variety of ways:

Student Advisors
The School of Health and Wellbeing has two student advisors to offer help and advice on a range of issues that may affect studies. This can be accessed by telephone and e-mail or the website http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=9182.

Tutorial Support
- Each student will be allocated a personal tutor – who will maintain an overview of their progress throughout the course.
- A tutor will be allocated from within the university to enhance experiential learning and reflection and to ‘troubleshoot’ any difficulties on the placement.
- Each student will be allocated a qualified practice teacher during placements.
- Each student has an entitlement to academic support on taught modules from the module team– this may be face-to-face or through e-mail.

Other support
- Counselling offers a confidential space in which students can talk to a counsellor about their concerns. Personal appointments are available on all campuses; there is a drop-in service every weekday at City Campus and online counselling is available via WOLF.
- The student financial support unit can help students with advice on funds available to students.
- The student enabling service centre provides a comprehensive range of support for D/deaf, Dyslexic and Disabled students including; screenings and assessments, guidance on gaining financial support, various support services and enabling technologies.
- The inter-faith Centre is also available to those requiring spiritual guidance and support.
Distinctive Features of the Course

This course leads to an academic award and a qualification as a social worker. With this students are eligible to register with the HCPC and to practise as a qualified and registered social worker.

The social work course is developed around national requirements, whilst incorporating a cross-national perspective for some modules. The course at the University of Wolverhampton has some excellent features including:

- Opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning
- Approved placement opportunities across a range of settings.
- Opportunities to hear visiting lecturers from Germany, France and Sweden and the Netherlands. It may be possible for students to visit EU countries and gain experience as 'value added'.
- There is a commitment to International Social Work on the award and staff members have interests and publications in this area.

There is a strong staff and service-user interest in learning disability and this is embedded into academic modules and workshops.

Ethical and engaged practice is a core element of the award, which is enhanced by skills days relating to values and critical reflection. Some of the staff team have relevant publications in this area and are also members of the Social Work Action Network, an organisation of social workers committed to equality and social justice.

Core members of staff on the course have a strong record of social work publications and/or conference presentations across a range of areas of interest.

There are also excellent campus facilities (catering, libraries and well equipped social learning spaces) which contribute to an enjoyable learning experience.

Academic Misconduct

We take pride in the academic integrity of our staff and students but when academic misconduct is suspected the University will take action. The University considers seriously all acts of academic misconduct, which by definition are dishonest and in direct opposition to the values of a learning community. If not challenged, academic misconduct will ultimately devalue our academic standards and undermines the honest efforts on the part of our staff and students.

Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, collusion and cheating and may be deliberate or unintentional. Whatever form it takes, it will be thoroughly investigated and penalties will be applied if proven.

Support for Students

The University and the Students’ Union believe that many incidents of academic misconduct can be avoided by increasing students’ knowledge and skill.

A variety of support mechanisms are in place to help students succeed and avoid academic misconduct:

- Visit the Learning Centre or our study skills support website at [www.wlv.ac.uk/skills](http://www.wlv.ac.uk/skills). See the section on tackling academic misconduct.
- Download the Students' Union guide to Avoiding Academic Misconduct ("Write Right") - available from the [Student’s Union website](http://www.wlv.ac.uk/skills).
- Book a Skype appointment with study skills adviser or join the online chat service [ASSIST](http://www.wlv.ac.uk/skills) - through the Learning Centre “Skills for Learning” website.
Contact your personal tutor or module leader.

Remember – there is help available if you need it.

Defining Academic Misconduct

Cheating
Cheating is defined as any attempt to gain unfair advantage in an assessment by dishonest means, and includes, for example, all breaches of examination room rules, impersonating another student, falsifying data, and obtaining an examination paper in advance of its authorised release. Cheating attracts the University’s most severe penalties.

Other common examples of cheating would include –

- Being in possession of “revision notes” during an examination
- The purchase or commission of assignments from others
- Theft of other students’ work
- Prohibited communication during an examination

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else’s work and passing it off as your own. This includes incorporating either unattributed direct quotation(s) or substantial paraphrasing from the work of another/others. It is important to cite all sources whose work has been drawn on and reference them fully in accordance with the referencing standard used in each academic school.

The most common forms of plagiarism are –

- Cut or copied and pasted materials from websites
- Copying the work of another student (past or present) including essays available through “essay bank” websites – or other data.
- Copying material from a text book or journal

When you’re using other people’s work or ideas it is important to engage with their work critically. You can quote, paraphrase, summarise or critically review – but you must always provide appropriate references.

Collusion
Collusion is when two or more people combine to produce a piece of work for assessment that is passed off as the work of one student alone. The work may be so alike in content, wording and structure that the similarity goes beyond what might have been coincidence. For example – where one student has copied the work of another, or where a joint effort has taken place in producing what should have been an individual effort.

Collusion should not be confused with the normal situation in which students learn from one another, sharing ideas and group work to complete assignments (where this is specifically authorised).

Penalties
Where an offence is admitted, or a panel decides that cheating, plagiarism or collusion has occurred, a penalty will be imposed. There is a cumulative range of penalties which will be applied to any continuous period of registration for study with the University. The severity of the penalty will vary according to the nature of the offence and the number of previous offences. Penalties range from failure of the assignment under investigation to exclusion from the University.

Full details about the University’s policy on Academic Misconduct and regulations and procedures for the investigation of academic misconduct are available on the Conduct and Appeals website.
Important note
For students on the MA Social Work, the assessment board will normally exercise regulation point D3.12 for any students found guilty of academic misconduct, and will not support the right to reassessment or to retake the module: thus, the student will be deemed to have failed the course.

The Course Structure

### Year One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
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| **Core**   | Placement One (70 days) 7SO 002
This begins with the completion of a student led PCF report, which incorporates learning from skills days I Semester 1. | 20 credits |
| Core       | Theories and Methods for Social Work Practice 7SO 001 | 20 credits |
| Core       | Law for Social Workers 7SO 004 | 20 credits |
| Core       | Critical Perspectives for Social Work 7SO 005 | 20 credits |
| Core       | Social Work with Adults, Children, Families and Carers. 7SO 007 | 20 credits |

### Year Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core</strong></td>
<td>MA Dissertation 7SO 025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Placement Two (100days) 7SO003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The course is designed to enable students to establish a knowledge base for practice, grounded in core values, before the first placement. The knowledge base is applied and assessed during the first placement and is further developed in the second year of study during the second placement and dissertation. Placements are supported by a series of planned and themed workshops.

Skills development days – Year 1
There will be 30 skills days which will be integrated throughout the course. During the four modules in Semester 1 of your first year, there will be 4 skills days integrated into the teaching of each module (16 in total). These will be augmented with other days throughout the year focusing upon aspects of practice. So, by the end of the first year you should have completed 20 skills days, which will have covered these areas:
- Learning from practice and study
- Critical reflective practice
- Court skills
- Interviewing & communication skills
- Preparing for placement skills.
The bulk of the skills development days will be embedded into the four modules you will study, but will focus explicitly upon ‘skills’. In the critical thinking module, you will be introduced to skills in critical reflection – covering both theory and the application of this whereby you will engage in critical and ethical reflections of work you have undertaken before you joined the course. In the Theories and methods module there will be skills development days set aside where you will be able to practice some of the techniques and methods you have been introduced to. During the law module, we hope to be able to introduce you to court work and the experience of operating in a court setting, for example, giving short pieces of evidence under cross examination. During the Social Work with Adults, Children, Families and Carers module you will be encouraged to develop your communications skills with specific service user groups.

The skills days will include service-user/carer and practitioner inputs, so that you begin to develop an awareness of the social work role in relation to service user groups. During these days you be given invaluable feedback about how your skills are developing, which will enable you to complete your ‘readiness to practice’ document.

Skills development and readiness to practice
The PCF states that prior to starting the first placement students should meet criteria set out for that level – these can be found at http://www.tcsw.org.uk/professional-capabilities-framework/. During the first semester you will be recording where you are in relation to developing your capabilities in this area. The taught modules and skills days will enable you to meet the readiness to practice criteria. You will write a critical reflection of what you have learned during your previous experience and the first semester and how this prepares you for practice through meeting the PCF criteria. We will give you full guidance on how you should do this at the beginning of the course, and it is intended to be an activity which allows you to begin your engagement with the PCF and professional practice from the very onset of the course, and which will feed into your first placement.

It will be particularly important to record your learning from the 16 skills days which are embedded into the semester 1 teaching, and this aspect of reflective learning will be vital in your preparation for the placement.

Skills development days, Year 2.
At the beginning of your second year there will be a series of eight skills days which will be organised into a ‘live’ case study, which will enable you to develop further your skills in communication, assessment and interventions. These days will also include a court room simulation exercise, as well as a full debrief and verbal formative assessment – which can inform your preparation for the 100 day placement.

At the end of the 100 day placement you will complete your skills days with two sessions which will prepare you for the transition to a newly qualified social worker and the Assessed and Supported year in Employment.

Other features of the award
The placements will be supported by a short series of practice/placement induction sessions and workshops. The course team will encourage and enable students to make links between all of the modules and will draw upon material already studied to reinforce the holistic nature of the award.

The role of service users and carers is an important feature of the award, both in teaching sessions and supporting the skills days. The taught modules will feature sessions covering aspects of disability; mental health; dementia; inter-professional working; international perspectives and the role of understanding and applying human growth and development in practice. To develop core aim 5, the teaching of ethics, anti-oppressive practice and social work’s core values will be embedded in both learning, teaching and assessed throughout the award. The module Critical Perspectives for Social Workers provides much of the core theoretical material for this.
integrated nature of the assessment of core areas for practice will not only feature in the Placement Modules but also the other taught modules.

A key feature of the Social Work with Adults, Children, Families and Carers module will be inter-professional working. Examples could include dementia care; learning disability; child protection since these are all areas in the School of Health and Wellbeing which reflect a multi-disciplinary and inter-professional approach.

**University Academic Calendar**
The course will more closely follow a **custom** calendar, as opposed to the 3 x 9 week term post-graduate calendar.
Where to get help with your course

Student Support
If you encounter any issues (personal or academic) the following diagram directs you to the appropriate department or staff member.

Administration queries:
enrolment
extensions
extenuating circumstances
Leave of Absence
Course transfer, etc
eVision helpdesk or your Student Centre

Academic and Course related queries
Personal Tutor
Course Leader
Head of Department
(by email)

Module related queries
Module guide (on WOLF)
Module Leader
or Tutor

Support for Study Skills
W: www.wlv.ac.ukskills
E: skills@wlv.ac.uk
T: 01902 32(2385)

Who to Contact for help when you are studying on campus

IT Problems
W: www.wlv.ac.uk/ITServices
T: 01902 32(2000)

Financial advice
W: www.wlv.ac.uk/moneymatters
E: money4students@wlv.ac.uk
T: 01902 32(1070)

Careers & Employment Centre
W: www.wlv.ac.uk/careers
E: careers@wlv.ac.uk
T: 01902 32(1414)

Special Needs (Students with disabilities)
Special Needs Tutor
or
Student Enabling Centre
W: www.wlv.ac.uk/sec
E: sec@wlv.ac.uk
T: 01902 32(1074)

Personal Issues
Personal Tutor (see eVision for details)
University Counselling Service
W: www.wlv.ac.uk/counselling
E: counsellingservices@wlv.ac.uk
T: 01902 32(2572)

General queries
eVision helpdesk
or your Student Centre

Independent academic, financial, international and housing advice
Students’ Union Advice and Support Centre
W: www.wolvesunion.org/advice
E: advice.wolvesunion@wlv.ac.uk
T: 01902 32(2038)
Extensions, Extenuating Circumstances and Leave of Absence

The University wants all students to do their best. You are expected to take responsibility for your own learning and we know students perform best if they participate in all activities associated with their modules.

Very occasionally something may happen suddenly which is beyond your control and this will prevent you from attending an examination (or other test) or completing an assessment by the due date. Common reasons for needing additional help are poor health or a death in the family – although other reasons may apply.

**Extensions** - for some assessments there may be the option to apply for a short term (maximum 7 days) extension if you are experiencing difficulties in completing your work on time. You should apply for the extension via your e:Vision account on or before your assessment date and provide supporting evidence to your Student Centre. On receipt of the evidence your claim will be assessed and you will be notified by e-mail if your extension has been approved and your revised submission date. Further details can be found [here](#).

**Extenuating Circumstances** – claims for extenuating circumstances are also submitted via your e: Vision account on or before your assessment date and again evidence to support your claim must be provided to your Student Centre. Claims for Extenuating Circumstances tend to be for more serious matters and if your claim is accepted then it enables you to take the assessment at the next available opportunity without penalty. Further details can be found [here](#). If you have any queries regarding either of these processes then please log a call on the e:Vision helpdesk.

**Leave of Absence** - in more extreme cases of potential prolonged absence you might consider a temporary leave of absence. Students may temporarily suspend their studies a semester at a time (and up to a maximum of four semesters). You can apply for a Leave of Absence via e:Vision but we would strongly recommend that you get advice from your Personal Tutor, your Student Centre or the Students' Union, particularly regarding the financial implications, before taking this step.

**Health & Safety issues**

Specific procedures relating to your course will be explained to you during induction and at appropriate points throughout the course. The University can accept no responsibility for any injury sustained through a student's negligence, misuse of equipment or disregard of instructions. You must observe all instructions regarding accident and fire prevention. All accidents must be reported immediately to a member of staff and will be recorded on an accident report form.

If you have a medical or other condition which may endanger yourself or others in a particular situation you must inform the member of staff present, and also discuss the condition beforehand with the Special Needs Tutor.

Fire notices, exits and assembly points are posted in all teaching rooms and around the buildings. Procedures to be observed when the alarm sounds are to leave as quickly as possible in a quiet and orderly manner and to assemble at the appropriate point. Do not attempt to re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so. You may need to show your identity card on entry to the building so ensure you have it with you at all times.

**Health and Wellbeing whilst using your computer**

As a student you will be using a computer for the majority of your study. The guidelines below are to promote good health and wellbeing in relation to your computer use.

**Set-up and space**

Ensure you have a comfortable working area where you can have adequate space for your keyboard, mouse, monitor or laptop/mobile device and that you are in a comfortable seated position. Try to prevent eye strain by ensuring you have good lighting, adjusting your monitor to
prevent glare and by cleaning your monitor regularly. If you are using a laptop for any extended length of time try to use an external mouse to prevent continued use of a laptop mouse pad which can cause strain injuries.

**Taking a break**

You should take regular breaks away from the screen. One to two minutes away every thirty minutes can be most effective, with regular longer breaks every couple of hours. Physically moving away from the screen and working area will also allow for important stretching and increasing circulation as well as reducing eye strain from looking at the screen.

**Progression for Further Study**

**Employment**

The course enables successful students to begin practice as a qualified and registered social worker.

The English qualification is accepted throughout the UK, the EU and is recognised Internationally.

**Further training and education opportunities**

A graduates may return to the University of Wolverhampton (or any HEI) to undertake courses as part of their continuing professional development, which is a requirement to maintain social work registration with the HCPC. A revised framework for Continuing Professional Development and Post-Qualifying Awards is being developed by the College of Social Work.

In addition the university also runs Professional Doctorates, as well as traditional PhDs, and these are available to social workers who graduate from this award with the full MA.

It is a condition of continuing HCPC registration that qualified and registered social workers maintain a record of CPD.

**Alumni**

*We’re proud of your success. Be proud of your connection with us.*

Once you complete your studies you will continue to be part of the University of Wolverhampton academic community as one of our ever growing alumni community. The WLV Alumni Association is a university-wide association bringing together Wolverhampton graduates.

For further information please visit our [Alumni](#) website.