Module Specification

Law for Social Work Practice

Version: 2026-27, v3.0, Approved

Contents

Module Specification 1

Part 1: Information 2

Part 2: Description 2

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods 4

Part 4: Assessment 5

Part 5: Contributes towards 6

Part 1: Information

Module title: Law for Social Work Practice

Module code: UZVYH4-15-1

Level: Level 4

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 15

ECTS credit rating: 7.5

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School of Health and Social Wellbeing

Partner institutions: None

Field: Health, Community and Policy Studies

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: This module introduces the key legal frameworks that shape social work with a focus on the ethical dilemmas that arise with applying the law in social work practice

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: The aim of this module is to engage you to think about the legal context that influences decision making in social work and the ethical tensions that

can arise.

The module teaching and assessment will help you understand how legislation informs how social workers practice with adults, children and their families. The main focus will be on the Human Rights Act 1998, and Equality Act 2010, but will also include reference to the Children Act 1989, the Mental Health Act 1983 (2007) and the Care Act 2014. As legislation is introduced or amended, the focus of the module will be updated. The perspective of people with lived experience is also central to how the law is taught within this module.

Outline syllabus: In this module you will consider the ways in which legal frameworks influence social work practice with different groups, and why it is vital practitioners understand the legal context in which they are working. A key focus of the module is on the importance of the law in promoting equality and human rights, in the context of social work practice.

You will begin to learn about how the law, statutory guidance, and policy, is developed and how this shapes the duties and responsibilities placed on organisations that deliver social work services. This will inform your understanding of how social workers can promote individuals' rights, and challenge discrimination and inequality.

You will learn about the complexities and ethical dilemmas that arise when the law is applied in practice, developing an understanding of the proportionate use of authority. Consideration will be given to how the law impacts on the delivery of services in other areas, such as criminal justice, education and health, and how social workers work together with professionals from these sectors.

You will be introduced to some of the basic court skills that social workers need to prepare and present written or verbal evidence to a court, and how their role fits alongside others in preparing for legal proceedings.

In this module the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (SDG) '10. Reduce inequalities' and '16. Peace, justice and strong institutions' will be

considered.

Studying this module will also help you meet the requirements of the social work Professional Capabilities Framework: Domain 3 ‘Rights, Justice & Economic Wellbeing', and Domain 4 ‘Knowledge’.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The learning opportunities will typically include lectures and seminar discussion groups where we will use enquiry based learning. In seminar you will use case studies and other resources to understand how the law is applied in social work practice. The experience of people with lived experience of social work services is included in the module either through their direct participation or via other means.

There is an expectation that you will attend a Magistrates Court or Crown Court session during this module, to see how courts use the law. Staff will support you to organise this visit.

You will also need to utilise a range of online resources and material from the reading lists to support your learning.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Explain the development and use of key legal frameworks that shape social work practice, identifying the relationship between the law, statutory guidance, policy, and social work practice.

MO2 Analyse ethical and value-based dilemmas involved in the application of the law within social work practice.

MO3 Articulate the importance of the law in promoting equality and safeguarding human rights within the context of social work.

Hours to be allocated: 150

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 114 hours

Staff-guided learning = 36 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://uwe.rl.talis.com/index.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: There will be a formative assessment that will involve you completing a short quiz to help you assess your understanding of what you have been studying. This quiz will take place midway through the module so you can have a measure of the progress you are making and it will help you prepare for your summative assessment by helping you to explore how the use of different legislation in social work practice.

The summative assessment will involve you writing a 2000 word essay in response to a case study. This assessment will involve you applying legislation to different individuals in a family or community group and reflecting on the ethical dilemmas and challenges that arise when thinking about proportionate legal intervention.

These assessments will compliment the other assessments you will undertake across the programme so that you have a range of assessment types and multiple opportunities for feedback to develop and your knowledge and professional skills.

Assessment tasks:

Case Study (First Sit)
Description: Case study answer based on social work practice examples (2000 words)
Weighting: 100 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Case Study (Resit)
Description: Case study answer based on social work practice examples (2000 words)
Weighting: 100 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Social Work [Glenside] BSc (Hons) 2026-27

Social Work [Yeovil] BSc (Hons) 2026-27

Social Work [Glenside] BSc (Hons) 2026-27

Social Work [Yeovil] BSc (Hons) 2026-27