

School of Health and Social Work

Title of Programme: MSc Social Work, including Step Up to Social Work

Programme Code: HHMSW

Programme Specification

This programme specification is relevant to students entering:
27 September 2021

Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance):
Cheryl Holman

Signature



A programme specification is a collection of key information about a programme of study (or course). It identifies the aims and learning outcomes of the programme, lists the modules that make up each stage (or year) of the programme, and the teaching, learning and assessment methods used by teaching staff. It also describes the structure of the programme, its progression requirements and any programme-specific regulations. This information is therefore useful to potential students to help them choose the right programme of study, to current students on the programme, and to staff teaching and administering the programme.

Summary of amendments to the programme

Date	Section	Amendment
31.03.2021	1, Section B, Section G	Programme Regulator changed to Social Work England
31.03.2021	Section B	Clarification that Programme Learning Outcome A7, B5 & C7 are required to gain the MSc <i>Social Work</i> qualification
31.03.2021	Section B, Table 1d, Table 2	Vulnerable Adults as Parents (7HSK0249) is replaced by Parenting Through Complexity (7HSK2013)
31.03.2021	Section D Table 1d	Entry point – Step up to Social Work amended to January to align with current practice

		Entry point amended to Sem B
31.03.2021	Table 1b	Note added – all modules must be passed to achieve MSc SW
31.03.2021	Table 1b and 1d	Note removed – alerting students that law module includes an in class test – this has been removed and replaced with coursework
31.03.2021	Programme Specific Regulations	Third sittings for resubmission of assignments have been removed from our usual exam board processes.
31.03.2021	Table 1b	7HSK0255 assessment changed from Coursework 1 P/F, Practical P/F, Practical P/F to Coursework 1 P/F, Practical P/F

If you have any queries regarding the changes, please email AQO@herts.ac.uk

Programme Specification MSc Social Work (including Step Up to Social Work)

This programme specification (PS) is designed for prospective students, enrolled students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content for each module can be found in Definitive Module Documents (DMDs) and Module Guides.

Section 1

Awarding Institution/Body	University of Hertfordshire
Teaching Institution	University of Hertfordshire
University/partner campuses	College Lane Step up at Birkbeck College
Programme accredited by	Social Work England
Final Award (Qualification)	PGDip/MSc
All Final Award titles (Qualification and Subject)	Postgraduate Diploma Social Work/ MSc Social Work
FHEQ level of award	7
UCAS code(s)	
Language of Delivery	English

A. Programme Rationale

Programme Philosophy

It is the aim of the Social Work programmes at the University of Hertfordshire to help students develop into social workers who are socially aware and critically engaged in debates about the quality, effectiveness and suitability of interventions with some of society's most vulnerable members. During their time with us, students will assimilate the knowledge, practice the skills and interrogate the values which form the foundation of social justice and social work practise, synthesising learning to develop as evidence-based, reflexive practitioners. The programme team is committed to providing a challenging programme which ensures that graduates are competent, conscientious and curious. Learning takes place in the classroom, in the full range of practice settings and in collaboration with employers, experts by experience and peers who will ultimately become colleagues. It lays the foundation for learning and development which spans the whole career (BASW, 2017).

MSc Social Work Pathway

The primary aim in developing the full time MSc was to provide professional social work qualification to students who already have a first degree. The MSc is designed to allow students to complete their social work qualification in two years while also gaining a postgraduate award, which may be more suitable to their learning needs than undertaking another undergraduate degree.

A part time route leads to the same qualification but is designed to respond to students who have financial, caring or other responsibilities which preclude full time study. Qualification over a 4-year period allows more flexibility while maintaining currency in the curriculum.

The University works within a formal teaching partnership with Hertfordshire County Council in order to deliver academic and practice learning experiences of the highest quality. The partnership delivers academic and placement learning which is responsive to local need.

The programme is designed to recruit students with a first degree or equivalent who wish to become qualified social workers and who demonstrate the necessary qualities, ability and potential required for a career in social work. The MSc recruitment of graduates into social work is in line with current Government policy

intended to encourage graduates into professional social work training, with a view to employment in statutory social work. The programme meets the requirements of the Social Work England (SWE), the QAA Benchmarks for Social Work, the Professional Capabilities Framework and SEEC descriptors for postgraduate study.

PGDip Social Work (Step up to Social Work) Pathway

Step up to Social Work is the first fast track route to social work qualification and has been developed to address some of the difficulties identified within the sector including:

- Poor retention in children services
- Building staff competence and skills
- Developing student support groups and innovation
- Creating a learning and mentoring culture within local authorities

In responding to this, Step up to Social Work recruits only graduates who hold a 1st or 2:1 in a first degree from any discipline. Selection processes are rigorous and support the principles that students entering the programme should be reflective in their character, resilient in their personality and academically robust.

The Step Up to Social Work MSc programme was developed in response to the review of social work degrees and the Select Committee Report on social work education both published in 2009. Both these documents highlighted the need for stronger and closer partnerships between HEIs and local authorities to ensure that NQSW feel prepared for practice and confident about the work ahead. It is this partnership between University of Hertfordshire and West London Alliance (WLA) which makes the Step up to Social Work programme distinctive.

Within a generic programme, students studying on the Step up to Social Work pathway will develop theory and practice skills which will equip them for the high-level demands in practice within front line child protection teams.

WLA is committed to the professional development of students and fund an extension to the PGDip enabling students studying on the Step up programme to continue to achieve a full MSc Social Work by completing the dissertation during their Assessed and Supported year in Employment.

MSc Social Work Pathway: The award of the MSc Social Work leads to eligibility to apply to the SWE Register and practice as a social worker.

Step up to Social Work Pathway: The award of the PGDip Social Work leads to eligibility to apply to the SWE Register and practice as a social worker.

B. Educational Aims of the Programme

The programme has been devised in accordance with the University's graduate attributes of programmes of study as set out in [UPR TL03](#).

Additionally, this programme aims to:

- Provide students with an understanding of trends in contemporary social work practice, developments in service provision, the philosophy underlying changes in legislation and the thinking behind new organisational patterns.
- To enable students to work in a variety of settings and with a range of service user groups with other professionals in an inter-professional and interagency context.
- Prepare graduate students for a rapidly changing work and wider social environment through a programme which promotes reflective, self-motivated lifelong learning and continuing professional development in order to enable students to practice effectively as a professional social worker.
- Enable students to be independent, research-minded, critical thinkers with transferable skills in the

application of values, knowledge and skills to social situations and to their own practice, responding creatively to the intellectual stimulus of learning and research with a view to making a personal contribution to the study and development of social work theory and practice.

- To develop a thorough understanding of and ability to engage in critical debates about the significance of inequality and discrimination for social work policy and practice and reflect on their own views and values as citizens and workers.

C. Intended Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes are referenced the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014), and relate to the typical student. Additionally, the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Further and Higher Education (2016) have been used as a guiding framework for curriculum design.

Knowledge and Understanding:	Teaching/learning methods & strategies	Assessment
A1 - The role of the social worker and a critical understanding and awareness of social work services.	Acquisition of knowledge and understanding is through a combination of lectures, tutorials, small group work, role play, observation, coursework, 170-day practice learning placement plus 30 Skills days.	Knowledge and understanding are assessed through a combination of formative and summative assessments. All students are expected to complete both formative and summative assessment components.
A2 - The service delivery context and the legislative and policy framework for social work.		
A3 – Values, ethics and models of anti-discriminatory practice and their implications for practice.	The programme makes use of a flipped classroom model in relation to teaching and learning, developing an enquiry-based approach to knowledge acquisition. Classroom sessions are supported by module drop ins which take place regularly to for clarification and enriched learning.	Students will submit practice portfolios which encourage self- assessment and reflection and evidence understanding and competence in practice
A4 - Social work theory and its implication for practice.	Throughout, we foster intellectual curiosity and students undertake independent study to consolidate what is being learnt and to deepen their individual knowledge and understanding of the subject and the cultural, national and global context in which social work sits.	
A5 - Social work methods and their application to contemporary practice.	Additional support is provided by study skills sessions, and LIS drop in sessions.	
MSc students will demonstrate		
A6 - Research methods and interpretation and application of the evidence base to contemporary social work.	Throughout, the learner is encouraged to undertake independent study both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught/learnt and to broaden their individual knowledge and understanding of the subject.	
MSc Social Work and PGDip Step up students will demonstrate		
A7 - Competence in the application of knowledge to social work practice as required of a social worker		

Intellectual skills:	Teaching/learning methods & strategies	Assessment
<p>B1- B1 - Critically analyse the professional relationship and develop critical awareness of communication and engagement including the use and impact of self in building relationships with people using services and carers.</p> <p>B2 - Analyse and critically evaluate the theoretical base for social work practice.</p> <p>B3 - Analyse and critically evaluate the context for social work in Europe and the UK including the inherent complexities and dilemmas.</p> <p>B4 - Critically evaluate current research and scholarship in the discipline of social work, and to evaluate and critique research methodologies.</p> <p>MSc Social Work and Step up students will also be able to demonstrate</p> <p>B5 competence in the analytic and inductive skills required of a social worker</p>	<p>Intellectual skills are developed through by the methods and strategies outlined in section A above.</p> <p>The MSc level 6 module The Research Informed Practitioner connects the practice of Social Work with the underpinning research and evidence base from the outset by exploring research methodologies and examining the quality of research evidence for the profession.</p> <p>Discussion in the classroom supports a research tutored approach including formal debate, small group and plenary discussion, case study and scenarios, active evaluation of research evidence (including the use of evaluative frameworks). From here a spiral progression is envisaged. Research informed teaching supports the growth of intellectual skills throughout the programme: enquiry-based techniques support students to become research informed practitioners. This culminates in the research-led Dissertation modules which place a strong emphasis on research processes and problems.</p> <p>Throughout, the learner is encouraged to develop intellectual skills further by independent study.</p> <p>The Step up to Social Work programme is designed for students whose first employment will be in frontline child protection. As a result, targeted theory and context relevant to frontline child protection services are emphasised. This is placed in the wider context of SW practice. This can be seen in the conjunction of the modules Developing Practice Learning 1 and Vulnerable Adults as Parents. The first of these looks at the needs of adult service users while the second challenges students to explore</p>	<p>Intellectual skills are assessed through formative and summative assessments as in section A above.</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to develop problem solving skills and intellectual depth. These are tested conceptually within academic modules then applied to practice contexts and assessed within the Practice Placement and Skills modules.</p> <p>The application of research to practice is developed incrementally through the programme. A key example of this from the MSc is the development and application of research via the modules The Research Informed Practitioner/Practice Contexts/Dissertation</p> <p>The first of these is research- tutored and helps students to understand the importance of a research evidence based to modern SW practice (tested via an annotated bibliography). The Practice Contexts is research-based and critiques the application of that research to contemporary SW. The dissertation is research orientated and students act as researcher/practitioners; using their own research to drive the practice knowledge base.</p>

	and critique the impact of those vulnerabilities on children.	
Practical skills:	Teaching/learning methods & strategies	Assessment
<p>C1 - To be able to build effective relationships with children, their carers and families, groups and communities to enable assessment, planning and review based on best evidence and a sound knowledge of difference, human development and structural factors</p> <p>C2 - To recognise and act upon a wide range of risk indicators, strengths and protective factors while carefully ensuring that needs are correctly balanced, and where necessary those of vulnerable individuals are prioritised</p> <p>C3 - To be able to communicate sensitively, clearly and authoritatively with all service users and other professionals.</p> <p>C4 - To be able to understand the complex interplay between rights, justice and responsibilities.</p> <p>C5 - To have a sound working understanding of local and national policy, organisational contexts and the relevant elements of the criminal justice system</p> <p>C6 - To understand the importance of professional and ethical behaviour both within and outside of the practice setting while making use of critical reflection and supervision to ensure personal well-being and professional best practice.</p> <p>MSc Social Work students and Step up students will also be able to demonstrate</p>	<p>Practical skills are developed throughout the programme. A Skills module at the start of both the Step up to SW help students to identify and practice the core skills which underpin all SW practice. The practice learning modules in both programmes develop students' practical skills and the use of reflective logs identifies the underpinning knowledge and theory.</p> <p>Modules throughout the programme, but particularly Practice Contexts (MSc), Parenting Through Complexity and Protecting Children (Step up) involve input from service users and practitioners so that practical skills are triangulated with the SW knowledge base and the challenges of contemporary SW practice (C10).</p>	<p>Practical skills are assessed primarily through the practice learning portfolio. In addition, the key skills of formal presentation and liaison are tested formatively and via academic assignments see MSc modules Ethics, Values & Anti-Discriminatory Practice; Human Growth and Development Practice learning 1 & 2. PGDip modules: Knowledge Skills and Methods; Parenting Through Complexity; Protecting Children. Students are supported in developing the transferability of these skills into the practice context through the development of reflective practice, tested as part of the practice portfolios. These require students to demonstrate how theoretical learning has been meshed with the practice context. Students will be required to demonstrate in all assessments how they have integrated their understanding of theory and applied this to their practice undertaken in skills sessions and their practice learning placements. Throughout the programme and in their assignments and presentations, students are also required to make reference to and link theoretical knowledge to the practice elements of the programme.</p> <p>Human growth and Development and Practice Contexts (MSc) & Developing Practice Learning 1&2 (Step up) all involve collaborative assessment and feedback between academic tutors and practitioners. This underlines the links between practical skills and theoretical knowledge which is a cornerstone of modern SW.</p>

C7 to demonstrate professional competence in social work practice.		
Transferable skills:	Teaching/learning methods & strategies	Assessment
<p>D1 – Communicate respectfully and effectively both orally and in writing with service users and colleagues in a range of settings.</p> <p>D2 - Work as an effective team member.</p> <p>D3 - Demonstrate effective time management and self- management skills.</p> <p>D4 - Identify and access information utilising a range of resources.</p> <p>D5 - Demonstrate ability to make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations.</p> <p>D6 - Exercise initiative and personal responsibility.</p> <p>D7 - Demonstrate their learning from reflection and self-assessment on their knowledge skills and values. D8 - Understand the significance of the concept of continuous professional development and an acceptance of the responsibility for their own continuing development</p>	<p>Transferable skills are developed through an emphasis on Action Learning and students undertake a variety of formative and summative tasks in these groups in order to critique and deconstruct the skills required of a SW as inter and intra agency practitioner. Teaching draws parallels with the issues raised in Serious Case Reviews. Together these foster a culture of mutual respect, honesty and professionalism.</p> <p>Throughout, the learner is encouraged to develop transferable skills by maintaining a record of evidence and completing a personal development plan.</p>	<p>Transferable skills are assessed through a range of assignments built into the curriculum, by the use of reflective logs and case studies, the 30 Skills days, incorporating the 170-day practice learning placement and portfolio and assignments (D1- D8).</p> <p>The programme develops these transferable skills continuously. Reflective logs and case studies call upon students to articulate their skill base. The practice learning placements, skills days and assessments for these modules call upon students to analyse the transference of the skills they develop.</p>

D. Programme Structures, Features, Levels, Modules, and Credits

The MSc Social Work is offered in full time mode over 2 years. The MSc Social Work is also offered as a part time route offering students the opportunity to study over a longer (4-year period). Entry for both full-time and part-time routes is normally at level 6 with an honours degree or equivalent. Intake is in September (semester A) and leads to the final award of a MSc in Social Work and eligibility to apply for registration with Social Work England as a Social Worker.

The Step up to Social Work pathway is offered over a 14-month time frame and leads to the award of the PGDip Social Work. Entry is at level 7 with an honours degree or equivalent. Intake is bi-annual, normally in January, as determined by commissioners. On achieving the PGDip Social Work students are eligible to apply to register with Social Work England and thereafter practice as a social worker; however, they have the opportunity to undertake the dissertation module 'Enhancing Practice' in order to achieve MSc Social Work. This is completed while students are employed as social workers with WLA and study at this stage is undertaken on a part time basis.

Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies

Completion of all modules is mandatory in order to gain the final award of MSc Social Work/PGDip Social Work.

On successful completion of this programme, students are eligible to apply for registration Social Work England as a Social Worker

Work-Based Learning, including Sandwich Programmes

During the course of the programme students undertake two practice placements. In year 1 MSc students undertake a 70-day placement and in year two a further 100-day placement.

In addition, students undertake a period of child observation either live or via video. MSc students undertake this as part of the module Human Growth and development. Step up to Social Work students complete this period of child observation as part of their skills days.

Programme Structure

The programme structure and progression information below (Table 1a and 1b) is provided for the award. Any interim awards are identified in Table 1b. The Programme Learning Outcomes detailed above are developed and assessed through the constituent modules. Table 2 identifies where each learning outcome is assessed.

Table 1a Outline Programme Structure

Completion of all modules is mandatory in order to gain the final award of MSc Social Work/PGDip Social Work. See below for the credits required for interim awards. The MSc Applied Social Studies must include completion of the dissertation module.

The programme structure and progression information are provided below for each award (MSc Social Work and Step up to Social Work in Table a-e). Any interim awards are identified in Table 1c and 1e. A PGDip is available as a final award on the Step up to Social Work programme only. The Programme Learning Outcomes detailed above are developed and assessed through the constituent modules. Table 2 identifies where each learning outcome is assessed.

Table 1a Outline Programme Structure

Mode of study Full Time

Entry point Semester A

Module Title	Module Code	Credit Points	Language of Delivery	% Examination	% Coursework	% Practical	Semesters
Skills for Practice 1	7HSK0254	0	English	0	P/F***	P/F***	A
The Research Informed Practitioner	6HSK0153	15	English	0	100	0	A
Law and Policy for Practice	7HSK0257	30	English	0	100*	0	AB
Ethics, Values & Anti-Discriminatory Practice	7HSK0256	30	English	0	70	30	AB
Human Growth and Development	7HSK0258	15	English	0	70	30	B
Skills for Practice 2	7HSK0255	0	English	0	P/F***	P/F***	B
Practice Learning 1	7HSK0259	15	English	0	P/F**	100	BC

Year 2 Compulsory Modules

Module Title

	Module Code	Credit Points	Language of Delivery	% Examination	% Coursework	% Practical	Semesters
Practice Contexts	7HSK0260	15	English	0	100	0	A
Skills for Practice 3	7HSK0273	0	English		P/F***	0	A
Practice Learning 2	7HSK0261	15	English	0	P/F**	100	ABC
Dissertation	7HSK0262	45	English	0	80	20	ABC

NOTE

*Students should note that coursework for the module Law and Policy for Practice includes an in-class test undertaken in exam conditions

**This Pass/Fail element of assessment must be successfully completed to pass the module; however, it will not contribute to the overall numeric grade awarded.

***This module is Pass/Fail, with no numeric grade awarded. Each Pass/Fail element of assessment must be successfully completed to pass the module.

For further information regarding the assessment for each module please refer to the Definitive Module Document.

Table 1b Outline Programme Structure – MSc Social Work

Mode of study: Part time

Entry point: Semester A

Year 1 Compulsory Modules

Module Title

	Module Code	Credit Points	Language of Delivery	% Examination	% Coursework	% Practical	Semesters
Skills for Practice 1	7HSK0254	0	English	0	P/F***	P/F***	A
The Research Informed Practitioner	6HSK0153	15	English	0	100	0	A
Law and Policy for Practice	7HSK0257	30	English	0	70	30	AB

Year 2 Compulsory Modules

Module Title

	Module Code	Credit Points	Language of Delivery	% Examination	% Coursework	% Practical	Semesters
Human Growth and Development	7HSK0258	15	English	0	70	30	B
Skills for Practice 2	7HSK0255	0	English	0	P/F***	P/F***	B
Ethics, Values & Anti-Discriminatory Practice	7HSK0256	30	English	0	100	0	AB

Year 3 Compulsory Modules

Module Title	Module Code	Credit Points	Language of Delivery	% Examination	% Coursework	% Practical	Semesters
Practice Contexts	7HSK0260	15	English	0	100	0	A
Skills for Practice 3	7HSK0273	0	English	0	P/F***	0	A
Practice Learning 1	7HSK0259	15	English	0	P/F**	100	BC

Year 4 Compulsory Modules

Module Title	Module Code	Credit Points	Language of Delivery	% Examination	% Coursework	% Practical	Semesters
Practice Learning 2	7HSK0261	15	English	0	P/F**	100	ABC
Dissertation	7HSK0262	45	English	0	80	20	ABC

NOTE

**This Pass/Fail element of assessment must be successfully completed to pass the module; however, it will not contribute to the overall numeric grade awarded.

***This module is Pass/Fail, with no numeric grade awarded. Each Pass/Fail element of assessment must be successfully completed to pass the module.

For further information regarding the assessment for each module please refer to the Definitive Module Document.

The award of an MSc Social Work requires 180 credits points to be passed of which 165 are at level 7, and 15 are at level 6. All modules including the practice elements of Practice Learning 1 and 2 must be completed and passed.

The degree classification will be based on the best 150 credits contributing to the programme (level 6 & 7 are included).

Table 1c Final and interim awards available – MSc Social Work

The programme provides the following final and interim awards:

Final Award	Award Title	Minimum requirements	Available at end of (normally):	Programme Learning Outcomes developed (see above)
Masters	MSc Social Work	180 credit points including at least 150 at level 7	6 Semesters	All programme learning outcomes (see Table 2)

Interim Award	Award Title	Minimum requirements	Available at end of Level	Programme Learning Outcomes developed (see above)
Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Social Studies	60 credit points, including at least 30 at level 7	1-2 Semesters	At least one learning outcome from each of A1-5, B1-4 and C1-6 and all of D
Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Social Studies	120 credit points, including at least 90 at level 7	2, 3 Semesters	A 1- 5, B1-4, C1-6, D1 - 7
Masters	Masters in Applied Social Studies	180 credit points including at least 150 at level 7	6 Semesters	A 1- 6; B1-4 C1-6, D1 - 7

Masters and Diploma awards can be made "with Distinction" or "with Commendation" where criteria as described in [UPR AS14](#), Section D and the students' handbook are met.

Table 1d Outline Programme Structure – PGDip Social Work (Step up to Social Work)

PGDip Step up to Social Work Pathway

Mode of study Full time

Entry point Semester B

Module Title	Module Code	Credit Points	Language of Delivery	% Examination	% Coursework	% Practical	Semesters
Skills for Practice 1	7HSK0248	0	English	0	P/F**	P/F**	B
Legislative and Policy Context of Practice	7HSK0046	30	English	0	50	50	B
Knowledge, Skills and Methods for Professional Practice	7HSK0253	30	English	0	50	50	B
Parenting Through Complexity	7HSK2013	15	English	0	80	20	C
Developing Practice Learning 1	7HSK0250	15	English	0	100	P/F*	C
Protecting Vulnerable Children and Building Resilience	7HSK0251	15	English	0	100	P/F***	A
Skills for Practice 2	7HSK0272	0	English	0	P/F**	0	BCA
Developing Practice Learning 2	7HSK0252	15	English	0	100	P/F*	AB

MSc Step up to Social Work Pathway

Mode of study Part time

Entry point Semester C

Enhancing Practice***	7HSK0049	60	English	0	100	0	CAB
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NOTE

*This Pass/Fail element of assessment must be successfully completed to pass the module; however, it will not contribute to the overall numeric grade awarded.

**This module is Pass/Fail, with no numeric grade awarded. Each Pass/Fail element of assessment must be successfully completed to pass the module.

For further information regarding the assessment for each module please refer to the Definitive Module Document.

***To be undertaken to gain the MSc in Social Work

Table 1e Final and interim awards available – Step up to Social Work

The programme provides the following final and interim awards:

Final Award	Award Title	Minimum requirements	Available at end of (normally):	Programme Learning Outcomes developed (see above)
Masters	Master in Social Work	180 credit points at level 7	7 Semesters	All programme learning outcomes (see Table 2)
Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work	150 credit points at level 7	2 – 3 semesters	A 1- 5 and A7; B1-5, C1-7, D1 - 7

Interim Award	Award Title	Minimum requirements	Available at end of Level	Programme Learning Outcomes developed (see above)
Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Social Studies	60 credit points at level 7	1-2 Semesters	At least one learning outcome from each of A1-5, B1-4 and C1-6 and all of D

Students who undertake the Enhancing Practice module (part time) and achieve an MSc in Social Work may exit with a classified MSc or may retain a classified PGDip and an unclassified MSc.

Masters and Diploma awards can be made "with Distinction" or "with Commendation" where criteria as described in [UPR AS14](#), Section D and the students' handbook are met.

In accordance with the regulatory professional body, the PGDip/MSc Social Work is a protected title, leading to qualification as a social worker, and is awarded only to those students who have completed all the modules above (Tables 1a) and the 170 days practice learning placement successfully. Students exiting with the interim awards above (Table 1b) will gain the relevant award in Applied Social Studies and will not be eligible for professional registration

Programme-specific assessment regulations

The programme is compliant with the University's academic regulations (in particular, [UPR AS11](#), [UPR AS12/UPR AS13](#) and [UPR AS14](#)) with the exception of those listed below, which have been specifically approved by the University:

- Final compensatory credit (exemption from UPR AS14 section D4.4) and or intramodular compensation is not permissible within the programme.
- Students are required to pass the Skills for Practice 1 module to demonstrate fitness to practise before commencing their 170-day practice learning placement. A student who fails the module would not normally be offered the opportunity for re-enrolment (exemption from UPR AS14 section D5.3).
- Students who fail a placement on two occasions will not normally be offered the opportunity to reenrol on the module (exemption from UPR AS14 section D5.3).

Further points of clarification and interpretation relevant to this specific programme are given below:

For both Pathways

- A successfully accomplished period of 170 days (1275 hours) of supervised practice + 30 Skills days are mandatory for receipt of the award on both the MSc Social Work and the Step up to

Social Work programme

- The Practice Educator is responsible for making a decision concerning the pass or fail of a student on placement. The PE must adduce sufficient evidence to support such a decision. If the Practice Assessment Panel, together with an external examiner is of the opinion that the evidence for pass or fail is not sufficient it may request further information. If that information is not provided, or remains insufficient, the portfolio will be reviewed by an independent Practice Assessor (a qualified PE). On the recommendation of that assessor the PAP and external examiner may recommend to the board that the decision of the PE be overturned.
- Third sittings for resubmission of assignments have been removed from our usual exam board processes.

For MSc Pathway

- In securing practice learning experiences, students will be offered up to three interview opportunities. Students who fail to obtain a placement opportunity for either the 70 or 100-day practice learning experiences following three interviews will normally be withdrawn from the programme
- Students are not permitted to refuse placements. If a student does so, then they may not be allowed to progress on the programme.
- Students should not unilaterally terminate a placement without first convening an extraordinary meeting. Student who leave placement without discussion or against the University's advice will normally be deemed to have failed the placement
- Students may be permitted to commence the second year of the programme and retrieve up to 30 credits following the award of an FREN at the discretion of the Board of Examiners based on the student's academic and practice profile.
- Students are not permitted to progress to the 100 day placement unless they have successfully completed the 70 day placement.
- Students are required to attend all programme components in theory and practice.
- Students will be expected to attend all practice components of the programme without exemption. Failure to follow the attendance guidance, as per programme policy, will normally lead to withdrawal from the programme. Failure to fulfil the requirements for practice as per programme policy (including undertaking barring and enhanced disclosure checks, attending occupational health screening when referred and (where applicable) completing a statutory declaration will normally lead to the student being withdrawn from the programme.
- Students will be expected to sign a declaration indicating that they understand the implications and possible impact of retrieving a first-year module in the second year of the programme.

For the Step up to Social Work Pathway

- Students on the Step up to Social Work programme are assessed for their Readiness for Direct Practice during the admissions process at the jointly-led assessment centre. During the course of the programme the zero-credit pass/fail modules (Skills for Practice 1&2) further prepare students for 'Readiness for Direct Practice'. Students are supported throughout, are required to attend all sessions and undertake a portfolio demonstrating their learning
- Students cannot progress to the second (100-day) placement experience without successfully completing the first (70-day) placement
- Progression depends upon the student successfully completing and passing all academic modules and practice learning placements
- Students may in exceptional circumstances be permitted to retrieve one 30 credit module following the award of an FREN, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners in consultation with the host local authority and based on the student's academic and practice profile. Students will be expected to sign a declaration indicating that they understand the implications and possible impact of retrieving a module while continuing their studies
- Students on the Step up to Social Work pathway are funded by DfE. The Department is specific in its requirement that students must complete within the specified timeframe. Extensions to the 14-month qualification period will exclude further student funding for academic fees or the DfE bursary
- Due to the nature and time constraints of the programme students who fail a practice assessment at the first attempt will not normally be permitted a referral or re-enrolment opportunity.
- Where a placement has not been completed due to a student's serious adverse circumstances the programme will not normally be extended; however, consideration will be given to transfer to a later cohort (the DfE student bursary will no longer be available and the student will be liable for any academic fees) or to the 2-year MSc programme offered by the University of Hertfordshire.

- The only progression point for students occurs at the conclusion of the Post Graduate Diploma. Following this Programme Board of Examiners students may top up to the MSc Social Work provided they have passed all previous modules.
- On completion of the PGDip students are encouraged and supported by WLA as their employer to continue their studies and complete a full MSc by undertaking a dissertation module. Students who continue to study to MSc level will be required to return their PgDip Certification, as MSc will be the final award.

E. Management of Programme & Support for student learning

Management

The programme is managed and administered through:

- Dean of School;
- Associate Dean of School (AQA) who has overall responsibility for Quality Assurance;
- Associate Dean of School (L&T) who has overall responsibility for Learning & Teaching;
- Professor Karen Beeton, Head of Department of Allied Health Professions, Midwifery and Social Work
- Vida Douglas who is Professional Lead for all Social Work Programmes;
- the Programme Lead who is responsible for the day to day management chairing the programme committee and advising students on the programme as a whole;
- the designated programme administration team;
- an Admissions Tutor, with specific responsibility for selection;
- a programme committee that includes the above plus student representation;
- Module leaders who are responsible for individual modules

Support

Students are supported by:

- An induction week at the beginning of the academic session
- StudyNet a versatile online interactive learning environment
- Study skills sessions, and study skills drop-in sessions
- Access to extensive digital and print collections of information sources
- Attractive modern learning environments in 2 learning resource centres
- A substantial Student Centre that provides advice on issues such as finance, University regulations, legal matters, accommodation, international student support etc.
- Office of Dean of Students, incorporating Chaplaincy, Counselling and Nursery
- Medical Centre
- University Disability Advisors
- Guided Learner Journey hosted on StudyNet module sites
- An Equal Opportunities Officer
- The Students' Union
- A Careers Service for all current students and graduates

Additionally, Step up to Social Work students are supported by:

- Step up Practice Manager (West London Alliance)
- Project coordination across the London boroughs through the Step up Steering Group

F. Other sources of information

In addition to this Programme Specification, the University publishes guidance to registered students on the programme and its constituent modules:

- A Programme (or Student) Handbook;
- A Definitive Module Document (DMD) for each constituent module;

- A Module Guide for each constituent module.

The [Ask Herts](#) website provides information on a wide range of resources and services available at the University of Hertfordshire including academic support, accommodation, fees, funding, visas, wellbeing services and student societies.

As a condition of registration, all students of the University of Hertfordshire are required to comply with the University's rules, regulations and procedures. These are published in a series of documents called 'University Policies and Regulations' (UPRs). The University requires that all students consult these documents which are available on-line, on the UPR web site, at: <http://www.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/>. In particular, [UPR SA07](#) 'Regulations and Advice for Students' Particular Attention - Index' provides information on the UPRs that contain the academic regulations of particular relevance for undergraduate and taught postgraduate students.

In accordance with section 4(5) of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA), the UK Office for Students (OfS) has registered the University of Hertfordshire in the register of English higher education providers. The Register can be viewed at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/the-register/the-ofs-register/>. Furthermore, the OfS has judged that the University of Hertfordshire delivers consistently outstanding teaching, learning and outcomes for its students. It is of the highest quality found in the UK. Consequently, the University received a Gold award in the 2018 Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes (TEF) exercise. This award was made in June 2018 and is valid for up to 3 years. The TEF panel's report and conclusions can be accessed at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/tef-outcomes/#/provider/10007147>

G. Entry requirements

The normal entry requirements for the programme are:

For MSc pathway:

The normal entry requirements for the programme are:

- A relevant first degree at 2:1 or above;
- Relevant paid, voluntary or life experience;
- Occupational Health and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance.
- Selection is determined by a written exercise, a group discussion and an individual interview, all mapped against the professional capabilities framework for social work (PCF) at entry level and the Social Work England Standards of Education and Training (SET)

For the **Step up to Social Work** pathway

- The **Step up to Social Work** pathway requires a 2:1 or first-class honours degree.
- All **Step up to Social Work** candidates are required to have English and Mathematics GCSE grade C or equivalent.
- The Step up to Social Work pathway requires students to meet the employer-led assessment centre requirements (including written test, group exercise, role play and interview)
- Following the provisional offer of a place on the programme students are required to achieve satisfactory Occupational Health and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance
- Students applying for **Step up to Social Work** will need to have settled immigration status in order to be sponsored for the programme
- International students applying to the programme must demonstrate that they are eligible to remain in the UK for the duration of their studies and that they meet the requirements of the UKBA with regard to full time study in the UK prior to their acceptance on the programme

For both pathways any international students are required to demonstrate an English Language capability with an overall average of IELTS 7.0, with no less than 6.5 in any band. Where appropriate, English language qualifications that are recognised by the University as equivalent to the specified IELTS bands may also be considered.

The programme is subject to the University's Principles, Policies and Regulations for the Admission of Students to Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes (in [UPR SA03](#)), along with associated procedures. These will take account of University policy and guidelines for assessing accredited prior certificated learning (APCL) and accredited prior experiential learning (APEL).

If you would like this information in an alternative format please contact: Karen Mills K.Mills@herts.ac.uk

If you wish to receive a copy of the latest Programme Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report (AMER) and/or the External Examiner's Report for the programme, please email a request to aqo@herts.ac.uk

MSc Social Work

Table 2: Development of Programme Learning Outcomes in the Constituent Modules

This map identifies where the programme learning outcomes are assessed in the constituent modules. It provides (i) an aid to academic staff in understanding how individual modules contribute to the programme aims (ii) a checklist for quality control purposes and (iii) a means to help students monitor their own learning, personal and professional development as the programme progresses.

		Programme Learning Outcomes (as identified in section 1 and the following page)																											
		Knowledge & Understanding							Intellectual Skills					Practical Skills								Transferable skills							
Module Title	Module Code	A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4	A 5	A 6	A 7	B 1	B 2	B 3	B 4	B 5	C 1	C 2	C 3	C 4	C 5	C 6	C 7	C 8	D 1	D 2	D 3	D 4	D 5	D 6	D 7	D 8
Ethics, Values and Anti-Discriminatory Practice	7HSK0256	x		x	x				x		x					x	x		x			x			x	x	x		
Law and Policy for Practice	7HSK0257	x	x		x		x			x	x						x	x						x	x				
The Research Informed Practitioner	6HSK0153				x	x				x		x												x	x				
Skills for Practice 1	7HSK0254	x		x		x		x	x				x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Skills for Practice 2	7HSK0255	x	x	x		x		x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Skills for Practice 3	7HSK0272	x	x	x		x			x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Practice Learning 1	7HSK0259	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Human Growth and Development	7HSK0258				x	x	x			x		x											x		x	x			
Practice Contexts	7HSK0260	x	x	x	x		x			x	x	x				x	x							x	x				
Practice Learning 2	7HSK0261	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Dissertation	7HSK0262		x		x	x	x			x	x	x												x	x	x			

PG Dip Social Work (Step Up)

MSc Social Work (Step-Up)

		Programme Learning Outcomes (as identified in section 1 and the following page)																											
		Knowledge & Understanding							Intellectual Skills					Practical Skills								Transferable Skills							
Module Title	Module Code	A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4	A 5	A 6	A 7	B 1	B 2	B 3	B 4	B 5	C 1	C 2	C 3	C 4	C 5	C 6	C 7	C 8	D 1	D 2	D 3	D 4	D 5	D 6	D 7	D 8
Knowledge Skills and Methods for Professional Practice	7HSK0253	x		x	x	x	x		x	x						x			x				x	x	x	x			
Legislative and Policy Context of Practice	7HSK0046	x	x		x		x			x	x						x	x						x	x				
Skills for Practice 1	7HSK0254	x			x			x	x				x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Skills for practice 2	7HSK0255	x			x			x	x				x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Parenting Through Complexity	7HSK2013	x	x	x	x		x			x		x		x	x		x						x	x	x				
Developing Practice Learning 1	7HSK0250	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Protecting Vulnerable Children and Building Resilience	7HSK0251	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x				x		x						x	x	x				
Developing Practice Learning 2	7HSK0252	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Enhancing Practice	7HSK0049		x				x			x	x	x													x	x	x		

KEY TO PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>A1 - The role of the social worker and a critical understanding and awareness of social work services. A2 - The service delivery context and the legislative and policy framework for social work. A3 – Values, ethics and models of anti-discriminatory practice and their implications for practice. A4 - Social work theory and its implication for practice. A5 - Social work methods and their application to contemporary practice. A6 - Research methods and interpretation and application of the evidence base to contemporary social work.</p>
<p>Intellectual Skills</p> <p>B1 - Critically analyse the professional relationship and develop critical awareness of communication and engagement including the use and impact of self in building relationships with people using services and carers. B2 - Analyse and critically evaluate the theoretical base for social work practice. B3 - Analyse and critically evaluate the context for social work in Europe and the UK including the inherent complexities and dilemmas. B4 - Critically evaluate current research and scholarship in the discipline of social work, and to evaluate and critique research methodologies.</p>
<p>Practical Skills</p> <p>C1 - To be able to build effective relationships with children, their carers and families, groups and communities to enable assessment, planning and review based on best evidence and a sound knowledge of difference, human development and structural factors. C2 - To recognise and act upon a wide range of risk indicators, strengths and protective factors while carefully ensuring that needs are correctly balanced, and where necessary those of vulnerable individuals are prioritised C3 - To be able to communicate sensitively, clearly and authoritatively with all service users and other professionals. C4 - To be able to understand the complex interplay between rights, justice and responsibilities. C5 - To have a sound working understanding of local and national policy, organisational contexts and the relevant elements of the criminal justice system C6 - To understand the importance of professional and ethical behaviour both within and outside of the practice setting while making use of critical reflection and supervision to ensure personal well-being and professional best practice. C7 To demonstrate professional competence in social work practice.</p>
<p>Transferable Skills</p> <p>D1 – Communicate respectfully and effectively both orally and in writing with service users and colleagues in a range of settings. D2 - Work as an effective team member. D3 - Demonstrate effective time management and self- management skills. D4 - Identify and access information utilising a range of resources. D5 - Demonstrate ability to make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations. D6 - Exercise initiative and personal responsibility. D7 - Demonstrate their learning from reflection and self-assessment on their knowledge skills and values. D8 - Understand the significance of the concept of continuous professional development and an acceptance of the responsibility for their own continuing development</p>

Section 2

Programme management

Relevant QAA subject benchmarking statements	QAA Benchmarks for Social Work
Date of validation/last periodic review	October 2018
Date of production/ last revision of PS	March 2021
Relevant intakes	Level 7 entering September 2021
Administrative School	School of Health and Social Care

Course details		
Course code	Course description	HECoS
HHMSW	MSc Social Work	100503
HHSWPGD	PgDip Social Work	100503