

Social Work

This programme is no longer recruiting. Please refer to the updated specification for the programme of the same name.

Final award	BA (Hons)
Intermediate awards available	Cert HE, Dip HE
UCAS code	L501
Details of professional body accreditation	Was a General Social Care Council approved programme but following a change in the statutory regulator to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) this programme is currently pending approval from the HCPC.
Relevant QAA Benchmark statements	QAAHE Academic Standards: Social Work QAAHE Code of Practice for the assurance of academic Quality and standards in higher education: Placement learning
Date specification last up-dated	April 2013

Profile

The summary - UCAS programme profile

BANNER BOX:

This programme is underpinned by academic and practice standards that will equip successful candidates for professional practice across the range of contemporary social work settings.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

All candidates are required to have:

- written and spoken English
- Key Skills in Maths and English (GCSE: A-C)
- appropriate personal and intellectual qualities
- experience of work in relevant settings

The selection process after the application form involves an entrance test and an individual interview with a tutor and/or a practice teacher from a partner social work agency.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

What is Social Work?

Social Work is the programme for you if you are interested in becoming a qualified social worker by developing your interpersonal skills and understanding whilst working with

individuals, groups and/or communities. You will learn about social structure and social justice within contemporary society. You will have a chance to observe, explore, develop and reflect on your own practice in both classroom settings and whilst on placement.

Social Work at UEL

At UEL we teach social work within the Cass school of Education and Communities. We present a rich offering of psycho-social perspectives as the foundation for the social work degree. Students have the opportunity, in their first year to undertake a young child observation. This is the basis for the development of theoretically informed professional practice skills that can be applied to a variety of interpersonal and inter-professional contexts. Students are encouraged to think critically and analytically about principles underpinning social policy and legislative frameworks. Whilst relationship-based practice is at the heart of this programme, students also have the opportunity to develop their own special interests and to conduct small-scale research into this area. Students and staff approach the learning and teaching experience within an anti-oppressive framework in which the significance of diversity and difference is continually explored. The diverse perspectives of the wide range of service users, inform the teaching and learning experience throughout the programme.

Programme structure

The social work degree is a three year full-time programme.

Learning environment

We take a variety of approaches to adult learning throughout the programme. As well as lectures, seminars and group tutorials, students undertake observations of a young child in their setting. Preparation for practice involves skills development, including shadowing experienced practitioners. Workshops offer access to the various kinds of service users that students may choose to work with as qualified practitioners. Students will keep journal accounts of some aspect of their learning. Students practice portfolios will document agency based practice development. Experience of different approaches to researching the social world will be considered and students will be helped to develop a realistic proposal for applying their selected approach. Throughout, individuals and groups will engage in reflective approaches valuing the diversity that exists in the learning group.

Assessment

To match the variety of subjects offered in the social work degree and the different methods used for learning and teaching, we have a range of different assessment approaches taken. Using Year 1 as an example the assessment approaches tools consist of: a Position Paper; an essay on an ethical dilemma encountered in practice; legal case assessments and a multi-choice question exercise ; an account of a session from your young child observation; a presentation based on library search of a social work practice method and essay exploring and analysing this method with respect to a specific client group; a portfolio showing your understanding and competence from your first practice placement. Every module has to be passed before a student can proceed to the next stage of the programme; in some cases every component of the module assessment has to be passed. In the third year you do your biggest piece of work this is a 10,000 word dissertation based on your research project.

Work experience/placement opportunities

The social work degree is a balance of classroom learning with practice learning opportunities. In the second year there is a 70 day assessed placement in a social work setting and an extended 100 day placement in the third year. When students are on placement, they work with their practice assessors to integrate the theoretical approaches they have learned about in the classroom. When in the classroom, students consider the relevance of theoretical material, research and social policies to the practice of professional social work.

Project work

In each year of their training, student social workers at UEL have the opportunity to work on their own or with others to develop a presentation around an area of theory or practice that is of interest to them. In the first year, amongst the many presentations that individual students may make, one involves researching and presenting to the group a practice approach that they have selected. This could be, for example, on the psycho-therapeutic approach or crisis intervention or on cognitive behavioural therapy. This presentation is evaluated as part of the Module assessment. In the second year, students write a Special Interest essay in which they research an area of practice with a client, community or group with which they have had experience. The research project in the third year is designed from a proposal that is honed via classroom presentation and discussion. The data is collected during the inter-semester break and the analysis of the data and writing of the dissertation follows.

Added value

UEL is the principal social work training provider in East London. Our placements are centred around this region. If this is where students live and want to work then this is the programme to apply for. Surveys show that graduates from our programme are well-placed to gain employment in professional social work posts.

IS THIS THE PROGRAMME FOR ME?

If you are interested in...

- how people grow and develop
- what helps us communicate in challenging situations
- which laws affect vulnerable people
- how policies are made and changed
- why what you say, do and feel about your clients matters both to them and to us
- what approaches have the best outcome

If you enjoy...

Working with others to try to solve problems and make a difference.

If you want...

To learn about psychological and sociological approaches to understanding the experience people have of living in this society and to work with them to achieve their potential for fulfilment...

Your future career

Social Work at UEL starts with the professional qualification BA (Hons) Social Work. After you have completed that, you will be required to continue your professional development. This will be through the Assessed Year in Practice and may also be through the Graduate Diploma and Post Qualifying Award in Social Work. There are a number of post-graduate/post-qualifying programmes both at UEL and at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust which will be open to you as a graduate. Through these programmes social workers can continue to develop academically and professionally. We offer a suite of post-qualifying programmes and short courses some, in conjunction with the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust which go beyond Masters awards right up to doctorates in social work. In particular we are proud of our MA in International Social Welfare and our advanced MA programmes at UEL and at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust.

How we support you

As soon as a student starts the UEL social work programme, they find themselves in a group of students and tutors with similar interests to their own (although expressed in many very different ways). Students are assigned a tutor who sees them through that year of the programme. The tutor meets with their tutor group regularly in Semester A. The tutor visits the student in the practice setting and advises them in relation to the application of theory to practice and vice versa. If a student is struggling, they may contact their tutor to make an appointment to see them.

Bonus factors

Outcomes

Programme aims and learning outcomes

What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- gain a professional training and qualification as a social worker
- prepare yourself for professional practice through successfully completing a fascinating programme at the appropriate level of academic study and practical application
- contribute to contemporary social work practice with a variety of client groups and, where possible, make a difference

What will you learn?

Knowledge

- how people grow, develop and change over a lifetime
- what interventions produce what outcomes and why
- the relationship between social policies, laws and the political context of the time

Thinking skills

- to develop your own view about what different authors have to say on the same topic
- to recognise themes and patterns in what you are reading or observing
- to find an approach to reading and writing that adheres to academic convention and works for you.

Subject-Based Practical skills

- how to intervene effectively with different client groups
- how to work well with colleagues and supervisor within social work settings
- how to make use of supervision in order to develop professionally

Skills for life and work (general skills)

- how to understand interpersonal and inter-professional dynamics (interpretation)
- how to explore personal, professional, social and political life (analysis)
- how to think about your practice (reflection)

Structure

The programme structure

Introduction

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

Credit rating

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 360.

Typical duration

The typical duration of this programme is 3 years full-time.

How the teaching year is divided

The teaching year is divided into two semesters. A semester includes 12 weeks of teaching and three for assessment. Typically a full-time student will study three 20 credit modules per semester.

What you will study when

This programme is part of a modular degree scheme. A typical full-time student will take six 20 credit modules per year. An honours degree student will complete six modules at level one, six at level 2 and six at level 3.

Modules are defined as:

- Core - Must be taken
- Option - Select from a range of identified modules within the field
- University wide option - Select from a wide range of modules across the University

The following are the core and optional requirements for the single and major pathways for this programme

Year	Module title	Credit	status
1	The Social Work Development 1	20	Core
1	Social Work and Law 1	20	Core
1	Psychosocial perspectives and young Child Observation	20	Core
1	Client focused practice: context and skills	20	Core
1	Professional Practice	40	Core
2	The Social Work Development 2	20	Core
2	Social Work Law 2	20	Core
2	Research, Social Policy and Social Work 1	20	Core
2	Interpersonal and Inter-professional Skills	20	Core
2	Initial Professional Practice Placement	40	Core
3	The Social Work Development 3 and Research Project	40	Core
3	Research, Social Policy and Social Work 2	20	Core
3	Social Policy: Children and Families	20	Option 1
3	People with Learning Difficulties: Policy and Practice	20	Option 2
3	Mental Health Policy and Practice	20	Option 3
3	Final Professional Practice Placement	40	Core

Requirements for gaining an award

In order to gain an honours degree and professional qualification in social work, students must pass all modules. All components must each usually be passed before a student can proceed to the next stage of the programme.

These are the marking categories used:

- 40 - 49% Third Class Performance: The work displays an adequate ability to understand and re-work a set of readings; there is evidence of an ability to present and assess hypotheses and debates; there is evidence of linking theories with practice and a rudimentary understanding of diversity and oppression, as well as the ability to reflect upon personal experience.
- 50 - 59% Lower Second Class Performance: The work displays an ability to comprehend a complex set of readings and reflect upon the contents; there is evidence of the ability to present and evaluate lines of argument in relation to logical criteria and a body of empirical evidence; issues regarding diversity and oppression as well as personal experience are linked into the arguments; the work is presented in a structured, coherent manner and the author guides the reader through the document.
- 60 - 69% Upper Second Class Performance: This level requires a larger, wider basis in reading; a display of theoretical and empirical themes in a complex, qualified manner; integration of practice and experience to support or challenge theory; understanding of methodological problems; high standard of presentation.
- 70% First Class Performance: Exemplary use of bibliographic and literary sources; evidence of originality in organisation of published materials; advanced levels of conceptualisation, analysis and use of material drawn from practice and experience; detailed understanding and reflection upon the implications of diversity and oppression; very high standards of presentation.

Some modules may have assessments requiring the demonstration of particular features in addition to those detailed here. If this applies, they will be detailed in the Module Guide.

The marking forms which should be attached to programme work indicate the broad headings under which the work has been marked and should be a guide to students to ensure that they have covered all the items required of assessed work.

Degree Classification

Where a student is eligible for an Honours degree, and has gained a minimum of 240 UEL credits at level 2 or level 3 on the current enrolment for the programme (of which 80 credits are placement modules marked as pass / fail), including a minimum of 120 UEL credits at level 3, the award classification is determined by calculating:

(mean of the best 80 credits at level 3) x 2/3 + (mean of the next best 60 credits at levels 2 or 3) x 1/3

and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

70% - 100% First Class Honours

60% - 69% Second Class Honours, First Division

50% - 59% Second Class Honours, Second Division

40% - 49% Third Class Honours

0% - 39% Not passed

Assessment

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning

Knowledge is developed through

- lectures, seminars, reading, discussion, workshops, young child observation, professional observation and social work practice
- practice theory research, presentation of same, classroom workshops, assessed preparation for practice, practice placements, small-scale primary research, service user perspectives, direct observation of practice, professional supervision
- lectures and seminars in law and social policy, critical analysis of same and effects in practice, small-scale primary research and analysis of findings

Thinking skills are developed through

- attention in group tutorial sessions to academic thinking and writing
- consideration in seminars of the lecture content and reading material, identification of themes, library studies in the first and third years
- making links in practice tutorial on placement to the connections between theory, practice and the use of self

Subject-based Practical skills are developed through

- observation project (young child), practice placements including preparation for practice; analysis of practice theories; service user perspectives, small scale primary research
- practice placements and links between practice and classroom learning
- practice learning opportunities and use of supervision, mentoring relationships, classroom learning about supervision; computer skills to level of ECDL

Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through

- workshops, seminars, other kinds of group work, practice learning opportunities and team work, theory lectures
- training in developing an analytic style of writing and of practice
- training in reflection on which students think about their own actions in the classroom and in the practice setting including in supervision

Assessment

Knowledge is assessed by

- an account of the young child observed, an essay linking your grasp of theory to the observation you have made of the young child, a practice study that shows your understanding of an agency setting in relation to one client group and reflects on the way you engaged with them, practice portfolios in all three years that show your thinking about how you carried out three of the key roles for professional practice (in the first placement) and five of the key roles in the next placement and all six key roles in the third placement and includes accounts of your practice from you practice teacher and feedback from your service users. Classroom presentations in all three years.
- a position statement in the first semester showing what you know so far about practice; a presentation on a practice theory you have researched; and an analytical essay on same; an essay showing your appreciation of an ethical dilemma that is manifest in the practice settings (Year1), your understanding of the professional role and identity (Year 2), your readiness for practice and a research project dissertation (Year 3)
- analysis of legal case studies in years 1 and 2; a practice study: Year 1, showing understanding of legal and policy framework; analytical essays on aspects of social policy: Years 2 and 3; special interest essay: Year 2, linking theory to your own practice within a placement setting; extended conceptual development in 3rd year dissertation.

Thinking skills are assessed by

- use of academic writing and referencing in written work, appreciation of relevant report format in placement work for agencies, successful navigation of assessed library-based literature search, use of selected research methodology
- achieving sufficient quality and standard of observation, analysis and reflection in written work
- indicating reflective capacity through analysis of own practice in settings and exploration of meaning of same for client groups

Subject-Based Practical skills are assessed by

- observation accounts and contextualising essays, practice learning portfolios in Years 1, 2 and 3; quality of position paper; ethical dilemma analysis and practice study in Year 1; interpersonal and inter-professional skills paper and special interest essay in Year 2; Dissertation in Year 3
- practice learning portfolios in Year 1, 2 and 3, links between theory and practice in the written work
- practice teachers analysing the content of the students' involvement with clients through observation and exploration of their practice in supervision and written work about this

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by

- seminar presentation, essay on practice theory, essay on own use of theory in practice, observation accounts and contextualising essays, ICT skills input and assessment

- academic and practice standards assessed throughout the different levels of the programme
- reflective practice assessed throughout the different levels of the programme

Quality

How we assure the quality of this programme

Before this programme started

Before the programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the University's Quality Standing Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement

Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the University's quality assurance procedures.

The role of external examiners

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future

Listening to the views of students

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Questionnaires to former students
- Practice teacher workshop
- Meetings with employers who sponsor students or offer placements to them
- Programme Management Board meeting where stakeholders are represented
- Meetings with service users and carers who participate in all areas of the programme
- Practice Assessment Panel practice learning assessment is moderated and the quality of placements explored
- The London Regional Social Work Educators and Practice Assessors network meetings

Listening to the views of others

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Questionnaires to former students
- Practice teacher workshop
- Stake-holders meeting with employers where students are placed
- Programme Management Board meeting where service users and carers are represented
- Practice Assessment Panel practice learning assessment is moderated and the quality of placements explored
- The East London Regional Social Work Educators and Practice Assessors network meetings

Further Information

Where you can find further information

Further information about this programme is available from:

- The UEL web site (<http://www.uel.ac.uk>)
- The student handbook
- The UEL Study Skills handbook
- UEL Manual of Regulations and Policies <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- UEL Quality Manual <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- Regulations for the Academic Framework <http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/>
- Departmental web pages (<http://www.social-work.org.uk>)
- The Post- Qualifying Award in Social Work and Graduate Diploma (PQSW) Social Work Studies handbook gives details of Post qualifying pathways
- The Social Work at UEL Brochure gives details of programmes at all levels for social workers including post-graduate, post-qualifying programmes based at the Tavistock And Portman NHS Trust

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