UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

Course Specification

Published Date:	21-Jul-2025
Produced By:	Multi Type Usr Record For All Personnel
Status:	Validated

Core Information

Awarding Body / Institution:	University of Wolverhampton		
School / Institute:	School of Health and Wellbeing		
Course Code(s):	SO016P01UV SO016P31UV	Full-time Part-time	2 Years 4 Years
Course Title:	MA Social Work		
Hierarchy of Awards:	Master of Arts Social Work Postgraduate Diploma Social Work University Statement of Credit Social Work		
Language of Study:	English		
Date of DAG approval:	19/Sep/2022		
Last Review:			
Course Specification valid from:	2022/3		
Course Specification valid to:	2028/9		

Academic Staff

Course Leader:	Mrs Sandra Shaw
Head of Department:	Francine Masson

Course Information

Location of Delivery:	University of Wolverhampton
Category of Partnership:	Not delivered in partnership - Standard Provision
Teaching Institution:	University of Wolverhampton
Open / Closed Course:	This course is open to all suitably qualified candidates.

Entry Requirements:

Entry requirements are subject to regular review. The entry requirements applicable to a particular academic year will be published on the University website (and externally as appropriate e.g. UCAS

All candidates must hold an Honours degree (Bachelor) at 2:1 or above

Candidates must have a GCSE grade C+ / 4 (or equivalent) in Maths and English.

All candidates must have substantial prior experience in the field of Social Care, Health or Education. This can be either paid or voluntary work and must be verifiable, for example, by a manager.

If you have other qualifications and/or relevant experience, please contact The Gateway for further advice before applying.

International entry requirements and application guidance can be found here

Applicants will also be required to provide a satisfactory personal statement and two references (academic and employer).

Those meeting the entry requirements may be invited for interview where they will be assessed in comprehension, verbal ability and suitability for social work. Interview panels will include, whenever possible, employer representatives and representatives from people with lived experience of social work (service-users/carers).

Due to the professional nature of this course you will also be required to complete a Declaration of Health and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check.

Due to nature of social work, you are likely to be expected to travel to placement. Having a driving licence and your own transport is advantageous.

Those who do not meet the entry requirements may be offered an alternative course

Distinctive Features of the Course:

Successful completion of this course leads to an academic award and to eligibility to apply for registration as a Social Worker with the Regulatory Body, i.e. Social Work England, in order to practise as a qualified and registered social worker.

The Social Work Department at the University has Practice Learning Units in two Local Authorities providing increased opportunities for students to access high quality placement opportunities. It also directly employs eight qualified practice educators ensuring consistent and high-quality practice education for students.

The Marches Centre for Excellence in Health and Social Care, developed on the Telford Campus, offers students opportunity to prepare for practice using cutting edge technology, such as immersive reality, in simulated practice settings.

The practice relevance of the course is sustained by good communication with social work employers and collaboration with other education providers through our active engagement in the government funded West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership.

The course uses assessment methods which seek to replicate practice skills, such as report writing, observational skills and care planning.

In the first year of the MA programme students will be provided with academic support from an Academic Coach who will meet with each student three times in the year. The Academic Coach supports the student in semester one to set goals, in January to reflect on their grades and feedback and at the end of the academic year to prepare for the second year.

The course is informed by our internationally, nationally and/or regionally respected research, including research into violence against women and girls, the treatment of informal carers, the concept of social risk, systematic reviews including around psychosocial interventions to sexual abuse, crime & community safety, domestic violence, and practice education. Core members of staff on the course have a strong record of publications and/or conference presentations across a range of areas of interest.

The course offers opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning.

There are excellent campus facilities (libraries, well equipped social learning spaces, catering) that contribute to a productive and enjoyable learning experience.

Educational Aims of the Course:

This graduate entry level course aims to equip social work students with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for qualification. Upon successful completion of the course students will have met the published professional standards and be ready to begin their first year in practice. Successful students will be able to apply for registration with the Regulatory Body, Social Work England.

In addition, the University will confer the academic award of a Master of Arts Social Work. 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 Post-Graduate Diploma, which allows successful students to qualify and apply to for registration with the Regulatory Body, Social Work England.

The specific educational aims of the course are to enable students to:

Meet Social Work England’s Professional Standards for Social Work;

Meet required levels of professional capability as they progress toward Social Work England’s Standards;

Develop a knowledge base to underpin capable and effective practice and core social work values as identified by professional and regulatory bodies (e.g. British Association of Social Workers and Social Work England);

Develop the necessary intellectual skills of critical thinking, inquiry and problem solving required for academic learning and for ethical, research minded and critically engaged practice;

Develop as social work practitioners committed to recognising and responding to inequality and discrimination.

These education aims feed into and support the course learning outcomes

Intakes:

September

Major Source of Funding:

Office for Students (OFS)

Tuition Fees:

Tuition fees are reviewed on an annual basis. The fees applicable to a particular academic year will be published on the University website.

Year	Status	Mode	Amount
2021/2	H	Full Time	£3275.00
2021/2	Overseas	Full Time	£6975.00
2022/3	H	Full Time	£5500.00
2022/3	Overseas	Full Time	£11000.00
2023/4	H	Full Time	£5775.00
2023/4	Overseas	Full Time	£11900.00
2024/5	H	Full Time	£5775.00
2024/5	Overseas	Full Time	£12400.00
2025/6	H	Full Time	£5954.00
2025/6	Overseas	Full Time	£12784.00

PSRB:

SO016P01UV (Full-time)

Professional Accreditation Body:
Social Work England

Accrediting Body:
Social Work England

Accreditation Statement:
Approved by Social Work England (SWE) for the purpose of providing eligibility to apply for registration with SWE as a social worker in England.

Approved	Start	Expected End	Renewal
02/Dec/2019	02/Dec/2019		

Course Structure:

September (Full-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7SO035	Preparing for Social Work Practice	40	SEM1	Core
7SO043	Methods, Models & Approaches	20	SEM1	Core
7SO039	Life Course Development	20	SEM1	Core
7SO045	70 Day Practice Placement	0	SEM2	Core
7SO048	Practice Skills	0	CRYRA	Core
7SO044	MA Social Work Dissertation	60	CRYRA	Core

September (Part-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7SO043	Methods, Models & Approaches	20	SEM1	Core
7SO039	Life Course Development	20	SEM1	Core
7SO048	Practice Skills	0	CRYRA	Core

September (Full-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7SO036	Law for Social Work Practice	20	SEM1	Core
7SO037	Communities in Context	20	SEM1	Core
7SO046	100 Day Practice Placement	0	INYR	Core

September (Part-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7SO035	Preparing for Social Work Practice	40	SEM1	Core
7SO045	70 Day Practice Placement	0	SEM2	Core

September (Part-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7SO036	Law for Social Work Practice	20	SEM1	Core
7SO044	MA Social Work Dissertation	60	CRYRA	Core

September (Part-time)

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7SO037	Communities in Context	20	SEM1	Core
7SO046	100 Day Practice Placement	0	INYR	Core

Please note: Optional modules might not run every year, the course team will decide on an annual basis which options will be running, based on student demand and academic factors, to create the best learning experience.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Academic Regulations Exemption:

Section 1.2.3 - Exemption for delivery outside the standard University Academic Calendar, including Year Long modules, to enable students to complete the required hours for practice.

Section 1.3.1 - Exemption to exceed normal module credits within the standard University Framework allowing for the use of 60 credit practice modules.

Section 2.3.1 - Exemption in accordance with the standards of the Professional Body. Students are not permitted advanced standing or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) upon entry given that all modules relate to practice and must be studied and passed.

Section 3.4.2 - Exemption to permit an extension to the maximum period of registration for full time students from 2 years to 4 years. Progression regulations for this course cannot allow students to progress to the second year until they have successfully completed all modules timetabled for the first year. Therefore, additional time may be required by students who fail their placement and are required to re-take this element of the course.

Section 4.5.1 - Proceed between years one and two according to the full-time route course diet, allowing for part-time students to take two years to complete the usual components of the full-time MA. Exemption permitted to ensure all students must pass all modules in order to progress to the next level of study

Section 5.1 - Exemption to permit the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work to only be awarded upon completion of the 120 credits derived from the prescribed diet for MA Social Work, excluding the Dissertation module. The PG Dip in Social Work is an award leading to eligibility to apply to join the register of qualified social workers and only students who have passed the prescribed modules will have met the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory requirements leading to this eligibility.

APPROVED 18/11/21 Effective date: September 2022.

Reference Points:

UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Qualifications and Credit Frameworks

Subject Benchmark Statements

University Policies and Regulations

Equality Act (2010)

Social Work England Professional Standards

British Association of Social Workers Professional Capability Framework

Overview of Assessment:

As part of the course approval process, the course learning outcomes were mapped to each of the modules forming the diet of the programme of study. This process confirmed that all course learning outcomes can be met through successful completion of the modules. This mapping applies to the final award as well as to all of the intermediate awards.

Learning Outcomes	Modules
PGDIP01 Capacity to deal with the complexity of managing risk while practising safely and with professional integrity.	
PGDIP02 Critical and analytical understanding of and demonstrable ability to promote the rights, strengths and wellbeing of people, families and communities	
PGDIP03 Critical and analytical understanding of professional social work ethics, accountability and decision making including the importance of reporting concerns.	
PGDIP04 A comprehensive understanding and demonstrable ability to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of people.	
PGDIP05 A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of professional practice	
PGDIP06 Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring: • the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility • decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations • the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development	
MA01 Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline	
MA02 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.	
MA03 Conceptual understanding that enables the student: - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.	
MA04 A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship	
MA05 Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level	

Teaching, Learning and Assessment:

Teaching Activities

The course uses a wide range of learning activities including:

- Formal lectures.
- Seminar groups (discussions, practice skills, discussions/debates)
- Laboratory work, where students are able to develop practice skills using role play and simulated activity
- Whole days workshops (Skills Development Days)
- Practice placements

- Tutorials
- Guest speakers, including practitioners, people with lived experience, local service providers and social work leaders
- Independent study
- On-line electronic support for learning through CANVAS (Wolverhampton On Line Framework), which is the University's virtual learning environment. CANVAS 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 and 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 statutory, voluntary and independent sector settings.

The course encourages students to access a wide range of learning materials and activities including podcasts, TV programmes, radio programmes, webinars, regional social work professional groups such as BASW.

Finally, the course encourages and supports students' learning by providing a range of different extra curricula activities which support students to develop confidence, academic skills and build knowledge. These activities include a webinar series, a book & film club and a 'shut up and write' group.

Attendance

The course has an attendance requirement of 80% for taught content in an academic year and 100% for all placement days and skills days. This reflects the professional nature of the course and the importance of students being able to demonstrate a professional approach to practice. In the event students drop below 80% of the taught content students will potentially be referred to Fitness to Practice if it is believed poor attendance as impacted upon their ability to practice. Students will not be able to pass the course without attending 100% of placement days and skills days.

Assessment

Students are assessed using a wide variety of methods during the course. There is an overall approach within the department to develop assessment methods that reflect the skills needed for social work practice, we hope this ensures that students find assessment methods engaging, interesting and supportive in developing confidence in practice skills.

Assessment methods include report writing, observations, reflective case studies, portfolios, in class tests, care planning assignments, presentations and an empirical research dissertation. In addition there is formative assessment in the form of practice skills feedback from peers, people with lived experience and practicing social workers. Within Canvas students will have access to summative quizzes and activities which will enable students to test their own knowledge.

Whilst practice placements have zero credit weighting, all students are supported by a Practice Educator on placement who will provide supervision in which formative feedback on practice will be given and in which there will be discussions supporting the student to successfully link practice and theory.

Assessment Methods:

At the University of Wolverhampton, a variety of modes of assessment will be used to support and test your learning and progress and to help you develop capabilities that are valued beyond your University studies and into your working life. Your course may include a variety of assessment activities:

Written examinations (including online examinations, open and closed book examinations and quizzes)
Coursework (for example, essays, reports, portfolios, project proposals and briefs, CVs, poster presentation)
Practical (for example, oral and video presentations, laboratory work, performances, practical skills assessment)

In the final year of your undergraduate degree, and at the end of your postgraduate degree, you are likely to be expected to write an extended piece of work or research, such as a dissertation or a practice-based piece of research.

Student Support:

General University support:

The University Library is a key source of academic information for students. The Library provides access to a wide range of online information sources, including eBooks, e-Journals and subject databases as well as printed material. A range of study spaces are available in each of our libraries, including social, quiet and silent areas. In addition to our day to day 'on campus' support, our online 'Ask the Library' chat service, ASSIST is staffed 24 hours a day.

The University Library also provides students with academic skills support via the Skills for Learning programme. Students can attend workshops or ask for one-to-one help on a range of skills such as academic writing and referencing. Support is available both on campus and virtually via the VLE, and a range of online skills material is also available at: www.wlv.ac.uk/lib/skills

The University Student Support website offers advice on a variety of matters (careers, counselling, student union advice, etc.) Students can also access these services by booking appointment with the SU, careers, counselling services, etc.

Course Specific Support

Each student is allocated a personal tutor who will meet with them at least three times every year and contact them by email on a monthly basis. The personal tutor will provide;

- a pastoral role (growth, progression, social and wellbeing)
- data informed guidance and timely intervention for retention and progression
- advice on University regulations and procedures
- advocacy for the student where required
- a point of contact for keeping in touch during long-term periods of sickness / Leave of Absence
- promoting work placements, job opportunities, Graduate Attributes Framework and the Employability Framework

Personal tutors also take on the role of practice tutor for social work students who are on placement (the personal tutor and practice tutor is a combined role). The practice tutor role supports students by,

- Attending the practice learning agreement (PLA) and mid-point review meetings
- Providing support to both student and other members of the placement-based practice learning team
- Ensuring that a discussion takes place in the PLA meeting about the student's specific learning requirements and their implications for the student, and the student's practice.
- Supporting students on placement who have a specific learning requirement
- Ensuring compliance with the regulation and guidance that govern social work practice learning
- Ensuring that the criteria for both the 70 day and 100 day practice placements are understood, and that there are sufficient work opportunities to enable the student to achieve the practice learning outcomes
- Monitoring student progress and informing the module leader of any concerns
- Being the first point of contact on any matters relating to the management of assessment and student progress in practice; and progress the matter to a conclusion
- Attending action plan meetings and working with all parties towards a resolution of any issues raised
- Providing academic advice to the students about any tutor marked elements of the practice assessment
- Liaising with the practice learning coordinator on matters (including concerns) relating to the quality of a practice placement

There is a level 7 Academic Coach who supports students during their first year of the Master's Social Work course. The academic coach supports students in

- Completing their Individual Leaner Profile
- Monitoring attendance and meeting with students whose attendance drops below 85%

Meeting individually with students three times across the academic year

Employability in the Curriculum:

Employment

The course enables successful students to apply to Social Work England (or equivalent bodies in Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland) to register as a qualified social worker; registration with SWE allows students to practice as a social worker in England. The English qualification is accepted throughout the UK, the EU and is recognised Internationally.

Students will undertake two placements during the course, a 70- and 100-days practice placement. Students will be guaranteed at least one placement which involves statutory social work practice.

Students will undertake at least one skill development day in the final year of the course focused on supporting them to make the transition to becoming newly qualified social workers, including support to complete applications to local employers once they have completed the course.

The course invites practising social workers and relevant social care practitioners in to support the curriculum speaking to students about their work where appropriate. This is intended to ensure that students get a realistic picture of social work practice.

The Institute for Society & Community runs a free webinar series. This series is aimed at practising social workers, but students are encouraged to attend in order to support their understanding of the value of continuing professional development and support the development of a good mindset for being a qualified social worker.

Further Training and Education Opportunities

Graduates may return to the University of Wolverhampton (or any Higher Education Institution (HEI)) to undertake courses as part of their continuing professional development, which is a requirement to maintain social work registration with Social Work England.

There is the opportunity for candidates to enrol on a programme of doctoral study – either a Professional Doctorate or a more conventional PhD.