



**University of
East London**

Pioneering Futures Since 1898

Cass School of Education and Communities

BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programme

**Admissions Guidebook
(Prospective Students)**

Academic Year:
2019-2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in studying Social Work at the University of East London (UEL). The guidebook is meant to:

Inform prospective students about the nature of the BA (Hons) Social Work Programme offered through the Cass School of Education and Communities and MA Social Work Programme offered through the Cass School of Education and Communities jointly with the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.

Provide information to help prospective students decide whether to apply for Admission to their chosen programme.

Outline the process by which students are selected for the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes.

The processes and the procedures outlined in this document work in conjunction with the general guidelines provided by the University and any divergences are attributable to adherence to professional body requirements. It is suggested that you also consult UEL Student Admissions, who can provide further information and support with regard to the University's general admissions procedures or admissions to other programmes.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us:

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Please ensure that include your programme of interest and the relevant Admissions Tutor in the Subject Line of any correspondence. We may not be able to reply to you if this information is not included.

2. OVERVIEW

Social work is a challenging profession that is centred on people. Practitioners are required to build solid professional relationships with a variety of individuals, groups, and organisations. Often this means working with people who have been socially excluded or who are experiencing crisis. Social workers are expected to be able to help people cope with challenges while also enabling them to maximise control over their own lives. In order to do this, social workers need to be able to assess and deliver information, ‘think on their feet’ and evaluate their own practice. All while remaining committed to social justice and equality. It is therefore essential that social workers not only have good intentions, but also possess the appropriate practice knowledge and professional acumen. At UEL, these requisite social work skills are developed through intensive education, training, and practical experience.

The BA (Hons) and the MA Social Work Programmes share a reputation of producing competent, confident, and effective social work professionals who are well regarded and prepared for the rigours of practice. The student selection process is crucial to achieving these outcomes. The information herein should assist prospective students with engaging in the selection process for either the BA (Hons) or MA Social Work Programmes.

The dynamic nature of higher education along with the on-going evolution of the social work profession means that there are regular updates with regard to best practices in applicant selection. Therefore, the screening procedures of the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes are continuously assessed to ensure the selection of students meet the standards and thresholds set by social work’s professional and regulating bodies (Social Work England). Please continue to re-visit the UEL website or contact the BA (Hons) and MA Social work Programmes directly for further details.

Quick Facts		
Programme	BA (Hons)	MA
Duration:	3 years (full time)	2 years (full time)
University Course Code	E28	E28
UCAS Code	L501	L512
Places Available	65	50
Start date	September	September

3. TERMINOLOGY:

Below please find a list of terms commonly used in during the UEL admissions process.

Admissions Selection Committee: The group that formally reviews Applications, Entrance Exams, and Interview results. The committee is chaired by the relevant Admissions Tutor and includes employers, service users, and academic staff.

Applicant: Anyone who formally submits an application to UEL to be considered for either the BA (Hons) or MA Social Work Programmes.

Application: The UCAS form that is received and reviewed by the UEL Social Work Admissions team. Based on your application, you will be invited to sit an **Entrance Examination**.

BA (Hons): Bachelor of Arts with Honours available.

Carer: A carer is a person of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not otherwise manage without this help. Many local authorities and health and social service provide their own definition of who they consider to be 'carers'.

Conditional Offer: An offer made by UEL, whereby you must fulfil certain criteria before you can be accepted on the relevant course.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS): On 1 December 2012 the Criminal Records Bureau and Independent Safeguarding Authority merged to become the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). All Offer Holders **MUST** apply for an up-to-date enhanced criminal conviction checks (DBS check) for Regulated Activity before they enrol on the program for which they have an offer.

Enrolment: The process by which those with **Unconditional Offers** sign up to UEL's conditions and regulations, pay tuition fees and obtain a student identity card. Please note that module registration is done separately.

Entrance Examination: The written examination that an **Applicant** is required to pass in order to be invited for an **Interview**.

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC): From 01 August 2012, the HCPC has been the statutory regulator of social workers in England (replacing the General Social Care Council - GSCC). This is now being taken over by Social Work England.

Interview: The interview that an **applicant** must successfully complete in order to receive an **Offer**.

MA: Master of Arts degree.

Offer: An offer to enrol and register for study on the programme, for which you submitted an application, passed the **Entrance Examination** and successfully completed **Interview**.

Offer Holder: Anyone who has been given either a **Conditional** or **Unconditional Offer** to enrol in one of the Social Work Programmes.

Practice Learning Opportunity: Sometimes referred to, as 'Field Placement', 'Practice Placement' or simply 'Placement' is where students are placed in social service organisations to practice and learn skills under the supervision of experienced practitioners.

Prospective Student: Anyone who has or demonstrates an interest in attending the BA (Hons) or MA Social Work Programmes.

Service User: A term often applied to anyone who is a patient or other user of health and / or social services. Though the term is widely accepted and used, it is important to remember that not everyone who falls into this category may appreciate being called a 'service user'.

Social Work England <https://socialworkengland.org.uk>. This is the new regulatory body that will shortly be taking over, or has taken over, the registration and regulation of social work from the HCPC.

Stakeholders: People or organizations that have an interest or concern in how the Social Work Programmes function and perform (e.g. service users, carers, employers)

Student: Anyone who has enrolled and is eligible to attend classes.

UCAS: The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

Unconditional Offer: An offer given to you by UEL if you have satisfied the criteria and can attend the course.

Unsuccessful Applicant/Application: Anyone who applies to the programme and does not receive an **Offer** due to having been screened prior to the **Entrance Examination**, not passing the Entrance Examination or not successfully completing an **Interview**.

Withdrawal: Either the **Applicant** or UEL cancels a choice before a decision has been made - a reason will be included if the withdrawal was issued by UEL.

4. MAKING THE DECISION TO APPLY

The decision to attend university is quite significant and should only be made following the careful consideration of multiple factors. The sections below offer some of the information that prospective students may find useful in deciding whether or not to submit an application for entry to one of the UEL Social Work programmes. While the questions and answers cover many different considerations, they are by no means exhaustive. Prospective students are therefore strongly encouraged to put sufficient time and consideration into any decision regarding the submission or non-submission of an application.

4.1 *What do Social Workers do?*

Social work is a profession focused on working with people (often referred to as 'service users' and 'carers') from infants to older adults who are often experiencing significant personal difficulties and may also be vulnerable or at risk of encountering harm. Social workers help service users remain safe and resolve their difficulties through offering support, advocacy and protection. A key social work role is enabling people to live fulfilled lives as independently as possible. Fundamental to good practice is the ability of social workers to be reflective, quick thinking, emotionally resilient and pro-active in seeking to work with others to problem-solve. Social workers often work closely with a variety of people including other professionals from fields such as education, health, and probation services. Therefore, excellent communication skills are crucial.

There are many other aspects of social work practice and it is suggested that all applicants have a reasonable understanding of both the social work profession and the particular programme to which you are applying (particularly the MA). You may want to conduct research prior to completing your application and throughout the admissions process to remain abreast of developments. Some ways to do this might be:

- Access professional websites e.g. British Association of Social Workers;
- Read relevant newspapers, textbooks and journals e.g. *British Journal of Social Work*;
- Arrange to meet and talk with a practising social work professional;
- Speak to family and friends who may have had experience with social work professionals;
- Arrange voluntary placements or work experience in a care setting or agency;
- Attend open days at universities.

4.2 *Will I enjoy being a Social Work student?*

The preparation undertaken to become a social worker is challenging yet potentially rewarding. Many students find that they love the course while a small number of others ultimately decide that it is not for them. In either event the course encourages 'self awareness' and nurtures 'self reflection', two crucial abilities required in order to be a competent professional social worker.

A number of applicants to the Social Work programmes have at one time helped friends and family or 'been in previous contact with social workers' themselves. While these examples demonstrate potentially valuable life experience and may offer some insight into the profession, they alone should not form the basis of your decision to apply to a Social Work Programme. Nor should simply wanting a 'change of career'. You need to develop a good understanding of what the Social Worker/Social Work student role will involve and be highly motivated in order to cope with all aspects of being a full time Social Work student. This includes taking into account the duration (3 years BA/2 years MA) and the nature (academic/practice) of your social work training.

4.3 *Where does teaching take place and what are the facilities like?*

Teaching for the BA (Hons) programme takes place at the University of East London's Stratford Campus. The campus is near the town centre, providing an array of shopping mall, cafés, bars and restaurants, good leisure and culture facilities and excellent transport links. The campus is located near the former Olympic site and close to Stratford International Station and London City Airport is a short journey away. The campus has undergone an extensive programme of refurbishment and provides impressive facilities

The MA Programme runs in collaboration with the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust – a world-renowned institution specialising in training professionals in clinical practice. This collaboration is the only one of its kind in the UK and therefore offers students a unique opportunity. Teaching for the MA takes place jointly at the UEL Stratford Campus and also at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, which is located in Swiss Cottage.

Students from either programme are also invited to use the facilities located in and around the UEL Docklands campus.

4.4 How does UEL address equality and diversity?

The University of East London aims to create an intellectual community and workplace that welcomes and promotes diversity and equality in and through relationships involving all staff and students: learning and teaching; research and scholarship; outreach and other University activities and practices. All guests and members of the UEL community are entitled to be treated with courtesy according to these consensual norms of mutual respect and understanding. The Cass School of Education and Communities is fully supportive of the Students' Union and University's Equal Opportunities and anti-harassment policy, insisting that members of the student community 'treat all staff and students in a polite and mature way.'

During the admissions process, no applicant should be disadvantaged due to matters of 'race', class, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Where reasonable, we will attempt to accommodate the special needs of applicants provided we are given the relevant information in a timely manner to allow the necessary arrangements to be made. Should you have questions or need to request aids/modifications during the admissions process, please contact the Social Work Administrator. In most cases some form of written evidence will be required to support any special requests.

4.5 What are the basic entry criteria for the BA (Hons) Programme?

In addition to the UEL's general undergraduate entry requirements, applicants to the BA (Hons) Programme should typically be able to evidence the following on their UCAS/Application Form and during the selection process:

- 1) GCSE Maths and English at grade C or above (or a certified equivalent e.g. Key Skills Level 2 in Communication/Application of Number; Adult Numeracy/ Literacy; etc)**
- 2) Minimum of 120 UCAS points or equivalent**
- 3) Evidence of work with vulnerable people in a volunteer or paid capacity (recommended)**
- 4) Evidence in the personal statement of:**
 - good standard of written English;**
 - relevant level of understanding about the social work context and role;**
 - relevance of previous work experience to application;**
 - clear and convincing explanation of why they want to do an BA (Hons) Social Work Programme at this particular time.**

- 5) Applicants are required to be able to use basic IT facilities, including, word processing, Internet browsing and use of email.
- 6) An acceptable reference is required at the application stage. Applications without an acceptable reference will be rejected.

4.6 What are the basic entry criteria for the MA Programme?

In addition to the UEL's general postgraduate entry requirements, applicants to the MA Programme should typically be able to evidence the following on their UCAS/Application Form and during the selection process:

- 1) First degree in any subject (2:1 classification, or if applicant has significant experience in social care, plus a strong personal statement, then a 2:2 is acceptable; further, a 2:2 and a post graduate qualification, can also be considered). GCSE Maths and English grade C or above, (or a certified equivalent e.g. Key Skills Level 2 in Communication/Application of Number; Adult Numeracy/ Literacy; etc).
- 2) Applicants are also required to have experience of social care or working with vulnerable people in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- 3) Evidence in the personal statement of:
 - good standard of written English;
 - relevant level of understanding about the social work context and role;
 - relevance of previous work experience to application;
 - clear and convincing explanation of why they want to do an MA Social Work Programme at this particular time.
- 4) Applicants are required to be able to use basic IT facilities, including, word processing, Internet browsing and use of email.
- 5) An acceptable reference is required at the application stage. Applications without an acceptable reference will be rejected.

4.7 How do I apply for a place on the course?

Applications for the BA (Hons) programme are only accepted via the UCAS system – full details about the application process are available on the UEL and UCAS websites.

Applications for the MA are accepted via the UCAS system. Full details about the application process are available on the UEL and UCAS websites.

You should apply as early as possible as the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes at UEL are very popular. It is also important to ensure that your application is completed thoroughly and that you provide all the relevant information needed to make an informed decision as to whether or not you should be invited for an Entrance Exam.

4.8 How are students selected for the Social Work Programmes?

Prospective students first submit an application to their programme of choice via the UCAS website or direct entry for the MA. Once an application has been submitted, there are 4 points of assessment in the selection process:

1. UCAS/Application form;
2. Entrance Examination;
3. Group Exercise
4. Interview.

All four components must be successfully completed in order to receive an Unconditional or Conditional Offer. The selection process is covered in more detail in the section headed: Selection Process.

4.9 How much will my studies cost and how do I fund them?

Both Social Work Programmes are full-time (3 years BA (Hons) and 2 years MA) for which fees are charged on an annual basis. The fees for full-time undergraduate and graduate programmes can be found on the UEL website.

The number of bursaries is capped for both the BA (hons) Social Work and MA Social Work, so not all students will receive a bursary..

Social Work bursaries are administered by The NHS Business Services Authority on behalf of the Department of Health. All students should liaise with them directly with

any queries about how to apply for a bursary and any questions regarding eligibility for the bursary.

Additionally, for the BA (Hons) Programme you may, according to your individual circumstances, be eligible for financial support through a student loan towards student fees, maintenance/living costs, and some may also be eligible for an additional UEL loan. All Home students are eligible for a student loan from the Student Loans Company, which does not have to be repaid until you are earning a sufficient salary.

For detailed information about fees and funding please visit the following websites (you should check them regularly for updates):

Fees and Funding:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/student-services/moneymatters/grantsloans.htm>

Funding Education:

<http://www.fundingeducation.co.uk>

NHS Business Services Authority (Social Work Bursaries):

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students>

NHS Bursaries:

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students.aspx>

Skills for Care:

http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/funding/sourcesofskillsfunding/other_sources_of_funding.aspx

UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA):

<http://www.ukcisa.org.uk>

4.10 How will I be taught on the Social Work Programmes?

Both the BA and MA Social Work programmes have developed a subject-specific social work pedagogy drawing on a number of teaching methods informed by adult learning theory and models. We deploy a variety of methods to facilitate student learning. These involve: lectures, seminar discussions, seminar presentations, group-work, simulation exercises to teach specific skills and knowledge e.g. courtroom skills, skills development through reflective feedback, communication skills teaching using actors and video feedback, group tutorials, individual tutorials and dissertation supervision. The aim is to match the method of delivery to the content and purpose of the session. We also work with service users and carers so that learning is informed by their experiences of using services. In developing skills teaching and workshops for practice we also work closely with social workers from our partner agencies.

Your lectures, seminars and tutorials will be delivered by knowledgeable academic staff who are experienced practitioners with specialisms in a variety of areas. Guest speakers with specialist expertise, including service users will also contribute to various modules.

Students also have the opportunity to develop professional skills via presentations based on both academic and practice-based work throughout the programme. As well as time spent in class, you will need to develop knowledge and understanding via focused and guided reading. You will also need to read preparatory material in advance of taught sessions. The library is very well stocked with appropriate reading, while sometimes materials will be provided or made available via the Virtual Learning Environment.

The structure of both programmes, and their provision, within an intellectually stimulating and satisfying environment, is geared to ensuring that you develop both academic and practice-based skills that will be useful both in your future work as a practitioner, or in other fields you might choose to enter.

4.11 What is “practice learning” and when does it begin?

Practice Learning is where students attend work-based placements to apply theory and skills under the supervision of experienced social work practitioners. This provides students with the opportunity to integrate classroom learning with service user interaction in real world situations.

All students on the BA (Hons) and MA Programmes attend a total of 200 days of practice learning. For both programmes placements run concurrently with teaching.

BA (Hons)

- 30 Skills Days (Developing Skills for Practice) – undertaken in Year 1
- 70 Practice Placement Days - Year 2
- 100 Practice Placement Days - Year 3

MA

- 30 Skills Days (Developing Skills for Practice) – integrated into Years 1 and 2
- 70 Practice Placement Days - Year 1
- 100 Practice Placement Days - Year 2

4.12 How will I be assessed?

Most modules are assessed through written assignments, which are usually essays or portfolios. You will also prepare group and individual oral presentations and there are computer-based tests on some modules. You will complete both formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments provide an opportunity for you to develop your academic skills by completing work and receiving informal feedback. Summative assessments are formal and designed to determine whether learning outcomes are being met. Additionally, Practice Placements are assessed through direct observation by a trained 'Practice Educator'.

4.13 What type of support is available to students?

You will be assigned a Personal Tutor to support your engagement with academic study and with your practice placements. Your Personal Tutor is there to support you in your studies and on placement and will be able to provide help on the following key features:

- helping you to develop your own academic and preparation skills;
- balancing your commitment to study, your employment and any home life issues;
- managing the transition relevant to each level of study;
- support during your two practice placements;
- understanding any relevant university regulations.

Your Academic Advisor will also be able to offer you advice on the support services available and refer you to additional support such as counselling, financial support.

4.14 Are there any age restrictions regarding who may study on the Social Work Programmes?

You must be at least 18 years old to commence study on any of the Social Work Programmes. Other than this specification, age has no bearing on your application or selection. We welcome people from a variety of walks of life to apply as we believe a diverse student body enriches learning, and represents society at large.

4.15 Do I have to be an EU resident to apply for study on the Social Work Programmes?

No, both the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes accept applications from overseas applicants. However, your level of tuition fees will be based on:

- your nationality;
- your immigration status in the UK;
- where you have been living and;
- what you have been doing for the three years prior to the start of your programme.

Admissions staff at the University of East London are the only persons permitted to determine an applicant's fee status for the purpose of tuition fees. It is therefore advisable to contact the admissions office to determine how you will be assessed for fees: feeassess@uel.ac.uk

4.16 Where can I get more information?

In the first instance, you should consult the websites highlighted in the Useful Links section of this guidebook. The University of East London also holds open days throughout the year and it is advisable that prospective students attend at least one in order to obtain information about any programmes of interest. Information regarding Open Days is also available on the UEL website. Additionally, Admissions Tutors and Programme Leaders are able to provide information and are contactable through email.

4.17 Useful Links

About UEL:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/contact/>

Admissions Policy and Principles:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/manual/admissionspolicy.htm> *

British Association of Social Work (BASW):

<http://www.basw.co.uk>

Corporate Marketing:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/marketing/admissions/index.htm>

Disability Support:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/disability/index.htm>

Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS):

<https://www.gov.uk/crb-criminal-records-bureau-check/overview> (Email address for transgendered applicants: sensitive@db.s.gsi.gov.uk)

Equality and Diversity Strategy:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/hrservices/documents/emhandbook/generalpolicies.pdf>

Fees and Funding:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/student-services/moneymatters/grantsloans.htm>

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC):

<http://www.hpc-uk.org/>

Being taken over by Social Work England

International Office:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/international/>

NHS Business Services Authority (Social Work Bursaries):

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students>

Student Admissions:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/marketing/admissions/index.htm>

Student Services:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/student-services/>

Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust:

<http://www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/>

UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA):

www.ukcisa.org.uk

Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS):

<http://www.ucas.com>

*Please note: The UEL Admissions Policy provides general guidance and best practices for all of the programs offered throughout the university. As programmes which lead to a professional qualification including potential registration the Health and Care and Professional Council, the procedures for Social Work may vary in certain areas.

4.18 Timescales

Teaching on the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes takes place from September until May of the UEL academic calendar. Practice Placements are also completed during this time. Below are some general timeframes that you may want to note. You will, however, want to consult the UCAS and UEL websites for a full list of admissions dates and deadlines.

September: UCAS begin taking applications. This may be a good time to narrow your choices and make a final decision about whether or not you intend to apply to university.

November/December: Entrance Examinations and group exercise/interviews commence for the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes.

January: First deadline for most applications. Interviews continue for the UEL BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes

March: Entrance Examinations/Group Exercise/Interviews continue.

April: Entrance Examinations/Group Exercise/Interviews continue.

June/July: Social Work Offer Holders Day (all Offer Holders are invited to the University for an introductory day).

September/October: Enrolment and registration for courses. Teaching commences.

5. SELECTION PROCESS:

BA (Hons) AND MA SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMMES

This section highlights the process undertaken to select students for the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes. Throughout the process decisions are made in a holistic manner; taking into account the many facets of the person who is applying. Each component of the selection process is designed to help select students who are capable of completing study at university level and developing into competent practitioners. All aspects of the selection process are underpinned by the stated entry-level Professional Capabilities as outlined by the then College of Social Work (now no longer extant) and the Standards of Education and Training as set by the Health and Care Professions Council. Service users and carers also have key roles in the admissions process.

Overview

Below is a brief outline of the steps in the selection process.

5.1 *What are the steps in the selection process?*

Once your application has been submitted, there are 4 points of assessment in the selection process:

1. Application Form
2. Entrance Examination
3. Group Exercise
4. Interview

All Four components must be successfully completed in order to receive an **Unconditional** or **Conditional Offer** to join the Social Work Programme. The Entrance Examination, Group Exercise and Interview will normally take place on the same day. You will need to pass the Entrance Examination in order to be eligible for a place in a Group Exercise and Interview.

Following either an Unconditional or Conditional Offer, all offer holders are required to apply for a Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) Check for Regulated Activity. Having a criminal conviction does not automatically bar people from studying social work or becoming social workers. Social work is exempted from certain provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended from time to time), and information about all previous convictions, cautions, warnings or ongoing police

matters must be provided (there are some exceptions – for more information on this look at DBS website or consult the interview team). A conviction does not automatically debar an applicant and the programme will seek further information about the circumstances to make an informed and considered judgement about an applicant's suitability in such instances.

The expectation is that you will declare criminal convictions as well as cautions, bind over's, fines etc. in your initial application as well as at interview. All social work students are required to have an enhanced criminal conviction checks DBS Check for Regulated Activity carried out and anything which later comes to light that was not declared at the interview stage may result in your immediate withdrawal from the programme. Therefore, as above, it is advisable that you disclose all relevant information as early as possible in the admissions process. It is also advisable to check directly with Social Work England (<https://socialworkengland.org.uk>) to see if they can advise you as to whether your offence(s) would likely to bar you from being registered once you complete the programme.

The Application form:

Below is some information about the Application screening process.

5.2 How does my application get to you?

Application Forms are initially processed and screened by the Admissions Unit to ensure that the basic entry criteria are evidenced. The Application Form is then forwarded it to the Social Work Administrator for processing and distribution to the appropriate Social Work Programme Admissions Tutor.

5.3 What happens after you receive my application?

Once your application has been forwarded to the relevant social work programme, it is reviewed by one of the members of the selection committee, who will determine whether or to invite you to sit and Entrance Examination.



5.4 *What are you looking for in the application?*

Completing your application is arguably the most important part of the process. It is usually the first opportunity that you will have to represent yourself to the selection committee. We look for applicants who not only honest, professional, and reflective, but who also demonstrate academic potential. In short, your application needs to evidence that you are ready to successfully undertake study at the university level. **This includes confirming that you are able to use basic IT facilities, including, word processing, Internet browsing and use of email.**

5.5 *Which sections are most important?*

Every section of the application is important and should be completed thoroughly. You will want to ensure that all your personal details are accurate and list any and all relevant experience in the correct section(s). If you have received low marks in the past you may want to explain the reasons for these and outline how you have developed and will manage at university.

5.6 *What is the 'Personal Statement'?*

The Personal Statement is an opportunity for you to explain why you want to study social work at UEL and to demonstrate something of your knowledge of the subject. It is also a chance to provide more information about yourself – including relevant personal/professional experiences, interests and skills, and what you might contribute the UEL Social Work Programmes. You should try to convey a 'sense' of who you are a person and provide some evidence of how your personal characteristics align with what is expected of social work students and professionals.

Here are some tips:

Tell the truth - It may be that there was a situation where you did not achieve as well as you hoped but took away some learning that you were able to apply to other situations. Be honest about yourself including your abilities, qualifications, failures and successes. If you misrepresent your experiences early on (e.g. work experience criminal history, etc.) you are not likely to perform well in the later stages of the admissions process. Also, your application may be withdrawn if it is discovered at a later date to contain inaccurate information.

Establish your commitment and motivation to study - A 'change of careers' or 'a good/bad experience with social workers' alone are not sufficient reasons to apply to study social work. You need to demonstrate that you have thought about your

decision to apply and will remain committed throughout your course of study.

Emphasise your academic interests - Social work is not simply a vocation where practitioners 'care for' service users. There are complex issues that impact practice and inform the daily decisions that practitioners have to make. A general awareness of the research and debates that inform social work practice will strengthen your application.

Describe how your experiences will help you on the course and as a practitioner - Being able to reflect is a crucial aspect of social work practice. You should demonstrate an ability to learn and incorporate this learning into your growth and development.

Show your awareness of the broader context/Demonstrate an understanding of current affairs and that you have read around the subject- Many of the complexities that social workers deal with relate to the shifting global environment. It is important to understand the impact that global issues have on national and local practice.

Demonstrate what kind of student you might be - Your personal statement is the first opportunity you have to demonstrate your academic ability. If it is poorly written (e.g. poor grammar, poor structure, etc.) you are not likely to be invited to sit an Entrance Examination.

Write about your outside interests and achievements - Demonstrate your different skills and how they might be relevant to social work study/practice.

Make sure you give a final summing up statement - You will want to ensure that your statement does not end abruptly instead is wrapped up nicely. Provide a closing statement and/or some final words about your suitability.

5.7 Do I need a reference?

Yes. The reference is a key part of your application as it provides a third person perspective of your suitability for the programme.

Applicants to the BA (Hons) programme need to have 1 reference included with the application.

Applicants to the MA programme should submit one with the application and be able to provide 2 references upon request.

References should be professional and/or academic. Personal references (e.g. from a spouse or friend) are unacceptable. **An acceptable reference is required at the application stage. Applications without an acceptable reference will be rejected.**

The Entrance Examination:

Below is some information about the Entrance Examination.

5.8 What does the Entrance Exam test for?

The primary purpose of the exam is to assess whether your written English proficiency meets the required standard and to assess how far you meet the professional body entry threshold standards and can go on to meet the HCPC Standards of Proficiency (similar standards will be implemented by Social Work England) at the point of completing your studies. You will need to write at a standard appropriate for undergraduate level and must write, coherently, logically and fully comprehend the tasks. The Entrance Exam also provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate how well you articulate your views and opinions in written form. It is important to show your analysis and reasoning and express this clearly and accurately to the reader.

5.9 How long is the Entrance Exam?

The Exam lasts 30 minutes.

5.10 Where does the Entrance Examination take place?

The Exam is held on the Stratford Campus in Water Lane, Stratford, London. **Please note that if you are unable to attend, we will only be able to re-invite you to another test session if there is availability of places on your chosen programme.** Please quote your full name and programme for which you have applied when you contact us. It is important that you inform us of your non-attendance as places are limited.

5.11 How should I prepare for the Entrance Examination?

You should ensure that you are comfortable writing and that you are prepared for exam conditions. The exam is designed to assess your English and grammar so it

would be in your best interest to make sure that you are comfortable evidencing this in written form.

If you consider that you have special needs in order to undertake this, you must inform the social work administrator at least 3 days before the date of the entrance examination. If given notice, the social work administrator can arrange additional time, access to a computer or whatever else you might reasonably need. However you must understand that we will be unable to meet your request if we do not receive your request by the deadline.

5.12 What happens after the Entrance Exam?

Following the Entrance Examination, your paper will be marked and you will be informed as to whether you have successfully passed. Successful applicants will be invited to participate in a Group Exercise and Interview, generally the same day but occasionally you may be invited in for a later date. The interview will normally follow the Group Exercise on the same day.

5.13 The Group Exercise:

Below is some information about the Group Exercise:

5.14 What is the Group Exercise?

The group exercise will last about 20 minutes. In a small group you will be asked to undertake a social work related task such as looking at a case study and developing a care plan.

5.15 What is the purpose of the Group Exercise?

The Group Exercise is designed to assess the applicant's ability to contribute to a group process involving: contributing and communicating ideas; listening to and understanding other group member's ideas; contributing to planning; and respecting and empowering other group members.

The Interview:

Below is some information about the Interview:

5.16 Who will I be interviewed by?

Social work academics and stakeholders conduct interviews. Stakeholders include: service users, carers, practitioners and employers. All Interviewers are briefed on the selection process and have a thorough understanding of the relevant entry criteria.

5.17 What is the purpose of the Interview?

The Interview is designed to assess the applicant's suitability to commence a social work training programme in line with professional body requirements. More specifically, it provides a chance to observe interpersonal communication, spoken English, professionalism and other characteristics that are not readily detectable from the other components of the selection process. The Interview also allows provides applicants with an opportunity to pose questions to the interviewer regarding the nature and structure of the relevant programme.

5.18 How long is the interview?

Interviews are usually 30 minutes long though in some cases this may vary.

5.19 Where does the Interview take place?

The Interview takes place on the Stratford Campus in Stratford, Newham.

5.20 How should I prepare for the Interview?

You should have a clear understanding of why it is that you would like to join your chosen programme and be able to reflect upon the factors that have contributed to your decision. It is vital that you are able to discuss social work practice and how you apply your understanding of social work principles, including anything relevant you have read on the subject. It is also important to remember that the interview is a chance for you to demonstrate what type of practitioner/professional you might be. You should also be prepared to discuss any disciplinary matters that you have noted on your disclosure form. Lastly, the Interview is an opportunity for you to pose any questions that you might have about your chosen programme.

MA in Social Work applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with literature and information of relevance to contemporary social work.

Some possible sources of information:

Quality newspapers, for example, The Guardian, The Times

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)- www.scie.org.uk

Health & Social Care Professions Council (HCPC)- www.hpc-uk.org

Social Work England <https://socialworkengland.org.uk>

Social work text books, for example:

Ruch, G, Turney, D and Ward, A, 2010, Relationship-Based Social Work, London, Jessica Kingsley

Wilson, K, Ruch, G, Lymbery, M and Cooper, A, 2011, Social Work: An Introduction to Contemporary Practice, 2nd edition, Harlow, Pearson

Horner, N, 2013, What is Social Work? 4th edition, London, Learning Matters

Receiving an Offer:

Below is some information about Offers.

5.21 Who decides whether or not I receive an Offer?

Following your Interview, the interviewer(s) will make one of the following three recommendations to the Selection Committee:

1. Extend an Unconditional Offer
2. Extend a Conditional Offer
3. Do not extend an Offer (Reject Application)

At this stage, the recommendation will be based on your performance during the Interview. Where an applicant performs marginally, the Application and Entrance Test are also considered along with the Interview.

5.22 How will I know if I have received and offer?

You will be notified through the UCAS portal as to whether or not you receive an offer. This usually occurs 1-2 weeks following the interview. Offers are either Conditional or Unconditional. Following any offer your eligibility will remain subject to satisfactory DBS enhanced criminal conviction checks. Social work is exempted from certain provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended from time to time), and information about all previous convictions, cautions, warnings or ongoing police matters must be provided (there are some exceptions – for more information on this look at DBS website or consult the interview team). A conviction does not automatically debar an applicant and the programme will seek further information about the circumstances to make an informed and considered judgement about an applicant's suitability in such instances.

5.23 What are the funding arrangements?

Details of the NHS bursary, how to apply and any recent changes are available from <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/825.aspx>.

The UEL Student finance office should also be able to help you identify possible undergraduate funding options.

Bursary nominations for the BA (Hons) in Social Work at the completion of the first year

Bursary nominations for the MA in Social Work at the beginning of the programme

Nominations for BA only:

Performance and attendance in the first year of the programme will contribute to the nominations for the NHS bursary from year 2 and 3.

Nominations for the MA only:

Applicants are being nominated for a bursary drawing on the NHS BSA guidance taking account of the allocation of bursaries made to this University for each cohort. We are prioritising applicants who:

- Score highly overall in entrance test, group exercise and admissions interview
- Receive unconditional offers or conditional offers, and
- Accept early in the admissions process. It is important that you use the online portal to let us know your decision, it will this be date that is used as part of the ranking process. Emailing the admissions team your decision will mean that it might take few days before the decision is recorded and this can significantly influence where you are ranked in the nomination list

We will take a decision on the first group of nominees from all those who applied before January UCAS deadline date and have accepted their offer by the May UCAS deadline date.

We will notify any further nominees before the deadline set by NHS BSA for the University to submit its ranked list.

Further Information:

5.24 Open days

You are very welcome to attend an open day for further information – these will be held throughout the year and further information is available on the UEL website:
<http://www.uel.ac.uk/openday/>

5.25 Useful Links

About UEL:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/contact/>

Admissions Policy and Principles:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/manual/admissionspolicy.htm> *

BASW:

<http://www.basw.co.uk>

Corporate Marketing:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/marketing/admissions/index.htm>

Disability Support:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/disability/index.htm>

Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS):

<https://www.gov.uk/crb-criminal-records-bureau-check/overview> (Email address for transgendered applicants: sensitive@dbs.gsi.gov.uk)

Equality and Diversity Strategy:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/hrservices/documents/emhandbook/generalpolicies.pdf>

Fees and Funding:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/student services/moneymatters/grantsloans.htm>

Health and Care Professions Council

<http://www.hpc-uk.org/>

NHS Business Services Authority (Social Work Bursaries):

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students>

Student Admissions:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/marketing/admissions/index.htm>

Student Services:

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/studentservices/>

Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust:

<http://www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/>

Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS):

www.ucas.com

*N.B: The UEL Admissions Policy provides general guidance and best practices for all of the programs offered throughout the university. As programmes which lead to a professional qualification including potential registration the Health and Care and Professional Council, the admissions procedures for Social Work may vary in certain areas.

6. SERVICE USER AND CARER INVOLVEMENT:

Ultimately service users and carers are at the heart of social work practice. It is widely recognized that the ideas, skills, and knowledge of individuals who have first-hand experience of receiving support from health and social services have crucial role to play in preparing students for social work practice. To this end, UEL ensures that all stakeholders are able to provide significant contributions to the development of our Social Work programmes.

The involvement of service users and carers allows students to gain insight from a variety of perspectives while also challenging common assumptions and/or stereotypes. Their involvement also provides an opportunity for service users and carers to voice opinions about social work education including practitioner development and programme delivery. UEL involves service users (current and former), carers and other stakeholders in multiple facets of the social work programmes' development and delivery.

6.1 How do you involve service users and carers in your programmes?

Service users, carers and other stakeholders are directly involved in various aspects of the design and delivery of the Social Work Programmes including:

- Admissions
- Course design
- Contribution to teaching
- Assessment of practice
- Quality Control

6.2 Will I be taught by service users and/or carers?

Service users and carers assist in the delivery of both practice and academic modules. Throughout the course of each programme there will be sessions in which someone other than a UEL faculty member may deliver teaching (e.g. registered service users, social workers, medical professionals). This is done to enhance learning by provided variety perspectives and experiences. All modules however, are ultimately lead by UEL and/or Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust staff.

6.3 Are the service users and carers qualified/trained teachers?

People who support in the delivery of the BA (Hons) and MA Social Work Programmes have varying qualifications and experience. It is not a requirement that they have a teaching qualification. All are provided with an overview of the programme and referred to the relevant induction/documentation to support their involvement.

6.4 Do service users and carers have access to my confidential information?

As a general rule only the relevant UEL staff has access to any information that you provide to the university and it is treated with the strictest of confidence. All service users, carers and stakeholders involved in programme delivery are briefed on issues of confidentiality and adhere to guidelines provided by the relevant programme for the selected activity.

6.5 What areas of social work practice do service users and carers have experience with?

The service users and carers involved in the programmes have experiences of involvement in a range of social work practice settings including children and family work and adult mental health. Some have not accessed services for quite some time while others may be actively engaged. Most importantly each carries with them the experience of being a person who has experienced the input of a social worker.

7. FAQs–BA (Hons) SOCIAL WORK

What is a Social Work degree programme?

The Social Work degree programme is a professional course leading to eligibility to register as a social worker.

How many places are available?

We have an annual intake of 65 students

What are the Entry Requirements?

- You are required to provide evidence of GSCE grade C or above in English and Maths or certified equivalents (e.g. Key Skills – Level 2 or Higher).
- The UCAS tariff point minimum required for acceptance on to the BA (Hons) degree programme is 120.
- If you are applying/entering via Access routes, you will need to demonstrate the ability to succeed at university level.
- Prior to any offer, you need to confirm your ability to use basic IT facilities, including word processing, internet browsing and email.
- Successful applicants must meet communication and comprehension skills to International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) Level 7.
- It is helpful if applicants have some prior paid or voluntary work experience undertaken with people in a caring capacity.

When should I apply?

We receive a high volume of applications so it is recommended that you apply as early as possible. Applications are made through UCAS. Please remember to complete your application in full, giving details of **all** your qualifications, (including GSCEs), employment and any relevant experience.

Can I study part-time?

No, the BA (Hons) Social Work programme is full time.

Can I work and study at the same time?

We recommend working during holiday periods only due to the demands of undertaking a professional qualification where academic study and practice placement is combined

How long is the programme?

The BA (Hons) Social Work programme is three years in duration.

Can I transfer from another course?

No, this is not possible. You will need to make an application through UCAS for entry into **Year 1** of the programme.

What are the funding arrangements?

In addition to student loans available for undergraduate study, there is currently an NHS bursary available for the second and third year of study for BA Social Work. Bursaries are limited in number and students will be nominated at the end of the first year.

Details of the NHS bursary, how to apply and any recent changes are available from <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/825.aspx>.

The UEL Student finance office should also be able to help you identify possible undergraduate funding options.

What will I be studying?

Social work programmes are required to teach a number of key areas to ensure students understand the law, social policy, human growth and development, safeguarding practice, theory and research, communication skills and interventions plus ensure you have two practice based work placements. These subject areas and more will form part of your studies.

What is the applicant selection process?

Academic staff assesses all UCAS applications. Short-listing decisions are made on the basis of how the academic entry requirements are met as well as on the quality of the personal statement and references. Short-listed applicants are invited to attend the University for a **written test** to ensure that a key requirement for social work applicants (i.e. the ability to communicate clearly in written English) is met. All written tests are marked using standardised criteria equivalent to Grade C GCSE English. Applicants who successfully pass the written test are invited for a one-to-one interview with a member of academic staff or a social work professional from one of our partner agencies. If you are offered a place it is conditional on your

meeting all the requirements including those stated by the HCPC/Social Work England.

Please note that if you are unable to attend, we will only be able to re-invite you to another test session if there is availability of places on your chosen programme. Please quote your full name and programme for which you have applied when you contact us. It is important that you inform us of your non-attendance, as places are limited.

If you consider that you have special needs in order to undertake this, you must inform the social work administrator at least 3 days before the date of the entrance examination. If given notice, the social work admissions administrator can arrange additional time, access to a computer or whatever else you might reasonably need. However you must understand that we will be unable to meet your request if we do not receive your request by the deadline.

How can I prepare myself for group exercise and interview?

The interview will take place with an academic and/or representative from practice and/or a service user or carer. You need to demonstrate some understanding of the social work role and so it is suggested that you carry out some background reading on social work prior to your interview. We need to assess your potential to manage the demands of the programme and the demands of the job. You should arrive in good time for the group exercise and interview with all of the requested documentation.

How is the course structured?

The course runs for three years and each year is divided into 2 terms. Teaching takes place during both terms as do practice placements (years 2-3).

What are the teaching hours?

Teaching takes place anytime from 9pm until 6pm – up to five days a week. You will also undertake two practice placements in the second and third years of the programme and will be expected to work the usual hours of the particular agency, this could include shift work, starting earlier and evening work.

When do I go on placement?

The second and third year practice learning opportunities (placements) commence during the first semester of the respective year.

Who will select my placements and where will they be located?

The Practice Learning Team sources placements and students are not permitted to find their own. Placements can be in a variety of settings, both statutory and voluntary, and also other agencies including schools and prisons for example. Most of our placements are in the East London area but we also use some in North London and further a field. Our placements cover a range of service user groups including children and families, mental health, learning disability, physical disability and youth work.

Can I study social work if I have a criminal conviction?

Having a criminal conviction does not automatically bar people from studying social work or becoming social workers. Social work is exempted from certain provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended from time to time), and information about all previous convictions, cautions, warnings or on-going police matters must be provided (there are some exceptions – for more information on this look at DBS website or consult the interview team). A conviction does not automatically debar an applicant and the programme will seek further information about the circumstances to make an informed and considered judgement about an applicant's suitability in such instances

The expectation is that you will declare criminal convictions as well as cautions, bind overs, fines etc. in your initial application as well as at interview. All social work students are required to have an enhanced criminal conviction checks DBS Check for Regulated Activity carried out and anything which later comes to light that was not declared at the interview stage may result in your immediate withdrawal from the programme. Therefore, as above, it is advisable that you disclose all relevant information as early as possible in the admissions process. It is also advisable to check directly with the Social Work England (<https://socialworkengland.org.uk>) to see if they can advise you as to whether your offence(s) would likely to bar you from being registered once you complete the programme.

N.B. - If you have any convictions that have occurred during the past 5 years, you should contact the admissions tutor of your chosen programme for further discussion.

Fitness for practice and HCPC/Social Work England guidelines:

Students must demonstrate they are 'fit for practice' **before** the first practice placement commences in Year 2 of the programme. Students not meeting this requirement will be exited from the programme.

Will I be a fully qualified Social Worker on completion of the course?

You will be eligible to apply for registration as a Social Worker with the Social Work England.

Where could I gain experience to become a social worker?

Social work has vocational element to it so it helps if you are familiar with the roles undertaken by its practitioners as well as the values that shape the profession and how they are applied. Having some prior work experience is not a requirement of the BA (Hons) programme, but is strongly recommended. If you would like to gain further experience volunteer agencies are good places to start. You may also want to explore this website:

http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/areas/londonandsoutheast/london_and_south_east.aspx

8. FAQs–MA SOCIAL WORK

How many places are available?

We have an annual intake of 45 students.

What are the Entry Requirements?

Applicants must be graduates in any discipline who can demonstrate a clear commitment to social work. All applicants are required to have an upper second degree (2:1), or above, in any subject. Applicants with a second-class degree (2:2) and postgraduate qualifications may be considered in exceptional circumstances (i.e. a strong personal statement and significant social care experience). Additionally, all applicants need key skills in English and Maths, GCSE grade A - C or equivalent. Applicants are also required to have experience of social care or working with vulnerable people in a paid or voluntary capacity.

When should I apply?

We receive a high volume of applications so we recommend that you apply as early as possible. Applications are made through UCAS. Please remember to complete your application in full, giving details of **all** your qualifications, including GCSEs and any previous employment.

Can I study part-time?

No, the MA Social Work programme is full time.

How long is the programme?

The duration of the programme is two years.

Can I transfer from another course?

No, this is not possible. You will need to make an application through UCAS.

What are the funding arrangements?

Details of the NHS bursary, how to apply and any recent changes are available from <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/825.aspx>.

Bursary nominations

Applicants are being nominated for a bursary drawing on the NHS BSA guidance taking account of the allocation of bursaries made to this University for the cohort beginning in September. We are prioritising applicants who:

- Score highly overall in entrance test, group exercise and admissions interview
- Receive unconditional offers or conditional offers, and
- Accept early in the admissions process. It is important that you use the online portal to let us know your decision, it will be this date that is used as part of the ranking process. Emailing the admissions team your decision will mean that it might take a few days before the decision is recorded and this can significantly influence where you are ranked in the nomination list

We will take a decision on nominees from all those who applied and accepted the offer by the May UCAS deadline date.

Can a local authority or other employer sponsor me?

Yes you can but your employer who has agreed to sponsor you to train to be a social worker needs to contact the MA Social Work Admissions Tutor, Stuart Stevenson s.stevenson@uel.ac.uk

What will I be studying?

Social work programmes are required to teach a number of key areas to ensure students understand the law, social policy, human growth and development, safeguarding practice, theory and research, communication skills and interventions plus ensure you have two practice based work placements. All of these subject areas and more will form part of your studies.

What is the selection process?

Academic staff assesses all applications. Short-listing decisions are made on the basis of how the academic entry requirements are met as well as on the quality of the personal statement and references. Short-listed applicants are invited to attend the University for a **written test** to ensure that a key requirement for social work applicants, i.e. the ability to write and communicate clearly in the English language is met. All written tests are marked using standardised criteria equivalent to Grade C GCSE English. Applicants who successfully pass the written test are invited for a group exercise and one-to-one interview with a member of academic staff or a social work professional from one of our partner agencies. This will usually be on the day of the test so ensure you have the whole day set aside. If you are offered a place it is conditional on your meeting all the requirements including those stated by the HCPC or Social Work England.

Please note that if you are unable to attend, we will only be able to re-invite you to another test session if there is availability of places on your chosen programme. Please quote your full name and programme for which you have applied when you contact us. It is important that you inform us of your non-attendance, as places are limited.

If you consider that you have special needs in order to undertake this, you must inform the social work admissions administrator at least 3 days before the date of the entrance examination. If given notice, the social work administrator can arrange additional time, access to a computer or whatever else you might reasonably need. However you must understand that we will be unable to meet your request if we do not receive your request by the deadline.

How can I prepare myself for interview?

The interview may take place with an academic and/or representative from practice and/or a service user or carer. You need to demonstrate some understanding of the social work role and so it is suggested carry out some background reading on social work prior to your interview. We need to assess your potential to manage the

demands of the programme and the demands of the job. You should arrive in good time for your interview.

MA in Social Work applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with literature and information of relevance to contemporary social work.

Some possible sources of information:

Quality newspapers, for example, The Guardian, The Times

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)- www.scie.org.uk

Health & Social Care Professions Council (HCPC)- www.hpc-uk.org

Social Work England <https://socialworkengland.org.uk>

Social work text books, for example:

Ruch, G, Turney, D and Ward, A, 2010, Relationship-Based Social Work, London, Jessica Kingsley

Wilson, K, Ruch, G, Lymbery, M and Cooper, A, 2011, Social Work: An Introduction to Contemporary Practice, 2nd edition, Harlow, Pearson

Horner, N, 2013, What is Social Work? 4th edition, London, Learning Matters

Can I work and study at the same time?

We recommend working during holiday periods only due to the demands of undertaking a professional qualification where academic study and practice placement is combined

How is the course structured?

For the first semester of year 1, (September to January) the programme runs from the University of East London. From January, you are taught at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust in Hampstead. Year 2 teaching all takes place at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust.

What are the Teaching hours?

Teaching can anytime from 9pm until 6pm – up to five days a week. You will also be expected to undertake two practice placements in each year of the programme and will be expected to work the usual hours of the particular agency, this could include shift work, starting earlier and evening work.

When do I go on placement?

Placements are usually either 3 or 4 days a week. The year 1 practice learning opportunity (placement) commences in January and continues until June. The first placement is 70 days. The second year practice learning opportunity commences in October and runs until June (depending on pattern of days worked).

Placement: who will find my placements and where will they be?

The Practice Learning Team sources placements. Due to very important reasons, students are not permitted to find their own placements. Placements can be in a variety of settings, statutory and voluntary, and also other agencies including schools and prisons for example. Most of our placements are in the East London area but we also use some in North London and further afield. Our placements cover a range of service user groups including children and families, mental health, learning disability, physical disability and youth work.

Can I study social work if I have a criminal conviction?

Having a criminal conviction does not automatically bar people from studying social work or becoming social workers. Social work is exempted from certain provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended from time to time), and information about all previous convictions, cautions, warnings or on-going police matters must be provided (there are some exceptions – for more information on this look at DBS website or consult the interview team). A conviction does not automatically debar an applicant and the programme will seek further information about the circumstances to make an informed and considered judgement about an applicant's suitability in such instances. The expectation is that you will declare criminal convictions as well as cautions, bind overs, fines etc. in your initial application as well as at interview. All social work students are required to have an enhanced criminal conviction checks DBS Check for Regulated Activity carried out and anything which later comes to light that was not declared at the interview stage may result in your immediate withdrawal from the programme. Therefore, as above, it is advisable that you disclose all relevant information as early as possible in the admissions process. It is also advisable to check directly with the HCPC (www.hpc-uk.org) or Social Work England (once they take over) (<https://socialworkengland.org.uk>) to see if they can advise you as to whether your offence(s) would likely to bar you from being registered once you complete the programme.

N.B. - If you have any convictions that have occurred during the past 5 years, you should contact the admissions tutor of your chosen programme for further discussion.

Fitness for Practice and HCPC/Social Work England guidelines:

Students must demonstrate they are “fit for practice” **before** the first practice placement commences in year 1 of the programme. Students not meeting the requirement will be exited from the programme.

Will I be a fully qualified social worker on completion of the course?

You will be eligible to apply for registration as a social worker with the Social Work England.

Thank you

Again, thank you for your interest in the course and for taking for taking the time read this guidebook. Please feel free to contact us with any further questions.