

Programme Specification for BA (Hons) Social Work

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| 1. | Awarding institution/body | University of Worcester |
| 2. | Teaching institution | Heart of Worcestershire College |
| 3. | Programme accredited by | Health and Care Professions Council |
| 4. | Final award | BA (Hons) Social Work |
| 5. | Programme title | Social Work |
| 6. | Pathways available | Full time |
| 7. | Mode and/or site of delivery | Standard taught programme is delivered at Heart of Worcestershire College. Practice placements will usually be within the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire |
| 8. | Mode of attendance | Full time, weekdays |
| 9. | UCAS Code | L500 |
| 10. | Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement | Subject Benchmark statement social work, 2016: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Social-Work-16.pdf DH Requirements for social work training, 2002 HCPC Standards of Proficiency, 2012 College of Social Work Professional Capabilities Framework, 2012 |
| 11. | Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic review in 2011 • change to Law and Practice modules in 2012 • change to Professional Learner • Skills Development, Introduction to Practice and Study Skills in 2013 • change to Practice modules 2013 • change to Professional Learner, Sociology, Skills, Assessment, Intervention, Theories & Methods 2014 • August and October 2014 (Regulations) • Amended July 2015 following HCPC Approval event • Updated QAA subject benchmark statement Social Work (December 2016) |

12. Educational aims of the programme

- To facilitate the education of student social workers to enable application to join the Health and Care Professions Council register of Social Workers
- To demonstrate capability as specified in the College Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)
- To enable students to practice social work in accordance with the accepted values and principles of the profession
- To enable students to acquire, critically evaluate, apply and integrate knowledge and understanding relevant to contemporary social work practice
- To enable students to develop techniques of analysing and solving problems; reach sound professional judgements and communicate effectively
- To enable students to acquire and apply conceptual understanding which draws on relevant sources including current research and evidence-based practice
- To enable students to be flexible practitioners who understand the respective responsibilities of social welfare agencies, can practice in a collaborative

interprofessional context, and who recognise both the responsibilities and limitations of the social worker's role.

- To enable students to develop into reflective practitioners with effective skills for assessment and intervention who are able to contribute significantly to the provision of social care
- To 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

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| <p>Intended learning outcomes – Knowledge and understanding <i>On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Identify, critically evaluate and inform practice with value perspectives which combat discrimination and empower those who are disadvantaged, recognising the particular claims of those of different gender, belief, social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.</i> <i>2. Demonstrate knowledge in the key areas of human growth, development, mental health, disability: assessment, planning intervention and review; interpersonal communication skills with children, adults and those with particular communication needs; law; partnership working and information sharing across professional disciplines and agencies</i> <i>3. Apply the knowledge and understanding gained from both academic study and practice and other experiences to current and future practice</i> <i>4. Appreciate and critically appraise the distinctive contribution of social work to society recognising the contested and evolving nature of social problems and appreciating the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge</i> | <p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Service user and carer input provided throughout the programme. Guest speakers from practice are used where appropriate</p> <p>Teaching methods will include; lectures, use of Moodle, groupwork, role play, videos, case studies, guided independent learning, debates, research, simulations, elearning, quizzes, individual and group tasks</p> <p>Assessment methods used include written assignments, examination, group presentations, posters, individual presentations, portfolios, learning journals, independent study.</p> |
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| <p>Intended learning outcomes – Cognitive and intellectual skills <i>On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Critically appraise the perspectives of social welfare, sociology and psychology, recognising their influence on law, policy and practice.</i> <i>2. Critically analyse the contested and evolving nature of social problems and develop a repertoire of theoretical frameworks, models and methods applicable to different professional perspectives and contexts.</i> <i>3. Demonstrate the skills of a competent practitioner drawing on theoretical frameworks to guide in assessing, decision making and problem solving, monitoring and reviewing.</i> <i>4. Demonstrate the ability to explain and evaluate a range of research methodologies and epistemologies in order both to develop and enhance social and theoretical perspectives and to promote research informed reflexive practice.</i> <i>5. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in learning and develop skills of reflective and reflexive practice, making use of a breadth of academic and primary sources of knowledge and information.</i> | <p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Service user and carer input provided throughout the programme. Guest speakers from practice are used where appropriate</p> <p>Teaching methods will include; lectures, use of Moodle, groupwork, role play, videos, case studies, guided independent learning, debates, research, simulations, elearning, quizzes, individual and group tasks</p> <p>Assessment methods used include written assignments, examination, group presentations, posters, individual presentations, portfolios, learning journals, independent study.</p> |
| <p>Intended learning outcomes – Practical skills relevant to employment: <i>On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Demonstrate capability against the Professional Capability Framework (PCF)</i> <i>2. Demonstrate capability in at least two practice settings; of statutory social work tasks involving legal interventions; and of providing services to at least two service user groups</i> | <p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Students will have the opportunity in year 1 to shadow a social worker in practice. They will also develop their skills through the Skills Development module in year 1 and Skills for social work practice in year 2. There will be a range of experiential methods used, such as a telephone role play activity, a supervision session, an observation skills activity, a role play multi-agency meeting and a videoed assessment visit.</p> |

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| <p>3. <i>Develop and apply skills of critical appraisal, decision-making and risk assessment in academic work and in interventions in complex circumstances</i></p> <p>4. <i>Practice in a manner, which has service user consultation, empowerment and partnership working at its core.</i></p> <p>5. <i>Contribute to professional organisational culture, keep critically informed about new directives and support lifelong learning practice in the workplace.</i></p> | <p>In years 2 and 3 students will undertake 170 days of practice placement where they will develop their capability alongside an experienced social worker.</p> <p>Both the skills development and practice elements of the programme will be assessed by a portfolio of evidence against the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) alongside written assignments and presentations.</p> |
| <p>Intended learning outcomes – Transferable/key skills: <i>On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</i></p> <p>1. <i>Demonstrate competence in the use of information technology for professional practice</i></p> <p>2. <i>Develop complex communication skills for use in a variety of professional contexts.</i></p> | <p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Students will develop their IT competence through the Skills Development and practice modules. They will also produce a Professional Development Portfolio in year 1 which will include evidence of IT competence.</p> <p>Skills development and practice placements will develop students' complex communication skills in professional contexts. Assessment will be made on placement by a qualified Practice Educator who observes the student's practice.</p> |

14. Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategies adopted in the BA in Social Work reflect the aims of the course and the descriptors for Social Work Degree Level Study (QAA 2008) and are designed to integrate with student learning and acquired knowledge, both in academic modules and practice. In order to ensure students meet the requirements of the regulator usually it is required that all assessment items must be passed. There will be no compensation allowed.

The assessment strategies are designed to develop skills and knowledge, provide evidence of the students' progress and achievement throughout the course and prepare the students for lifelong learning. Both formal (summative) and informal, developmental, (formative) approaches will be used. In order to develop the study skills identified within the course aims, students will experience a variety of assessment strategies. These include essays, reflective essays, presentations, peer assessment, exams, critical evaluation of role-play, and critical reviews. The opportunity for students to demonstrate independence in a sustained piece of work is provided in the completion of the Independent Study. As with the academic learning, the practice learning is structured to be incremental, enabling the student to be assessed at three different stages of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF). The Skills Development module in year 1 will be assessed against "Readiness for Direct Practice" level, with placements being assessed against "End of first placement" and "End of Last placement" capabilities respectively. This

assessment will be made by a Practice Educator who is appropriately qualified (according to the College of Social Work's Practice Educator Standards).

Student Practice on placement is assessed on the basis of:

- A portfolio of evidence – a comprehensive portfolio of academic and practice based tasks offering a critical and reflective account of the placement, demonstrating critical understanding, analysis and reflection on practice.
- Practice assessor direct observations of practice
- Service user and carer appraisals.

15. Programme structures and requirements

AWARD MAP FOR BA (HONS) DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK

| LEVEL 4 | | | | |
|--------------------|--|----------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Module Code | Module Title | Credits | Status | Prerequisites |
| | | Number | Mandatory (M) | Code of Module |
| SWSS 1002 | Applied Psychology and Human Development | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 1003 | Sociology: Themes and Perspectives in Social Work | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 1005 | Development and Delivery of Social Welfare Provision | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 1006 | The Ethics and Values of Social Work | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 1009 | Skills Development | 30 | M | None |
| SWSS 1010 | The Professional Learner and Safe Practitioner | 30 | M | None |
| LEVEL 5 | | | | |
| SWSS 2001 | Law for Social Work Practice | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 2004 | Advanced Social Work Skills | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 2006 | Practice – Developing Capability | 45 | M | None |
| SWSS 2007 | Assessment and intervention, theories and methods | 30 | M | None |
| SWSS 2008 | Understanding research in practice | 15 | M | None |

| LEVEL 6 | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|------|
| SWSS 3002 | The Professional Learner: Independent Study Module | 30 | M | None |
| SWSS 3003 | The Research and Policy Context of Social Work Practice | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 3005 | The Competent Practitioner | 15 | M | None |
| SWSS 3009 | Practice – Achieving Capability | 60 | M | None |

The course is full time.

Attendance for Academic Modules

Students are expected to attend 100% of all academic components of the course. In line with professional practice, timekeeping and punctuality is expected. Legitimate reasons for non-attendance are own illness, bereavement and medical appointments, which cannot be made at an alternative time. Where a student has been absent from lectures, the module leader can require the student to demonstrate independent study in the subject area missed, as they see fit.

Where attendance requirements and sickness notification have not been met, attendance will be the subject of formal enquiry by the personal academic tutor and could result in the student failing the module on the grounds of not having met attendance requirements. This is irrespective of whether the student has submitted and passed the assessments associated with the module.

Attendance on placement

This is an assessable course requirement because of the participative nature of the learning and the expectation of commitment to a course which leads to professional recognition.

Completion of 30 days skills development and 170 practice learning days over the three years of the programme is mandatory and is formally accounted for by being signed off before the portfolio is submitted to the Practice Assessment Panel.

16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

The programme has been developed to reflect:

- Expectations in relation to academic standards and quality of learning outcomes (UK Quality Code for Higher Education, QAA, 2012)
- The descriptor for higher education qualification at level 6 (Framework for HE Qualifications, QAA, 2008)
- Expectations in relation to Work Based and Practice Learning (Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education section 9, QAA, 2007)
- Subject Benchmark statement for social work. (QAA, 2016)
- Professional Capabilities Framework (College of Social Work, 2012)
- Standards of Proficiency – Social Workers in England (HCPC, 2012)
- Standards of Education and Training (HCPC, 2009)
- Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (HCPC, 2010)
- Guidance on health and character (HCPC, 2012)

17. Support for students

All students have support from the course team, practice training team and peer support provided through designated tutorial groups. All students are allocated a personal academic tutor on entry to the course and where possible this tutor will continue to provide support and guidance on a regular basis throughout the three years. North East Worcestershire College Learning Services provide a comprehensive package of support for all students on the degree.

Students have direct contact to module and personal academic tutors via email and the VLE and will receive a prompt response. A tutorial scheme exists to support each

student throughout the course and this includes individual and group tutorials at college as well as training team meetings whilst on placement.

Module tutors provide a group assignment tutorial and one individual tutorial upon request. Supervisors for the independent study module are allocated on an individual basis and offer up to 4 hours of student support time for this module.

The core academic team has a strong commitment to ensuring equality of access and participation in the course. Students with disabilities and particular support needs have access to additional information, support and advocacy from the College's Student Advice and Guidance team.

An induction programme is provided for students at the commencement of year one to introduce the student experience, college context, to nurture learning and reflection and develop support networks with fellow students and tutors. Library induction takes place at both institutions and information skills support is available. A Student Handbook and Practice Placement Handbook are provided to all students electronically via the VLE.

The BA Social Work is both an intellectually and emotionally demanding course. In the event of there being concerns about cheating or fitness to practice, the Team Leader will review the evidence and consult with the academic Integrity Officer for the Institute. Where necessary, the cheating and /or fitness to practice procedures will be invoked.

18. Admissions

Heart of Worcestershire College is committed to widening participation to candidates from diverse backgrounds, abilities and ages.

The course seeks to recruit candidates who are able to study at Degree level and have the appropriate personal attributes, values and commitment to vocational training for professional social work. Given that social work is emotionally as well as intellectually demanding, it is professionally and ethically important that due consideration is awarded to the readiness of the applicant to undertake these demands, candidates will be required to obtain satisfactory health and CRB clearance. All candidates will be invited to a selection process.

Students with additional needs will be provided with relevant information and where appropriate, students will be supported in applying for DSA to provide funding for goods and services that may be needed to enable them to access their course.

Entry requirements

- The minimum age is normally 18 years old at the start of the course
- GCSE Grade C or equivalent qualification in English and Maths
- At least 4 GSCEs Grade C or above
- 240 UCAS tariff points
- At least 6 months relevant social care experience, whether paid or voluntary
- 2 references are required before an offer of a place can be made; an academic reference and a reference commenting on suitability for social work as evidenced during experience in social care

Mature applicants

Applications from mature applicants are particularly welcomed, where they will be assessed on their ability to benefit from and be successful on the course via a range of

range of alternative qualifications and experience. This is often demonstrated through the achievement of a level 3 qualification in a relevant area.

Other conditions

- Satisfactory health check
- Satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check
- Where English is a second language, IELTS Level 7 will need to be evidenced

If successful following the application stage, applicants will be invited to a selection day involving a written exercise, interview and group exercise.

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).

Credit may be given for previous higher academic achievement where there is evidence of a close, explicit match between previous learning and the content of the modules. No credit may be given for Level 6 modules or for the practice learning modules at any level or for part modules. Students seeking to transfer from another degree course in social work should contact the programme for advice.

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

Admissions procedures

The above requirements will be assessed via:

- A completed UCAS application form, which includes one reference.
- Evidence of existing qualifications or other evidence of possessing or acquiring the required academic skills and abilities.
- A written exercise to demonstrate the required abilities in written English.
- An exercise regarding a contemporary professional issue, to be discussed at a group presentation exercise, under the observation of service user and carer advisors.
- Interview with one agency representative and one tutor.
- Self-disclosure in respect of health and criminal status (this will be followed up by checks carried out for the programme as required).

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS

Admissions/selection criteria

Each interview and group discussion is scored and the marks collated.

Academic ability is also assessed.

Suitability of each candidate is discussed by selection team and students are informed of the selection decision via UCAS.

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Standards of teaching and learning are monitored and improved on the basis of student feedback (provided on module evaluation forms, course committee meetings, use of VLE and discussions with external examiners) and external examiner feedback

(provided following moderation and also in annual reports). Student feedback on module assessment is gained via Moodle.

Moderation also provides a means of reviewing standards and at the end of a module a validation meeting is held whereby the module leader and moderator discuss the assignment brief. Standardisation meetings are held twice a year where standards across the programme are discussed.

The programme is scrutinised in the approval process in relation to the HCPC Standards of Education and Training and is aiming to gain endorsement throughout the College of Social Work. Periodic review is undertaken by the University of Worcester.

Quality of practice learning is assured through the Practice Assessment Panel and also through the completion and monitoring of Quality Audits for Practice Learning which are completed by the student, practice educator and workplace supervisor (where applicable).

Feedback from our service user and carer group and local authority partners is provided via Programme Management Board.

All teaching staff receive protected time for scholarly activity and have an annual performance appraisal with the Head of Faculty.

20. 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 the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are 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.
- Some modules have attendance requirements.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/TaughtCoursesRegulatoryFramework.pdf>
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Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

Practice assessment and retrieval of failure

Concerns related to a student's capability in practice will be addressed in accordance with the procedures for significant concerns set out in the Course Handbook.

Assessment of professional practice placements

- The course has two professional practice placements linked to SWSS 2006 and SWSS 3009. In order to pass the professional practice placement, students must successfully meet on a pass/fail basis all capabilities in all domains of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) at the End of the First Placement (year 2) or Final Placement level respectively and to meet the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards of Proficiency as assessed by the designated practice educator.
- The Practice Assessment Panel reviews the assessment of professional practice placements to confirm the results for individual students and make a recommendation to the Social Work Examination Board.
- A student who fails the professional practice placement element of SWSS 2006 or SWSS 3009 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 SWSS 2006 at the second attempt, must pass the placement element of SWSS 3009 at the first attempt.
- Students may not be assessed in professional practice placement elements across years 2 and 3 more than three times within the whole programme.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance, or relates to the professional practice placement element (see above).
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded 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 element (see above).

Failure in practice reassessment will require the student to be withdrawn from the course.

Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed 120 credits at Level 4.
- Students at Level 5 may be permitted to progress to Level 6 when they have passed 120 credits at Level 5.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

Requirements for Awards

| Award | Requirement |
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| CertHE | Passed 120 credits at Level 4 or higher |
| DipHE | Passed a minimum of 240 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher |
| Degree (non-honours) | 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 |

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| Degree with honours | 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 |
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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 best grades from 60 credits attained at Level 5 and the best grades from 120 credits at Level 6. Level 5 and Level 6 grades count equally in the profile.

Classification determined on the profile of the best grades from 120 credits attained at Level 6 only.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

The University of Worcester underwent a QAA Institutional Audit in March 2011. The audit confirmed that confidence can be placed in the soundness of the institution's current and likely future management of the academic standards of its awards and the quality of the learning opportunities available to students. The audit team highlighted several aspects of good practice, including the inclusive approach to working with its collaborative partners.

The programme underwent periodic review in 2010/11 and has been re-validated as a consequence.

In a challenging climate for employment 50% of qualifying students had already secured social work positions prior to graduation.

In 2010 University of Worcester social work provision was one of the 13 HEIs out of 83 which fully met the GSCC National Requirements

In 2012 University of Worcester social work provision was ranked 7th out of 77 programmes in the Guardian's university guide 2013: league table for social work (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/table/2012/may/22/university-guide-social-work>)

The level and amount of feedback offered to students has been identified as an area of particular strength by both external examiners.

22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

This course enables graduates to apply to join the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) social work register. They can then work in a range of social work agencies and settings in the United Kingdom across the statutory, private and voluntary sectors under the protected title of 'Social Worker'

Students, if joining a statutory social work team, will begin an Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme and Heart of Worcestershire College have a memorandum of cooperation in place in relation to this

programme. We have been working with our local authority partners to ensure that this programme dovetails with their degree and provides a logical progression into practice.

Student employability

The programme has excellent links with employers across the two counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire who provide practice learning opportunities for social work students. Many students secure employment in teams and organisations in which the programme has placed students.

Students are required to develop a personal development plan throughout their time on the degree which prepares them for their ASYE and ensures that they are in the best possible position to meet the requirements to maintain their registration. This year Unison delivered a workshop for all year 3 students around employability and this is scheduled for next year too.

Links with employers

Links with employers are strong with senior managers from attending the Programme Management Board. Practitioners are involved in a range of aspects of the programme from selection through to delivery and in terms of curriculum review and design, to ensure the programme remains up to date with practice.

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 the module outlines and the course handbook provided to all students at the start of the course. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#).