

## ACADEMIC SERVICES

### PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Part 1: Basic Data		
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	University of the West of England	
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	University of the West of England	
<b>Delivery Location</b>	UWE campuses	
<b>Faculty responsible for programme</b>	Health and Applied Sciences	
<b>Department responsible for programme</b>	Health and Social Sciences	
<b>Modular Scheme Title</b>	Postgraduate	
<b>Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body Links</b>		
<b>Highest Award Title</b>	Post Graduate Diploma Social Work	
<b>Default Award Title</b>	None	
<b>Fall-back Award Title</b>	None	
<b>Interim Award Titles</b>	PG Cert in Social Work	
<b>UWE Progression Route</b>	N/A	
<b>Mode(s) of Delivery</b>	FT	
<b>Codes</b>		
<b>Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements</b>	QAA Benchmark Statement for Social Work 2008	
<b>CAP Approval Date</b>		
<b>Valid from</b>		
<b>Valid until Date</b>		
<b>Version</b>	1	

## **Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme**

### **Broad aims**

- To prepare students to demonstrate capability to a qualifying standard across all domains of the Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Work (PCF); to meet the Health and Care Professions Council's (HCPC) 'Standards of Proficiency for Social Workers in England', so as to be eligible to apply for registration as social workers with the HCPC.
- To equip social workers with the core knowledge and skills for child and family social work as outlined by the Department for Education.
- To prepare students for capable and proficient practice as newly qualified workers with a specialist interest in child and family social work practice.
- To provide an academically rigorous, stimulating programme that provides students with the knowledge, critical understanding, experience and skills to work creatively and constructively with a diverse range of service users, carers, other professionals and organisations to enhance well-being.

### **Specific aims**

- To ensure that students understand the role of the child and family social worker in contemporary statutory organisations and as part of a system of welfare support to children and their families.
- To ensure that students understand all aspects of practice with children and families, including particularly: child development, adult mental illness, violence, substance abuse and other risk factors, prevention, abuse and neglect, thresholds, assessment, effective direct work, decision planning and making
- To ensure that students learn from and with service users and carers, qualified social workers and other relevant stakeholders and practitioners.
- To provide a programme of learning that closely integrates theory and practice and reflects current practice concerns and developments.
- To provide a programme of learning in which principles of equality and anti-oppressive practice are central, and which enables students to understand the impact of poverty, inequality and diversity on social and economic opportunities and how these impact on family functioning and child welfare.
- To enable students to explore their own values and develop them for social work practice.
- To enable students to become socially, politically and self aware practitioners who are able to exercise autonomous professional judgment, power and authority in complex situations and to work within and understand the role/conflict which occurs as a result of professional power.
- To enable students to become resilient, confident practitioners with strong professional identities, able to reflect critically on their own performance and professional development.

## Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme

### Programme requirements for the purposes of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)

Students must complete the programme in full to achieve the professional qualification. All modules are compulsory and together ensure that students are able to demonstrate the relevant professional standards of capability and proficiency in relation to all areas of social work practice with a specific focus on social work practice with children and families as defined within the DFE 'Step-Up to Social Work' initiative underpinning the programme. The programme requirements also address the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Proficiency for Social Work, the Professional Capabilities Statement and the QAA Subject Benchmark statements for Social Work.

## Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

The award route provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

<b>Learning Outcomes:</b>	<b>UZVS4X-30-M Policy Context and legal Frameworks for Social work</b>	<b>UZVS3C-15-M People and Their Communities – Practice Placement 1</b>	<b>UZVSJ5-30-M Contemporary Issues in Child Protection</b>	<b>UZVSJ4-30-M Psychosocial Approaches to the Life Course: theory, research and Practice</b>	<b>UZVS48-15-M Social workers and Organisations – Practice Placement 2</b>
<b>A) Knowledge and understanding of:</b>					
The role and responsibilities of the professional social worker in a range of practice contexts with adults, children and families	X	X	X		X
The principles and values of the social work profession, including the HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics and the implications of these in exercising professional authority and responsibility	X	X	X		X
The policies and legal requirements within which social workers practice and the implications of these for professional decision making, inter-professional practice and the wellbeing of service users and carers	X	X	X		X
A range of theories that contribute to the knowledge base for social work and their relevance for practice		X	X	X	X
The evidence base for social work including research and knowledge gained from practitioners, service users and carers	X	X	X	X	X
<b>(B) Intellectual Skills Be able to:</b>					
Identify, gather and synthesise information from a range of sources	X	X	X	X	X
Critically analyse and evaluate a range of sources of information and evidence		X	X	X	X

### Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

Formulate, test, evaluate and review hypotheses in response to information			X	X	X
Demonstrate logical, systematic, critical and reflective thinking	X	X	X	X	X
Critically evaluate own ongoing professional development and learning needs	X	X	X	X	X
<b>(C) Subject/Professional/Practical Skills Be able to:</b>					
Practice safely and effectively, using legislation, policy and procedure appropriate to their role	X	X	X		X
Draw on appropriate knowledge, theory and skills to inform practice	X	X	X	X	X
Practice as an autonomous professional, using critical reflection and analysis to inform decision making and professional judgment	X			X	X
Promote own professional development and wellbeing, using supervision, support and training opportunities to maintain fitness to practice		X			X
Apply the ethical principles of the profession with a critical awareness of self and own values	X	X	X		X
Recognise diversity and apply anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive principles in practice	X	X	X	X	X
Build appropriate working relationships with others including service users, carers and colleagues from a range of professions and agencies		X			X
Communicate effectively with individuals, groups and communities		X	X		X
<b>(D) Transferable skills and other attributes Be able to:</b>					
Critically reflect on and question current practice		X	X	X	X
Work effectively in a variety of organisational settings as part of uni or inter-professional teams			X		X
Use appropriate IT packages to aid efficient searching, handling communication and presentation of information	X	X	X		X
Use a variety of problem solving strategies	X	X	X	X	X

#### Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

##### **Teaching and learning strategies to enable learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated**

The nature of the 'Post Graduate Diploma Social Work' programme requires a fully integrated approach to practice learning, theoretical learning and professional development as a social worker, which is reflected in the structure of the programme itself. Consecutive placements, classes and independent study throughout, will reinforce the mutually constitutive nature of these elements and enhance the students' capacity to integrate these three core strands of the teaching and learning package. Regular critical reflection groups will reinforce this integration. Teaching methods themselves are also fundamentally an integration of several approaches in an overall 'blended learning' strategy, in which scheduled learning in 'traditional' face-to-face settings, online learning, personal development and practice learning are all vital and integrated facets.

**Scheduled learning** includes lectures, seminars, whole day conferences, skills workshops and project supervision. The formal learning programme will commence with a 3 week period (the first week of which is residential – see below) of professional skills development and continue in parallel with the placement periods. Skills development workshops ('skills days') and work based learning activities will continue during the first placement to reinforce placement learning and build on this. Lectures and seminars will introduce the students to key learning in relation to law, life-course, social work skills, research. All attendance will be monitored through UWE's swipe in systems. Attendance will be additionally monitored for skills days by registration. If students miss skills days they will be required to undertake additional learning to meet the learning outcomes. Students will be required to formulate a plan – supported by their tutor- showing how each outcome will be met and then demonstrate the attainment of these objectives

**Personal development.** Given the nature (and the inseparability of) the personal and professional demands of social work, the relational basis of the work, the high levels of both stress and satisfaction available within these roles and the person-centered orientation demanded, the programme supports students to develop as resilient practitioners. They will be encouraged to be reflective, emotionally intelligent and responsive, with a sophisticated understanding of self and others. An initial residential week of the programme will launch the beginning of a process of resilient development, which will be augmented by regular one to one and group tutorial support for the duration of the programme. The residential week is a compulsory part of the programme. However if serious documented circumstances require a student to miss any section of this, they will be required to undertake additional learning to meet the learning outcomes. Students will be required to formulate a plan – supported by their tutor- showing how each outcome will be met and then demonstrate the attainment of these objectives

**Independent learning** is a fundamental principle of the course, and one day per week will be dedicated to this throughout. This includes hours engaged with essential reading, case study preparation, contextual study, reflective time and assignment preparation and completion.

**Online learning** is a core component of both independent learning and formal teaching and learning through such mechanisms as 'Collaborate', a virtual classroom platform within the virtual learning environment. UWE's 'Blackboard' technology also means availability of set preparation texts and contextual reading.

**Placement learning.** The programme comprises two placement periods: a 70 day placement commencing near the beginning of the programme, followed by a 100 day placement.

## **Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support**

Overall, students will be exposed to a range of teaching and learning methods, and will be encouraged to undertake independent study, to develop skills as co-operative but autonomous and independent practitioners.

### **Description of any Distinctive Features**

#### **Context**

In setting out its defining principles, the QAA Benchmark Statement for Social Work asserts that the study of social work 'involves the integrated study of subject specific knowledge, skills and values and the critical application of research knowledge from the social and human sciences (and closely related domains) to inform understanding and to underpin action reflection and evaluation.' It also states that 'programmes should be designed to help foster this integration of contextual, analytic, explanatory and practical understanding.' The DFE specifically set out the requirements of learning in some detail in its 'Step-Up to Social Work' initiative. These principles underpin the Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work, and have been the starting point for the development of our approaches to teaching, learning and assessment on the programme.

#### **Relationships, reflection and resilience**

The programme team recognises that contemporary social work practice is challenging and diverse, and likely to become more so. Social work students must develop a mature and complex understanding of their role and high levels of self-awareness. They will need to recognise the inter-subjective nature of relationships with service users and carers, and with other professionals, and to develop skills in building such relationships. Social work demands of practitioners a considerable degree of conceptual thinking to transfer their knowledge and skills between settings. It is specifically these areas that the programme is actively committed to facilitating. A particular emphasis in the programme's teaching of such abilities is evident through the integration of reflective, psychological and sociological ideas in the 'Psychosocial approaches to the life course' module. The induction programme (below) also grows these approaches.

#### **Support**

Student support issues have been given considerable consideration by The Consortium and the Programme team. This is a very demanding 14 months, and students will be offered support through all aspects of the course. Individual tutors will be allocated at the very beginning of the programme, as will mentors in the employing agencies. and will remain in place, supporting the student in college and in placement, throughout the whole programme. Additionally on placement students will have practice educators and also facilitated peer reflective groups. UWE student support systems will all be available for the students. It is also expected that the residential induction period will facilitate a supportive group identity and atmosphere, and allow trusting relations between staff and students and students and each other to grow.

#### **Induction**

Induction for the students has been carefully considered by the Consortium and UWE in tandem, and a two part approach will be employed.

Firstly, approximately 2 months before the commencement of the programme, students will be required to attend a 'Welcome to the programme' day event, which will familiarize them with the structures, organization and personnel involved. Input from the Programme Leader and Consortium Lead will offer some familiarization with the structure and specific teaching and learning. Support services will be present to offer information on how we support



## **Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support**

students. The library and IT services will be represented to introduce students to these aspects. Advice will be offered on reading to prepare the students, and a task to underpin week one of the course set.

Secondly, induction will be undertaken in the first 3 weeks of the programme, threaded through the residential and university based days. Students will get to know each other and the service user group in this period. They will meet their tutor, and be given further information on student support and services. They will be introduced to handbooks and other sources of information. A greater understanding of the mechanics of the programme will be developed. Expectations will be addressed and the beginning of a cohort identity initiated. Reflective group and individual work will be included. (Also see below).

### **Service user and carer involvement**

The programme team works closely with service users and carers through a body known as the HUB group. The group is facilitated by a member of academic staff, and HUB members have been involved in developing the programme. The HUB group will be involved in programme planning, conference presentations, direct teaching and attending student drop-in sessions where students can engage in face to face discussion about service user and carer issues for practice and for their studies. The HUB group is offered training and support from staff to develop in their roles. The group have the chance to develop in specific roles where they have interests and expertise, and where they wish to offer, for example, more focus on assessing, or more on consultancy and/or teaching

As well as in person, the HUB group contributes through written and audio-visual materials that have been developed for use in the programme.

Additionally to the existing HUB group, service users with more direct experience of Family, Children and Young People's Services will be involved in the programme. This will range from the inclusion of young people's service user groups in assessment, to being included informally as part of the programme's induction week to acclimatize the students to the service user inclusion approach.

### **A partnership approach to working with students**

UWE promotes a system of academic personal tutoring, through which students meet a named tutor twice each semester. This programme adheres to this arrangement, and recognizes the importance of the tutoring relationship. The trainee may seek further contact at other points in their programme of study as needed. Over and above this the programme will promote partnership with students as a resource for learning through the following strategies:

#### *Tutors and tutorial groups*

As far as possible we will ensure that students work with the same academic tutor throughout their enrolment on the programme. In addition, tutors will work with their tutees in groups whose membership will remain constant throughout the programme. These groups will meet within scheduled teaching for the following modules:

Skills for relationship-based practice

Psychosocial approaches to the life-course

The intention is to support students in their development of a professional identity, and to model the importance of regular supervision in practice.

#### *Induction and group development*

A residential induction programme in the student's first week (including partner agencies as well as students and academics) will welcome new students, and begin to forge a group

## **Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support**

identity and an understanding of the inter-relational approach and professional and personal value base fundamental to social work in this concentrated group atmosphere.

Relationships and trust will be forged with staff and the consortium representatives. Basic principles of group work will be introduced, and ground rules for working together and supporting each other will be developed. Expectations of the programme will also be explored and aligned during this time.

### **Student representation**

The university works together with students through a system of student representatives who meet programme staff regularly, to promote the student voice in the overall running of the programme and to develop and enhance the student experience.

Student representatives will be selected from volunteers by the students in week one of the programme. Formal meetings with staff will be held three times a year, scheduled to be part of a process of informing quality assurance systems. Informal systems of review and evaluation will be a regular ongoing feature of this initial run of the programme. The Programme Leader will meet with students on a regular basis and the relationships established in the residential inclusion week will set a pattern of open communication between staff and students. Additionally tutoring arrangements will permit feed-back on the student's experience of the programme

### **Partnership with employers and practitioners**

The consortium is at the heart of this programme and the integration of practitioners from the consortium will be undertaken throughout. The Department has established long term, productive and extensive working relationships with social work and social care employers in the region, which the PG Dip programme will continue to build on. The contribution of practitioners to teaching, learning and assessment will be of paramount importance in the integration of experience with knowledge and research in the students' learning. As part of this we aim within the consortium to develop shared learning sets in practice settings for students, and their practice educators, to take place alongside the practice placements. This is intended as a form of knowledge exchange with practitioners, as well as a form of learning and support to students.

### **Partnerships and inter-professional approaches**

Partnership work has been the bedrock of UWE's social work teaching to date, and the PG Dip will build on this experience within the facilitating context of the consortium. Not only will selection involve the University and the consortium local authorities, but all aspects of programme delivery will reflect this closely integrated network. Experienced practitioners will be involved in teaching sessions and in developing and delivering online materials. Specific work-based learning days will be part of the programme, using practitioner specialists to support students to reflect on their own and group members' work based experiences and to learn from this.

Managers, lawyers, the police, community nurses, doctors, community support workers and magistrates will contribute to the delivery of the PG. Dip. In panels and a range of combinations, their work will inform students in relation to not just differing roles and tasks, but in the central importance of inter-professional communication and working relationships.

### **Community perspectives**

Understanding of the significance of the community context of practice with service users and carers will be developed throughout the programme. To balance the statutory nature of the programme itself, students will also have input from advice and advocacy agencies, the voluntary and private sector, and from those whose work is primarily community led. A



#### **Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support**

knowledge of resources and organisations in any locality, and also knowledge of the culturally diverse communities in which many service users live, is considered an essential element of the students' training as social workers.

##### **Research awareness**

Research awareness, including how to appraise research and its uses for both academic and practice learning, is developed throughout the programme. The importance of evidence bases and evidence based practice is demonstrated in all modules in the programme. By the end of the programme students will be sufficiently acquainted with M level research skills and knowledge that they could, if they wished to progress their studies, undertake a M level dissertation module.

Contemporary research knowledge will be used in both placements, 'Skills for relationship based practice', 'Contemporary issues in child protection' and particularly in 'Psychosocial approaches to the life course', where specific teaching on research appraisal and skills will form part of the curriculum.

Library-based skills for research (and indeed generally for learning) are an important part of research learning, and will be incorporated into the programme. Using library-based resources, exploring and drawing on the full range of appropriate journals, developing skills in web-searches and constructing specific search strategies will all be developed through library training sessions and in modules.

##### **Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)**

All modules will be supported by Blackboard or equivalent. Students will have access to an integrated learning technology experience via the University's port 'MyUWE', where they will receive personalized information and access to systems relevant to them. The programme will incorporate creative uses of blended learning techniques so that students can work independently as well as in face-to-face contexts. E-learning will offer videoed presentations, appropriate contextual materials such as film and sound recording, and the potential for interaction via, e.g. discussion rooms.

Individual modules will encourage and support students to engage with specific eLearning resources relating to their content. (See also *service user and carer involvement* above).

##### **Employability and further study**

The PG Dip Social has the development of skills for employability at its heart. The role of the consortium in selecting students, offering and supervising placements and working with this programme on all aspects, connects students into potential sources of local employment when they finish. Social work programmes at UWE also, independently, have a very good record of producing students who are quickly successful in gaining relevant employment. Strategies used to encourage this include offering workshops with employers towards the end of the programme, covering topics such as writing applications and presentation at interview.

All modules contribute to the development of professional capabilities. This is most obvious in the skills related module with which the programme commences as well as in practice modules.

The programme will also work with the careers service to provide opportunities for students to develop their skills in seeking employment, and in exploring opportunities for further study.

#### Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

Students exiting with a PG Dip from this award will be well-placed to access further Masters level education, and the research methods provided within the PG Dip will underpin related M level research. Continuing Professional Development opportunities to Masters level would be accessible at UWE.

#### Part 5: Assessment

Approved [University Regulations and Procedures](#), *HCPC require that condonement is not permitted on this award.*

Only the target/highest award provides eligibility to apply for HCPC registration

##### Assessment Strategy

Assessment strategy to enable the learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated:

The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) produced by the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB), provides a framework for the professional development of social workers. It is intended to indicate standards of overall professional capability at different stages of someone's career in social work. It promotes holistic assessment of the extent to which the capabilities are achieved across nine domains at each stage. In relation to pre-qualifying education it identifies four stages beginning with entry requirements. The remaining three are:

- Readiness for Direct Practice
- End of placement one
- End of qualifying level / graduation

Assessment of modules in the programme is designed to provide holistic assessment of students' achievement of the capabilities appropriate to each stage. As such, the range of assessments is intended to assess students' integration of the knowledge, skills and values appropriate to the relevant stage of the PCF. It is this that has informed the determination of co- and pre-requisites for progression to modules at each Level. Assessment of Readiness for Direct Practice is dependent on successful completion of the 3 week intensive induction programme, and this will be a pre-requisite for the placement component of People and Their Communities- Practice Placement 1 module.

Beyond this, assessments have been chosen firstly for their relevance to each module's content, and secondly to provide a variety of approaches to assessment across the programme that will promote students' abilities to present themselves in a range of settings, mediums and formats relevant to the profession.

Assessment Map							
The programme encompasses a range of <b>assessment methods</b> including; Seen and unseen exams or timed assignments; on-line tests; presentations; written assignments; reports and case studies; and practice portfolios. These are detailed below:							
Assessment Map for PG Dip Social Work							
		Unseen Written Exam	Seen Written Exam	Oral presentation with written assignment	Written assignment	Extended independent study (Case study)	Practice Portfolio including community profile and reflective commentaries
<b>Compulsory Modules Level M</b>	UZVS4X-30-M Policy Context and Legal Frameworks for Social Work	A (50)			B (50)		
	UZVS3C-15-M People and Their Communities – Practice Placement 1						A (100)
	UZVSJ5-30-M Contemporary Issues in Child Protection			A (50)		B (50)	
	UZVSJ4-30-M Psychosocial Approaches to the Life Course: Theory, research and Practice		A (50)		B (50)		
	UZVS48-15-M Social work and Organisations – Practice Placement 2						A (100)
Written Exams, Practical exams, or Coursework is indicated by the colour coding above.							

Part 6: Programme Structure
This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a typical <b>full time student</b> , including: level and credit requirements, interim award requirements, module diet, including compulsory and optional modules

ENTRY		Compulsory Modules	Awards
Year 1		UZVS4X-30-M Policy Context and Legal Frameworks for Social Work	PG Dip Social Work  To include all 120 credits of compulsory modules
		UZVS3C-15-M People and Their Communities – Practice Placement 1	
		UZVSJ5-30-M Contemporary Issues in Child Protection	
		UZVSJ4-30-M Psychosocial Approaches to the Life Course: Theory, Research and Practice	
		UZVS48-15-M Social Workers and Organisations – Practice Placement 2	
GRADUATION			

## Part 7: Entry Requirements

The DFE has formally stipulated via its 'Step-Up to Social Work' initiative the necessary requirements for entry into the Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work, through which the Consortium, in collaboration with UWE, has put these specifications into place. The University's Standard Entry Requirements apply with the following additions:

### **Educational qualifications**

Applicants should have:

#### EITHER

- Achieved GCSEs in English Language and Mathematics (or certificated equivalent) at grade C or above and normally, three other subjects, all at grade C or above,

PLUS one of the following:

- An undergraduate Honours degree with either a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2:1 classification

### **English language**

Applicants whose first language is not English must have a minimum IELTS score of 7 overall with a minimum of 6.5 in any section, (or equivalent)

### **Previous experience**

Applicants must have some knowledge or direct experience in social work or social care and show that they have an initial understanding of social work.

### **Selection processes**

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an assessment centre for a full day of activities including a written test, interview and group task. The assessment centres will be run in collaboration with the HEI and the South West Regional Consortium 2, to DFE specifications.

### **Disclosure and barring service checks and other matters**

Health checks and criminal convictions checks (DBS checks) will be undertaken on all candidates in accordance with guidance from the Health and Care Professions Council, and in accordance with relevant university, faculty and programme policies.

### **Accreditation of Prior Learning (AL) / Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning (AP(E)L)**

Given the nature of the Programme and its specific selection requirements within DFE/Consortium specifications, APEL is not possible.

## Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

The programme team have used the following to inform the planning and development of the programme:

- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2008) *Benchmark Statement for Social Work* Gloucester, QAA
- Health and Care Professions Council (2012) *Standards of Proficiency for Social Workers in England* London, HCPC
- Health and Care Professions Council (2012) *Standards of Education and Training* London, HCPC
- Health and Care Professions Council (2012) *Standards of Education and Training Guidance* London, HCPC

## Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

- The College of Social Work (2012) *Reforming social work qualifying education: The social work degree* London, TCSW
- The College of Social Work (2012) *Professional Capabilities Framework* London, TCSW

All core modules have been mapped against these requirements and their delivery will be monitored and evaluated when the programme is running.

Other reference points included

- The Health and Care Professions Council *Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics* London, HCPC
- Health and Care Professions Council *Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students* London, HCPC
- The University and Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences policies and strategies notably for teaching and learning including e-learning, assessment, research, staff development, inter-professional learning.

All these documents have formed the basis of formal and informal consultations with colleagues within the university, with partner agencies, with service users, carers, current and former students.

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in module specifications, available on the [University's website](#).