Programme Specification for BA (Hons) Social Work

This document applies to Academic Year 2023/24 onwards

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	Social Work England (SWE)
4.	Final award or awards	BA (Hons)
5.	Programme title	Social Work
6.	Pathways available	Single
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	On campus delivery of theoretical and skills-based work with some blended learning via Blackboard. All modules delivered on the sites of the University of Worcester. Full-time block placements are facilitated by statutory and non-statutory placement providers.
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Full time- 3 years. Attendance during skills days and placement weeks is mandatory, and students are expected to complete 35 hours a week, to meet education and training standards for social work.
9.	UCAS Code	L500
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	QAA (2019) Subject benchmark for Social Work SWE (2019) Professional Standards BASW (2017) Professional Capabilities Framework
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Approved June 2023

12.   Educational aims of the programme

The Honours degree programme in Social Work is accredited by Social Work England (SWE) and aims to enable students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue a career in social work. This dynamic and contemporary programme, which incorporates theoretical and practical elements has been developed to support students to achieve the threshold standards for a professional programme in social work. These standards are required by Social Work England (SWE, 2019), the Quality Assurance Agency's benchmark statements for social work (QAA, 2019), and the Professional Capabilities Framework for Social work (BASW, 2016). The programme has transitional approval with Social Work England and complies with Social Work England's Education and Training standards (SWE, 2019)

Social Work graduates can go on to pursue careers as Registered Social Workers working with adults, children and families in a range of social work roles. These roles could involve, working with older adults, people with a physical or learning disability or mental health need, working with children in care, child protection, young offenders or adoption and fostering. Alternatively, graduates could choose alternative career paths working in relevant fields such as education, family support, community development, or working with young people in a range of settings.

The educational aims of the programme are to:

1. Develop social workers who are ready for professional practice and can successfully transition into employment within a dynamic, increasingly complex social welfare context.
2. Ensure that students develop the knowledge, skills and values required to meet the needs of people with lived experience of social care services.
3. Provide opportunities for students to achieve the SWE Professional Standards (2019) for social workers and the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework at End of Final Placement level, (2018) leading to eligibility to apply to join the social worker register with SWE.
4. Ensure the public are safeguarded through the development of responsible, accountable, and autonomous professionals, who work within the limitations and responsibilities of the legal and policy framework and who practice according to the SWE Professional Standards (2019) and the BASW Code of Ethics (2021).
5. Enable students to become reflective, adaptable practitioners who recognise the role of the professional social worker in managing the competing rights and needs of individuals and groups, and who demonstrate commitment to anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice principles.
6. Provide students with knowledge and skills to work effectively within an inter-disciplinary context and within integrated social welfare systems, collaborating with other health and social care professionals and services.
7. Promote partnership working with people with lived experiences of social care services within professional social work practice and within the design, planning, delivery and evaluation of the degree programme.
8. Develop critically reflective practitioners, with the ability to apply contemporary knowledge, theory and research evidence to underpin professional practice.
9. Encourage the development of emotionally intelligent and resilient practitioners to support effective transition into contemporary social welfare organisations.
10. Enable students to develop into social work practitioners who are committed to lifelong learning and continuing professional development.

13.   Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Table 1 knowledge and understanding outcomes for module code/s

Knowledge and Understanding		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	**Module Code/s**
1	Demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of social work practice though comprehensive application of core theories, legislation, policy and research	SOWK3103 SOWK3104
2	Examine and relate current and historical ethical and legal frameworks to social work practice	SOWK3102 SOWK3103 SOWK3104
3	Identify, assess and intervene appropriately to safeguarding concerns	SOWK3102 SOWK3103 SOWK3104
4	Reflect on the complexity of social work practice within its academic context	SOWK3102 SOWK3104 SOWK3105
5	Critically reflect on personal and professional ethics and values with the view to promoting anti oppressive practice	SOWK3103 SOWK3104 SOWK3105

Knowledge and Understanding		
6	Synthesise and apply knowledge to the experience of people with lived experience in social work in order to best promote social justice	SOWK3102

Table 2 cognitive and intellectual skills outcomes for module code/s

Cognitive and Intellectual skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	**Module Code/s**
7	Apply critical thinking and analysis skills to develop and sustain social work practice decisions.	SOWK3102 SOWK3103 SOWK3104
8.	Critically evaluate sources of evidence to question ideas generate hypotheses and support arguments	SOWK3102 SOWK3104 SOWK3105
9	Demonstrate independence of thought in identifying, evaluating, and synthesising methods of knowledge creation.	SOWK3102 SOWK3104
10	Use analytical and problem-solving skills to promote individual and shared decision-making skills with others	SOWK3103 SOWK3104 SOWK3105
11	Integrate critical reflective and reflexive skills to support the ongoing development of self and others	SOWK3103 SOWK3104 SOWK3105
12	Research and develop practical, evidence-informed initiatives that support social work practice across a range of contexts	SOWK3102 SOWK3104 SOWK3105

Table 3 skills and capabilities related to employment outcomes for module code/s

Skills and capabilities related to employability		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	**Module Code/s**
13	Demonstrate professional practice underpinned by SWE professional standards (2019) and the requirements of the PCF (BASW, 2018)	SOWK3103
14	Demonstrate abilities to work within agency contexts and processes, managing competing demands effectively and accountably	SOWK3103 SOWK3105
15	Demonstrate digital capabilities using a range of digital platforms and technology	SOWK3103
16	Promote effective partnership working with people with lived experience of social welfare services and within inter-disciplinary contexts	SOWK3102 SOWK3103 SOWK3104

Skills and capabilities related to employability		
17	Evidence leadership, self-direction, professional autonomy and team-working skills within practice contexts.	SOWK3102 SOWK3104 SOWK3105

Table 4 transferable/key skills outcomes for module code/s

Transferable/key skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	**Module Code/s**
18	Take responsibility for continuing professional development underpinned by a commitment to lifelong learning	SOWK3103 SOWK3105
19	Develop strategies for sustaining personal and professional resilience within diverse practice contexts	SOWK3103 SOWK3105
20	Communicate effectively through a range of media and with people who have a range of different communication needs	SOWK3103 SOWK3104 SOWK3105
21	Work effectively with others, eliciting, providing, and responding appropriately to feedback to support and sustain learning at an individual and agency level	SOWK3103
22	Demonstrate a commitment to anti discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice, upholding principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion through interaction with others	SOWK3103 SOWK3104 SOWK3105

Learning, teaching and assessment

The social work degree programme acknowledges that social work is a practice-based, professional, and academic discipline and therefore the integration of theory and practice are central to all aspects of the curriculum. Students who successfully complete the programme will be eligible to apply to register with Social Work England as social workers and contribute to the ongoing development of professional social work practice. The programme has a particular emphasis on supporting students' personal and professional development, building emotional resilience and self-care skills alongside practice focused and problem-solving skills to prepare students for the transition to qualified practice as a social worker.

The programme team will use a range of student centred, traditional, and innovative learning and teaching approaches, in both the academic modules and practice placements, seeking to recognise the diversity in learning styles amongst students. Drawing on contemporary practice literature and research, the programme team seek to integrate evidence informed practice principles across the curriculum. The design and delivery of the course programme has been developed to reflect key principles of equality, diversity and inclusion to support best practice.

The programme will include both face-to-face, classroom-based (synchronous) teaching and learning and self- directed (asynchronous) teaching and learning completed in by the student in their time. There will also be some use of the virtual classroom environment. Individual and small group tutorials will usually be arranged online as this has proven to be convenient and popular with students. The team will collect feedback regularly from students on the approaches used and lecturers will reflect on teaching practice to accommodate the needs and strengths of the student cohort.

The University of Worcester has an established reputation in partnership working through planning, teaching, assessment, consultancy, and evaluation with people with lived experience of social care services and of providing care for others through the IMPACT group. The IMPACT group brings together people with diverse experiences of using health and social care services - who have consolidated their presence across teaching and learning, recruitment, research, and consultancy within the school. Building on this firm foundation and commitment, the IMPACT group has played a central role in the design and development of the BA (Hons) Social Work. Students and staff will have the opportunity to learn from the experience, skills, and knowledge of people with lived experience throughout the programme.

In addition, the programme team co-operate with social work practitioners, educators, and managers from our partner agencies within the statutory and independent social work sector and are active members of the West Midland Social Work Teaching Partnership, to ensure that teaching and practice within the programme remains relevant, contemporary, and responsive to the changing professional context.

Teaching

The University places emphasis on enabling students to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from Student Services and Library Services, and also the Personal Academic Tutoring system enables students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful.

The programme team utilise a range of learning and teaching strategies:

➢ Teaching takes place through formal lectures, seminars, and workshops, both classroom-based and via the virtual classroom. Lectures include class-based activities and discussions alongside formal teaching sessions to support students' active participation in learning. Teaching is supported by contributions from a range of stakeholders including people with lived experience of services and of caring roles, current practitioners, and managers across the welfare arena.
➢ Academic skills teaching supports students to develop key skills in academic writing, planning and structuring assessments, selection of sources and referencing, critical reflection and analysis, models of reflection as well as introducing a range of digital skills for both academic and professional practice. Lecturers provide feedback to students verbally or in writing on all formative, summative and practice-based assessments, while students are expected to participate in peer feedback processes to support mutual learning at individual and group level.
➢ The teaching team use a range of learning activities to support students' active participation and development, including case studies, directed and independent study, group work tasks, problem and enquiry-based learning, student-led discussions and debates, role-play and skills simulation and engaging with on-line learning activities. Use of the online learning environment also supports students to engage with core learning and points students to supplementary learning materials - including contemporary journal articles, multimedia resources, use of online forums and other e-learning strategies.
➢ Interactive skills workshops focused on the development of skills for social work practice including use of role play, video-recordings, self and peer assessment and service user /carer and practitioner feedback of skills simulations. The university provides both a simulated home environment, Ability House, and a mock court room on City Campus to support the development of students' practice skills in interviewing and presenting professional assessments within a role play setting.

- Students receive regular tutorial support from their Personal Academic tutor, meeting three times each year to review progress. Additional tutorial support is provided by Module Leaders, including the provision of assessment tutorials to prepare for assessment submission.
- Students are also required in their first year of study to complete a period (2/3 days) shadowing a registered social worker as part of the SOWK1103 Skills Development module.
- Students undertake 2 practice placements, one in in year 2 & one in year 3, providing opportunities for students to integrate their academic learning within contemporary practice contexts. During placement, students have protected learning time and are supported by a Practice Educator who oversees their practice.
- Students with additional learning needs are supported both in practice and academic environments by a Disability Support Lecturer and their Personal Academic Tutor.
- The dissertation allows students to demonstrate independent learning and research skills and offers an opportunity to critically appraise the evidence base of an aspect of professional practice relevant to social work. Students are supported by an individual supervisor throughout their dissertation.

Contact time

In a typical week, students will have between 12 -15 contact hours of teaching. The precise hours will vary each semester and by academic level of study. In the final year students will normally have slightly less contact time to do more independent study. Typically contact time will be structured around:

- 8 hours of face-to-face campus-based lectures
- 5 hours of face-to-face, campus bases seminars, group-work and simulation activities
- 2 hours of lecturer-led (synchronous) virtual teaching and learning activity

In years 2 and 3, students also undertake practice placements, which they are required to attend on a full time (35 hours a week) basis. In year 2, this takes place in semester 2 for 70 days. In year 3, this takes place across both semesters for 100 days.

Independent self-study

In addition to the contact time, students are expected to undertake around 22 hours of personal self-study per week. Typically, this will involve completing online activities, reading journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library and online, preparing coursework assignments and presentations, and preparing for examinations.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including The Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources

Teaching staff

Students will receive teaching from a team whose expertise and knowledge are matched closely to the content of the modules on the course. All of the teaching team currently retain their registration as social workers with Social Work England. The team includes academics with a wide range of practice expertise from a range of practice contexts in the statutory and voluntary sectors including safeguarding, older adults practice, children and families practice, mental health, youth justice, adoption and fostering, substance use, learning disabilities as well as experience of managerial and strategic development roles. The programme is also supported through the participation of experienced practitioners from our partner social work agencies who and people with lived experience of services and as carers from the University IMPACT group.

A range of contemporary social work research and development activity informs the team's teaching. In addition, 90 per cent of course lecturers are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy and hold a higher education teaching qualification. Further details about the staff can be found by visiting our staff profiles.

Assessment
The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formal or 'summative' assessments, which are graded and count towards the overall module grade.

Assessment methods include written essays and reports, patchwork assessments, group and individual presentations, open book examination, assessed skills simulations, reflective accounts, placement portfolio and assessments of direct practice and a Dissertation. A typical formal summative assessment pattern for each year of the course is:

Year 1 (Level 4): 1 x group presentation; 3 x essays; 1 x poster presentation; 1 x exam; 1 x patchwork assessment; 1 x assessed skills simulation; 1 x skills portfolio

Year 2 (Level 5): 2 x individual presentation; 1 x research report; 1 x case study assessment report; 1 x practice portfolio, 3 x direct observations of practice; 2 reflective practice records.

Year 3 (Level 6): 1 x dissertation; 1 x essay; 1 x individual presentation; 1 x practice portfolio; 3 x direct observations of practice; 3 critical practice records.

Students will receive feedback on practice assessments and on formal assessments undertaken by coursework. Feedback is intended to support learning and students are encouraged to discuss it with personal academic tutors and module tutors as appropriate. Students are provided with feedback on formal course work assessments within 20 working days of submission.

14.   Assessment strategy

The programme is designed in line with the University's Assessment Policy to meet the assessment requirements of Social Work England's (SWE) Qualifying Education and Training Standards (2021). The assessment strategies across the programme will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate that they have met SWE Professional Standards (2019) and to demonstrate professional capability in line with the qualifying threshold standard of the Professional Capabilities Framework for social work (BASW, 2018). Assessment in this context is both assessment of theoretical learning, as well as the demonstration by students of safe, effective standards of practice. The assessment strategies within the programme have been developed with and will be reviewed in consultation with our partners from the IMPACT group of people with lived experience, and from key employer partners.

Across the programme, a wide variety of assessment methods, both formative and summative are used. Summative assessment strategies are constructively aligned to module learning outcomes and to the relevant level of academic study. Assessments are designed to encourage student creativity and autonomy, with methods including individual and group presentations, poster presentations, applied case study assessment, research reports, patchwork assessments and reflective logs, learning portfolios and assessed simulations, alongside written reports, essays and one multiple choice exam paper.

The programme assessment strategy acknowledges the learning journey of the student, promoting their progression from dependence to autonomy, culminating in the completion of an independently designed literature review, empirical research study or project around a professional practice issue for social work. Level 4 modules introduce and assess student's foundation knowledge, values, and skills for social work practice, while level 5 supports the development of critical analysis and questioning skills in relation to the legal and policy framework, and the integration of theories and methods of intervention within practice, before students' transition into their first assessed period of practice. Level 6 modules assess students' ability to integrate and synthesise critical analysis skills within a range of contemporary practice contexts, including organisational theory, and to critically reflect on their learning in relation to their own practice during their final placement.

Academic assessment facilitates the integration of theory within professional practice, encouraging students to draw on their practice learning experiences or relate to contemporary practice research in a chosen field. The assessment strategy is designed to build the knowledge, skills, and underpinning values of the social work profession, while encouraging the development of key graduate attributes such as a strong sense of social justice and responsibility, critical thinking, decision making and problem-solving skills, key digital and communication capabilities, the ability to work effectively with others and skills and values to sustain resilience throughout their careers.

Formal assessment guidance is provided for all assessment activities whether formative or summative. For summative assessments a comprehensive assignment brief is included in the module outline and this includes explicit assessment criteria clearly indicating what students need to do to complete the assessment successfully. In addition, all module leaders offer assessment tutorials to students as part of the teaching and learning strategy. Marking criteria are benchmarked to UW Generic Grade Descriptors.

Formative Assessment
Formative assessment is an important feature across the programme and the teaching team believes it has a fundamental role to play in student learning and development. Students are strongly advised to engage with all formative assessment in order that they receive regular feedback on their progress, to allow them to self-assess their achievement. Students will receive formative feedback from several sources including teaching staff, their academic tutor, visiting lecturers and practitioners, service user and carer colleagues from IMPACT and from other students. Students will meet with their personal academic tutors up to four times each year to review their learning from their formative and summative feedback.
All level 4 students complete a written formative assessment within 6 weeks of beginning the course and receive feedback from their Personal Academic Tutor to help them prepare for their subsequent summative assessments in Semester 1. Other formative assessments may include class quizzes and weekly learning reviews with peer assessment and feedback; opportunities for review of assessment exemplars; use of Turnitin software to support development of academic and referencing skills; skills simulation and feedback from other students and from service users and carer colleagues from IMPACT; opportunities to rehearse presentation skills informally in small groups and receive peer assessment; mock examinations and class tests; opportunities for debates and larger group discussion and peer evaluation; personal reflection and use of supervision in placements and with academic tutors.

Throughout the programme students are supported to maintain a formative reflective journal which is shared as part of the personal academic tutoring system, and to formally review their progress, including performance within formative and summative assessments with their personal academic tutors.

Assessment of Professional Practice

Assessment of Professional Practice commences with the "Readiness to Practice" assessment contained within the Skills Development module at level 4 and continues through the 2 practice placements (70 days at level 5 and 100 days at level 6). People with lived experience are involved in the assessment of practice. An IMPACT member assesses student's "readiness for practice" in Level 4 within a simulated home visit while feedback from people with lived experience is included in the student's portfolio at all 3 levels

As with academic learning, assessment of professional practice is structured to be incremental and is assessed at the 3 threshold levels identified in the Professional Capabilities Framework. (BASW, 2018) This enables the students to build towards the point where they can be assessed as having met the required standard to qualify at level 6. Assessment of professional practice is undertaken based on a portfolio of evidence, which in the case of the Readiness to Practice module will include feedback from an assessed role play activity, a supervision activity, a shadowing activity, a biographical piece and an observation report. The practice placement portfolios include reflective accounts of student's practice during placement, examples of key activities such as assessment and planning, direct observations of practice, and feedback from people with lived experience of services.

Assessment of practice is made on a pass/fail basis by a Practice Educator who meets the [Practice Educator Professional Standards](#) (PEPS) for social work (BASW,2020). The practice educator will provide a report supporting their assessment which is mapped to the relevant domains of the Professional Capabilities Framework (BASW, 2018).

While the responsibility for student assessment rests with the practice educator, a training team including the onsite supervisor (where appropriate) and an academic provide robust and consistent arrangements for the assessment of practice learning. Practice Educators and Onsite Supervisors are invited to attend a joint briefing where the requirements for assessment of professional practice are clearly outlined, along with any curriculum updates A module handbook outlines the portfolio requirements clearly for students, including the capabilities that need to be evidenced and the required level at which they are assessed. Students are required to complete the agreed number of days for each practice placement and the Practice Educator signs this off.

The portfolios are quality assured and moderated through the Quality Portfolio Assessment Panel (QPAP), which is made up of academic staff, practice educators, and people with lived experience. Students and Practice Educators receive written feedback to support quality development of portfolios and Practice Educator reports.

Students, Practice Educators, onsite supervisors, and tutors complete a Quality Assurance Practice Learning (QAPL) survey. This process is used to quality assure placements and a general report is produced to examine themes and individual feedback is given to placement providers.

15.   Programme structures and requirements

The programme offers the opportunity to achieve the award of Bachelor of Arts (with Honours) in Social Work. The programme meets the requirements of the SWE (2021) *Qualifying Education and Training Standards* to ensure that students are eligible to apply for admission to the SWE Register of Social Work. The BA (Hons) Social Work provides a three-year, full-time programme, offering practice-learning modules at levels 5 and 6. The

programme provides a total of 200 days of practice learning for students, including 30 days for the development of skills for practice. The programme provides placement opportunities in a range of statutory and private, independent & voluntary practice contexts. Assessments against the relevant threshold levels of the [Professional Capabilities Framework for social work](#) (2018) are made in relation to practice. All modules have been developed to facilitate achievement of the [SWE *Professional Standards* (2019)](#) and the [QAA (2019) Subject Benchmark for Social Work](#).

Students will engage in interdisciplinary learning within the programme to model contemporary social work practice and enrich the learning experience. Students will also participate in simulated learning, including in Ability House, where students can engage in role-play in a home, rather than a classroom setting.

Level 4

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))
SOWK 1101	**Context for Professional Practice**	**15**	**M**
SOWK 1102	**Foundations of Law and Policy**	**15**	**M**
SOWK 1103	**Skills Development**	**30**	**M**
SOWK 1104	**Theories of Life Course Development**	**30**	**M**
SOWK 1105	**Ethics, Values and Anti-Oppressive Practice**	**15**	**M**
SOWK 1106	**Professional Development 1: Building resilience and self-care for practice**	**15**	**M**

Level 4 introduces students to underpinning knowledge in relation to professional ethics and values, theories of development, the legal and policy context of practice and core communication and relationship building skills. There is also a focus on professional development and building foundations for professional identity and emotional resilience. Single Honours students must take 120 credits in total, and all modules are mandatory

Level 5

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))
SOWK 2101	**Law, policy, and safeguarding practice with adults**	**15**	**M**
SOWK 2102	**Law, policy, and safeguarding practice with children & families**	**15**	**M**
SOWK 2103	**Understanding research in social work practice**	**15**	**M**
SOWK 2104	**Practice 1**	**45**	**M**
SOWK 2105	**Professional Development 2 – Assessment & Intervention**	**30**	**M**

Level 5 supports students in their critical exploration of the law and policy context for contemporary safeguarding practice, with a focus on assessment and intervention skills and implementing theories and models of helping. Students will also develop their understanding of research processes and critical analysis of evidence and ideas, before undertaking their first period of 70 days assessed practice.
Single Honours students must take 120 credits in total, and all modules are mandatory

Level 6

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))
SOWK 3102	**Dissertation**	**30**	**M**
SOWK 3103	**Practice 2**	**60**	**M**
SOWK 3104	**Contemporary practice**	**15**	**M**
SOWK 3103	**Professional Development 3 – working within organisations**	**15**	**M**

Level 6 supports students to integrate their critical reflection and analytical skills within the context of a research project exploring a specialist area of practice and exploring a range of contemporary and innovative models of social work intervention. Students also engage with further developmental learning in relation to preparing for working within complex statutory social welfare organisations alongside their final practice placement experience of 100 days. Single Honours students must take 120 credits in total, and all modules are mandatory.

All modules must be passed successfully to achieve the award of BA (Hons) Social Work and be eligible to apply for registration with SWE.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

The BA (Hons) Social Work degree is located at Level 6 of the OfS sector recognised standards. Learning outcomes for modules at each level are designed in accordance with the academic standards identified within the OfS Regulatory Framework (2022), with learning becoming progressively more challenging, moving from broad generic concepts to the application of in -depth knowledge to support professional decision making in complex practice contexts. The aims and intended learning outcomes of the course comply with the Framework descriptor for a bachelor's degree with Honours. The academic standards also reflect the QAA (2019) subject benchmark for social work. The programme is designed to meet the SWE Qualifying Education and Training standards (2021) in relation to admissions, programme management and resources, curriculum, practice and assessment. The practice aspects of the programme incorporate the requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education in relation to practice placement and are informed by the University's (2020) Policy on the Management of Placement and Work- based Learning. Within placement, students are assessed using the Professional Capabilities Framework (BASW, 2018) standards for end-of-first and end-of-final practice placement.

17. Support for students

Student support is a central component of the social work programme and is available from within the Department of Social Work and the Community, the School of Allied Health & Community and from the wider University. Examples of wider University support are firstpoint Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service .

Pre-programme
Students are invited to attend an 'applicant day' event which focuses on introducing students to learning and teaching at the University and to core elements of the social work programme. In addition, it facilitates meeting fellow students and provides an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the University.

Induction
There is a comprehensive induction programme, including sessions on the principles of academic study in higher education, an introduction to information and learning systems including library resources and an introduction to student services, the student union, and professional and representative bodies. Students meet the social work teaching team and engage in reflective tasks to help prepare them for their social work training as well as joining tutor groups for an introductory meeting with their personal academic tutor.

Personal Academic Tutoring
Personal Academic Tutoring is at the heart of supporting students personally, professionally and academically. The programme team believe that the Personal Academic Tutor system is fundamental to student success. Students are allocated a personal academic tutor and normally they will remain with this tutor throughout their time at the University and will be the student's regular point of contact within the University. Level 4 students will meet with their tutor on at least four occasions during the first year, with Level 5 & 6 students also meeting their tutors on three occasions, including for placement planning and review meetings. Students prepare for their tutorials by completing the relevant Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) form to help them reflect on their learning and identify any learning aims for their progress through the degree. The PAT will help and advise their tutee (the student) on issues relating to their study and progress throughout their three years at the university and will monitor their engagement, attendance, and progress. If necessary, tutors can recommend referral to a range of other support services within the university including

Firstpoint and the Disability and Dyslexia service, as well signposting students to writing support from the Royal Literacy Fund Academic Writers in Residence within the university. Students are advised to maintain regular contact with their Personal Academic Tutor, with email being the communication tool of choice. All tutorial contact is recorded.

We recognise that the first year of any programme can be a daunting experience for some, therefore students will meet their tutor as a group during induction week and for some pre-planned meetings. The tutorial scheme details will be given to students during induction and will have a focus on offering support and a sense of belonging within the university, promoting student's wellbeing and building their resilience and life skills.

Resource Support and Specialist Support
Students have access to a Virtual Learning Environment (which includes Blackboard Learn and Microsoft Teams) in which they are provided with module specific materials, documents, activities, videos. Etc. Students are provided with the BA (Hons) Social Work Course Handbook (published on an annual basis) to provide them with detailed course information, information on modules and details of how to access University support for their studies. Students are also given detailed module guides for each module which included planned teaching activities, attendance requirements, assessment briefs, assessment criteria and resources lists.

The Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) provides advice and support to students who have a disability, medical condition, or specific learning difficulty, including dyslexia. The DDS also provides support and advice to other departments and individual staff on how to ensure the needs of individual students are met. For more details see:

Placement support
Prior to commencing their first practice learning experience students have an induction, which includes professional responsibilities and expected conduct, introduction to practice learning documentation and policy and guidance. They also attend joint briefings (attended by their Practice Educator and where appropriate Onsite Supervisor) prior to staring each practice learning experience.

All placements are co-ordinated by the Practice Learning Coordinator. Every student will be supported in placement by a training team, which consists of a tutor from the course team (usually their academic tutor), a Practice Educator and where appropriate an onsite supervisor.

Students are supernumerary and supervised while in the practice learning environment, with the Practice Educator having primary responsibility for supporting and supervising learning experiences. Practice Educators will meet BASW (2020) *Practice Educator Professional Standards.*

Dissertation support
All students complete a Level 6 Dissertation extended piece of work, which offers an opportunity to critically appraise the evidence base of an aspect of professional practice relevant to social work. Students are supported in this via the module leader and a dissertation supervisor from the social work staff team.

18.   Admissions

Admissions policy
The University aims to provide fair and equal access to a university education to all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it. Admissions to social work are made in line with the University's Admissions Policy and Diversity and Equality procedures

The University is committed to widening participation to candidates from diverse backgrounds and therefore welcomes applications from young people leaving school or college and mature students wishing to pursue a career in social work. The course welcomes diversity in its student population and encourages international students and students with disabilities or with specific learning needs to apply and undertake the course. The programme recruits applicants who are able to study at degree level and have the appropriate knowledge, skills and values as defined by BASW Professional Capabilities Framework at "entry" level.

Entry requirements
The normal minimum entry requirement for undergraduate degree courses is the possession of 4 GCSEs (Grade C/4 or above) and a minimum of 2 A Levels (or equivalent Level 3 qualifications, for example, BTEC Extended National Diploma in Health and Social Care). Candidates with negligibly lower predictive or attained grades may also be considered, upon demonstration of relevant skills and experience via the Personal Statement.

The University's additional minimum entry requirements apply: 4 GCSEs (Grade 4/C or above) - this must include English and Maths. Functional Skills Level 2 Mathematics is accepted as an alternative qualification. Other equivalent qualifications may be considered – as outlined in the UW Admissions Policy. Applications from mature applicants will be assessed on their ability to benefit from and be successful on the course via a range of alternative qualifications and experience. This is often demonstrated through the achievement of a level 3 qualification in a relevant area.

Candidates should possess the following/or be in process of obtaining:
- A minimum of three months contemporary, relevant practice experience, paid or unpaid, verified by reference (See below)
- At least 4 GCSEs Grade C or above including English and Maths **(or equivalent)**
- Relevant Level 3 qualifications are accepted. For example, BTEC National Diploma in Health and Social Care

Successful applicants will also need to evidence:
- Satisfactory occupational health check
- Satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check
- Confirmation of the ability to use basic IT facilities
- Where English is a second language, IELTS Level 7 will need to be evidenced

The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW website https://www.worc.ac.uk/journey/a-z-of-courses.html

See Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements
An enhanced disclosure will be required prior to beginning any work-based element of a module. The cost of this will be met by the student. Students may be required to apply for

further enhanced DBS checks before commencing each practice learning experience. Students are therefore encouraged to sign up for the DBS update service.

Recognition of Prior Learning
Details of acceptable Level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University webpages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at
http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm

Admissions procedures
Full-time applicants apply through UCAS, using course code L500. All applications received are scrutinised and short listed against set criteria, which include both education and professional requirements:

 Applicant meets/working towards academic entry requirements
Personal statement shows applicant has the appropriate experience in social care and has some understanding of the role of a social worker
 Coherent and logical expression of ideas
 Includes one reference
 Declaration of criminal cautions/ convictions if applicable.

Candidates who meet the criteria for admission are invited to attend for an interview.

Admissions/selection criteria
The selection process for the social work degree has been designed to align with the Best Practice in Admissions to Pre-Qualifying Social Work Programmes guidance from the West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership and includes a variety of assessments, including group work, interviews, a written test and a case scenario discussion. The assessment during the selection day uses the BASW (2018) Professional Capabilities Framework at "entry" level. Assessment in relation to each activity the candidate undertakes is made against the relevant Professional Capabilities Framework standards.

Selection days involve both practice partners and people with lived experience who have attended training in the principles of selection, anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities through the University or practice partners' employing institution. Where a candidate is unsuccessful at interview, they are offered written 'feedback' against individual performance and interview outcome. Those who meet all the criteria for entry and are successful at interview are offered a place, conditional upon satisfactory health and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

19.   Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework
Requirements to pass modules
- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- A student is required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.

- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.
- To pass the professional practice modules SOWK2104 and SOWK3103 students must pass all capabilities in all domains of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) at the End of the First Year level or End of Final Placement level respectively and meet the Social Work England Professional Standards (2019) as assessed by the designated practice educator.

Submission of assessment items
- A student who submits course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- A student who submits work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Assessment of professional practice placements
- Within practice placement modules, in the event of a placement disruption or termination, the Practice Panel will review the report of the student's Practice Educator and make recommendations to the Social Work Examination Board.

Retrieval of failure
- A student is entitled to re-sit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module, with the exception of the professional practice placement modules (see above). The grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails the assessment of professional practice within SOWK 2104 or SOWK 3103 will be entitled to one further attempt at the placement. A student who fails in the original and reassessment opportunity of a placement will be discontinued from the programme.
- A student who has passed the placement element of SOWK 2104 at the second attempt, must pass the placement element of SOWK 3103 at the first attempt.
- Students may not be assessed in professional practice placement elements more than three times within the whole programme.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 will be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed all Level 4 modules (120 credits)
- Students at Level 5 will be permitted to progress to Level 6 when they have passed all Level 5 modules (120 credits)
- A student who, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, has failed 90 credits or more (after exhausting all reassessment opportunities) during the academic year, will have their registration with the University terminated.

This course is subject to the University's fitness to practice procedures.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
Certificate of Higher Education Cert HE in Social Welfare Studies	In order to be eligible for the exit award of Certificate in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 120 credits in total including the mandatory modules for Level 4 of the award as specified on the award map.
Diploma of Higher Education DipHE In Social Welfare Studies	In order to be eligible for the exit award of Diploma in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 240 credits in total including the mandatory modules for Level 4 and Level 5 of the award as specified on the award map.

Award	Requirement
Degree (non-honours) In Social Welfare Studies	Passed a minimum of 300 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6, including any 60 credits from taught modules excluding the dissertation, as specified on the award map.
BA (Hons) Social Work	Passed a minimum of 360 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6, as specified on the award map.

Classification

The honours classification will be determined by whichever of the following two methods results in the higher classification.

- Classification determined on the profile of the 120 credits attained at Level 5 and 120 credits at Level 6. Level 5 and Level 6 grades are weighted on a ratio of 1:2. OR
- Classification will be based on the weighted average grade together with a requirement for at least half of the Level 6 grades to be in the higher class.

For further information on honours degree classification, see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Note that the above methods apply to students entering Level 4 of three- or four-year degree programmes who commence Level 4 from September 2022 onwards.

20.   Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

Upon successful completion of the social work degree, graduates are eligible to register as social workers with Social Work England (SWE) and to apply for employment or progress into higher forms of education. Graduate Destination data (2019) indicates 92% of graduates had progressed into employment within 12 months of completion, with 8% engaged in further study. As a member of the West Midlands Social Work Teaching partnership, the programme has close links with employer partners in the region and many of our graduates obtain employment within the local region.

Social Work Graduates work in a range of social work and non-social work settings including:

- Adults with mental health needs
- Adults with physical / learning disabilities
- Older adults and dementia care
- Children in care
- Youth justice contexts
- Child protection
- Adoption and fostering
- Working in independent and voluntary sector agencies
- Domestic abuse services
- education support
- community development roles

Student employability

Students are prepared for employment throughout the programme. Our emphasis on professional development through linked modules at each level supports students to develop a range of professional skills and abilities that enhance their employability. Students begin in Professional Development 1 by focusing on their personal and professional resilience and self-care skills and reflecting on their developing professional identity, Within Professional Development 2 they focus on core social work skills and assessment and planning intervention, while Professional Development 3 prepares them for the complexities of working in contemporary social welfare organisations, exploring theories of leadership, professional decision making and managing change. Employability skills, including completion of job application forms and interviewing skills are taught within year 3, with local employer partners presenting their employment offer to student via recruitment events. Students are introduced to the Assessed and supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme for newly qualified social workers and to the Knowledge and Skills statements (KSS) for qualified social work practice with Adults and Children during level 6. Recent graduates and more experienced practitioners also come to speak to students during year 3 about their experiences of applying for work and succeeding as newly qualified social workers.

Links with employers

The University has strong partnerships with local authorities in the region through our membership of the West Midlands Social Work teaching partnership as well as through local partnerships with our immediate local authority neighbours. Together we are involved in ensuring the curriculum is current and prepares graduates robustly for post qualifying work. Local authorities increasingly see practice placements as a means of preparing their future workforce and often results in students securing employment before qualification. The University works closely with local partners in the delivery of post-qualifying social work training and continuous professional development events.

The University of Worcester has established links with a range of employers and placement providers. These include:

- Worcestershire County Council Adults Services
- Worcestershire Children First
- Herefordshire Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership
- Barnardo's
- CAFCASS.

These partners support both course development and delivery by informing course design and teaching staff of the skills and competencies they require, by providing opportunities for student workplace visits, and by giving talks and demonstrations to students. This course has been developed with the support and input of partners to ensure that it is designed with their needs in mind. In this way, the course will maximise the employment opportunities for its graduates.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.