



Programme Specification

Professional Development (Social Work) [Blended (Glenside and Frenchay)]

Version: 2026-27, v2.0, Validated

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Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Professional Development (Social Work) [Blended (Glenside and Frenchay)]

Highest award: MSc Professional Development (Social Work)

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CHSS School of Health and Social Wellbeing, College of Health, Science & Society

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies: Not applicable

Modes of delivery: Part-time

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website.

For implementation from: 01 September 2026

Programme code: L50G42

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The Professional Development (Social Work) Awards are a targeted structure for social work professionals that operates within the overall UWE Professional Development Awards framework. The Masters (MSc) Professional Development (Social Work) award is a flexible structure within which qualified social workers can develop their knowledge, skills and capabilities to meet their individual, professional and their employer's requirements and goals.

Alongside the generic Professional Development Awards, rather than following a rigid, pre-determined timetable, learners work collaboratively with employers and programme leadership to design a personalised plan for their learning. By combining active workplace projects with targeted academic study, this framework allows individuals to address immediate operational challenges in their workplace while formally recognising their prior professional experience and accelerating their career progression.

Features of the programme: To be eligible to study on the Professional Development (Social Work) Awards, individuals should be qualified to use the protected title of social worker, registered with the relevant professional regulator and currently employed in a social worker role. Relevant social work roles include, but are not limited to, statutory and voluntary sector agency practice, leadership, work-based learning and education.

Learners will be considered for entry to study within the award framework based on their existing qualifications and post-qualifying practice experience, following discussion with the Programme Lead in line with UWE's entry requirements and admission policy.

Work-based learning forms the core mandatory component of the award framework in recognition of the professional development foundations of these awards. To ensure a progressive depth of enquiry, the minimum credit threshold for the compulsory Evidencing Work Based Learning (EWBL) module on the MSc is 40 credits at level 7, via major evidence-led or research-based project.

Remaining credits towards the level required for the target award are accumulated through completion of a negotiated selection of modules tailored to the learner's

professional and operational context and goals, a minimum per level of award which must be studied at UWE. Credits from relevant study at other HEIs at the required level for the award may be recognised towards the total required for the award, by agreement during the learning planning process.

Educational Aims: The Professional Development (Social Work) Awards allow qualified social workers to academic achievement through their ongoing development in practice from qualification onwards through newly qualified practice, experienced, specialist and leadership levels, in the context of changing organisational and workplace contexts. Social workers can complete post-qualifying awards or top up their qualifying awards to a Masters degree through learning that develops their professional, work-based and academic expertise.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

- PO1. Develop and apply comprehensive knowledge of contemporary social work, related fields and user experiences while critically analysing and evaluating their professional practice to exercise informed judgement.
- PO2. Critically analyse and evaluate research and methodologies, and generate and apply original knowledge to enhance social work practice.
- PO3. Apply knowledge to navigate complex issues, make informed judgments in uncertain situations, and evidence professional autonomy to plan and implement innovative solutions in professional interdisciplinary contexts.
- PO4. Critically apply knowledge of diversity, equality, and ethics to model good practice, while evaluating and challenging discrimination in line with legal and professional standards.
- PO5. Foster your own and others' professional development, and contribute to strategic leadership and service improvement.

Assessment strategy: Knowledge and skills within the framework are primarily evaluated through individual written assignments, evidence-based projects, and

professional portfolios, reflecting the individualised approach.

Work-Based Modules: Assessed through the reflective application of theory to practice, requiring portfolios or projects that demonstrate direct workplace impact.

Taught & Experiential Modules: Utilise a diverse range of diagnostic and summative formats tailored by the providing teaching institution, aligned with the university's formal Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) regulations.

Governance: All assessment activity is rigorously aligned with the University's Work-Based Learning and Assessment Policies, ensuring academic standards are uniformly met across all customised pathways.

Student support: Academic quality and learner progression are demonstrated by a multi-layered, integrated support network:

Pathway & Academic Oversight: A dedicated Programme Leader guides the initial admissions process, facilitates the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and co-design the individualised learning journeys. Continuous academic monitoring is maintained via structured progress reviews and assigned project supervisors.

Peer & Collaborative Networks: Learning is reinforced through structured hybrid peer-learning sets and distance-learning cohorts that allow working professionals to share practice-led insights.

Operational & Central Infrastructure: Learners are assigned a dedicated Programme Coordinator for operational continuity. This is backed by UWE Bristol's central Student Advisers, Study Skills teams, a 24/7 Digital Library, and specialist IT infrastructure optimized for remote learners.

Strategic Governance: The Professional Development Governance Group provides continuous quality assurance and academic oversight of the entire framework.

Student Wellbeing: UWE provides access to University Wellbeing and Disability services in addition to the learner's employer support.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

There are no common pathways through the Framework to a generic 'Professional Development' award of the Scheme.

Other than the completion of a compulsory work-based learning project module, the remainder of the award will reflect individual and employer choice. The learning opportunities will be negotiated through an agreed approval process so that the credit accumulation of learning and assessment will demonstrate relevance to an employer and individual/employee.

A total of 60 credits at level 7 must be studied within the award.

Year 1 Optional EWBL Modules

Students must take a minimum of 40 credits from the Evidencing Work Based Learning (EWBL) modules listed.

This must include at least one 40+ credit level 7 work-based project module.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UZWSGU-60-M	Evidencing Work Based Learning 2026-27	60
UZVRYC-40-M	Evidencing Work Based Learning 2026-27	40
UZWSGS-40-M	Evidencing Work Based Learning 2026-27	40

Year 1 Optional Modules

In addition to the EWBL module/s, students must complete optional credits to total 180. Optional modules could include:

Any work-based learning project module

Any other UWE module or unit of study

Credit-rated learning opportunities from other awarding bodies

Modules with negotiated content (which may include non-credit rated learning opportunities), learning outcomes and assessment.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UWEPDPG	Professional Development Award Framework Module Portfolio PG 2026-27	0

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

These awards provide opportunities for organisations and individuals to develop tailored programmes to meet their needs and support learners to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes of benefit to their current workplace, or voluntary activities or future career aspirations.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA): UK Quality Code for Higher Education (setting expectations for standards, academic integrity, and student achievement).

Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ): Descriptors for HE awards at levels 4-7.

University Institutional Policy: UWE Bristol Strategy 2030 (specifically commitments to future-focused, enterprise, and inclusive practice-led education) and the University Work-Based Learning Policy.

Professional and Industry Bodies: Individual pathways are cross-referenced against relevant professional competency frameworks and industry skills gap assessments during the curriculum negotiation phase.

Part E: Regulations

B: Approved variant to University Academic Regulations and Procedures.

Maximum imported credit is 125 credits (of 180 for MA/MSc)