

NOTE TO PROGRAMME LEADS:

Please refer to APQO guidance note (G2.2) on completing the PS template.

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

for the award of

MA Social Work

Managed by the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Date approved:	Date approval confirmed, on recommendation of University validation panel or other authorised body.
Applies to students commencing study in:	September 2013 onwards.

RECORD OF UPDATES

Date amended*	Nature of amendment**	Reason for amendment**

Extend list as necessary.

*Date of meeting of Faculty AESC, validation panel, or other authorised body at which changes were formally approved.

**Give brief outline of what has been updated and why (e.g. section 4.2 updated due to changes in PSRB requirements).

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University – Marston Road Site
Language of study:	English
Final award:	MA or PGDip in Social Work
Programme title:	Social Work
Interim exit awards and award titles available:	PG Cert (unnamed)
Brookes course code:	HC55
UCAS code:	
JACS code:	L500
HECoS code:	See guidance note G2.2, section 1
Mode of delivery:	Full-time (face to face/on-campus) Part-time (face to face/on-campus)
Mode/s and duration of study:	2 Years Full-time / Maximum 5 Years 3 Years Part-time / Maximum 5 Years
QAA subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:	The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2008) Subject Benchmark Statement for Social Work (revised). QAA.
Professional accreditation attached to the programme:	Health and Care Professions Council
University Regulations:	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

This well established programme leads to an academic qualification as well as eligibility to apply for registration as a social worker with the HCPC. The interdisciplinary nature of the programme together with the focus on critical self-reflection and interpersonal skills enables post-graduates to work effectively within health and social care teams with a wide range of service users.

Blended learning is used effectively across the programme to impart knowledge and promote discussion as well as to enable students to develop digital and information literacy. Programme staff are actively engaged in research around cultural sensitivity and internationalisation and integrate aspects of this across the curriculum.

Staff profiles for members of the core teaching team can be found on Department website <http://pswph.brookes.ac.uk/staff>

The teaching team is supported by experts in the field, both Voices of Experience (service users) and professionals.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates of the MA and PGDip will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding and critical awareness of the core areas of knowledge and understanding relevant to social work, including their application to practice and service delivery.
- Demonstrate a systematic understanding and critical awareness of current problems and new insights relating to social work.
- Apply creatively a repertoire of core social work skills (also fits Research Literacy; Critical self-awareness and personal literacy; Digital and information literacy; Global citizenship).
- Apply core knowledge and understanding to engage in effective relationships with service users and carers (also fits Global citizenship).
- Analyse and appraise previous learning and experience in order to maintain fitness to practice and identify current and future learning needs. (also fits Critical self-awareness and personal literacy).
- Communicate effectively with service users and carers and with other professionals. • Integrate clear understanding of legal, confidentiality and ethical issues and codes of values in order to practice within the legal and ethical boundaries of social work. (also fits Critical self-awareness and personal literacy).
- Consistently exercise an appropriate level of autonomy and initiative in individual decision-making within the context of supervisory, collaborative, ethical and organisational requirements in order to maintain fitness to practice. (also fits Critical self-awareness and personal literacy). List relevant programme learning outcomes...

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

- Apply research and enquiry techniques with reflective awareness, to collect, analyse and interpret relevant information in order to maintain fitness to practice.
- Critical evaluate knowledge and evidence from a range of sources.
- Design and conduct a piece of research or conduct a systematic literature review which demonstrates comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to advanced scholarship and application to practice (**MA only**).
- Disseminate research findings and actively engage in the application of research into practice(**MA only**)..

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

- Critically reflection analyse and evaluate their performance and take responsibility for modifying action in the light of this in order to practice safely and effectively within their scope of practice. (also fits Digital and information literacy).

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

- Use digital and information literacy in an integrated way, in specific practice contexts.

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- Acknowledge and critical evaluate the potential and limitations of social work as a practice based discipline to effect individual and social change.
- Critically evaluate the impact of culture, equality and diversity and practice in a nondiscriminatory manner

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

MA/PG Dip

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
P40301	The Policy and Law Context of Social Care	20	7	Compulsory	Coursework 100%
P40302	Theory, Assessment and Social Work Intervention with Children	20	7	Compulsory	Coursework 100%
P40303	Theory, Assessment and Social Work Intervention with Adults	20	7	Compulsory	Coursework 100%
P40308	Skill Development and Professional Communications	10	7	Compulsory	Coursework 100%
P40309	Social Work Practice 1 (70 days)	10	7	Compulsory	Coursework 100%
P40310	Social Work Practice 2 (100 days)	20	7	Compulsory	Coursework 100%
P45002	Foundations in Child Welfare and Wellbeing	20	7	Compulsory	Coursework 100%
MA Award only					
P40306	Applied Research Methods	10		Compulsory for MA 7	Coursework 100%
P40307	Dissertation	50		Compulsory for MA 7	Coursework 100%

4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

For the PG Dip in Social Work there are seven compulsory modules (120 credits)

For the MA in Social Work there are an additional two modules making a total of nine compulsory modules (180 credits).

Exit Awards:

MA Social Work This leads to professional registration with the HCPC.

PGDip Social Work This leads to professional registration with the HCPC.

Interim exit award: **PG Cert (unnamed)**

Students leaving with the interim exit award will not be eligible for registration with the HCPC on the social work register.

4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Updated May 2016

The current MA / PG Dip in Social Work was validated by the General Social Care Council GSCC in 2010. From 2012 accreditation moves to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

The former College of Social Work in consultation with stakeholders has developed the Professional Capabilities Framework and this together with the HCPC Standards of Proficiency and QA Benchmark U/G statement (2008) provides the framework around which the programme curriculum is based. The programme has been designed so that students who successfully complete the MA or PGDip in Social Work meet the requirements laid down by the HCPC and College of Social Work and are therefore eligible to apply for professional registration with the HCPC.

There are a number of regulations that guide the Practice Learning Process. These are located with the 'dynamic document' **Standards of Conduct**. It is important to reiterate that students will be robustly assessed by the University, prior to acceptance on the Programme to ensure that they are 'Fit for Practice' with vulnerable populations.

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The programme handbook provides a commentary for students on how the Postgraduate Attributes are developed through the programme. In addition, students can expect to be introduced to the concept of Postgraduate Attributes during induction, and will have discussions with their academic advisor, particularly in their first year, which will focus on identifying module content and activities leading to their acquisition of Postgraduate Attributes, and their experience of them.

Teaching and Learning Methods

A range of teaching and learning methods are used on the programme including lectures, seminars, small and large group work, individual practice learning in agency settings and tutorials. Most sessions are participatory, with the students contributing formally and informally to discussion using their knowledge from reading, research and practice experience. Student time is split between direct contact time and independent study with a typical University based 20 credit module having a total of 200 hours of student effort. Modules are either classroom based, practice based or distance learning. Aspects of diversity and inclusion are taught practiced and assessed across each year of the programme (see the learning outcomes grid in the programme handbook).

Assessment Strategy

The programme uses a range of assessment tools for the University based modules. These include case studies, portfolios, presentations, exams and essays. For the agency-based practice learning modules the students have to present a portfolio of evidence of capability to meet the requirements of the College of Social Work and Health and Care Professions Council. The assessment strategy is informed by the Brookes Assessment Compact in terms of each module having formative and summative, a moderation process, objective marking, provision of qualitative feedback and quantitative marks by reference to the assessment grid.

A range of practiced and/or assessed tasks, activities and assessments contribute to your development of Postgraduate Attributes throughout the social work programme. For example in relation to Academic Literacy you will undertake literacy searches, produce annotated bibliographies and explore what is meant by evidence based knowledge and practice: Research Literacy utilises critical approaches to communication theories and methods and application of reflective cycles in a critical manner. MA students will complete a dissertation or research project and develop research skills. Critical self-awareness and personal literacy is a central part of the practice learning experience where you will use reflective diaries to explore how to make best use of learning opportunities and address ethical dilemmas. Digital and information literacy is developed using computer tests and technology to discuss and assess aspects of the programme. Global citizenship makes use of cross cultural understanding and teaching cultural diversity to raise awareness of diversity and inclusion issues. All these are integrated into your studies which on successful completion lead to an academic qualification as well as eligibility to apply for professional registration with the Health Care Professions Council.

Work-based learning elements

A total of 170 days in supervised practice is required. This is split into two periods of seventy days and 100 days. The two placements will be in contrasting settings with different service user groups and the final placement will provide opportunities for students to undertake statutory social work tasks. Students have to demonstrate the Capabilities across the nine domains of the Professional Capabilities Framework at each of the three PCF thresholds (readiness for practice, end of first placement and end of last placement).

Assessment regulations

These regulations are made under the University's Academic Postgraduate Taught Programmes Regulations which can be located at:

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/specific/b4/>

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates can apply for either the **MA Social Work** or the **Postgraduate Diploma Social Work**. Both programmes lead to eligibility to apply for registration as a social work with the HCPC.

Academic criteria

1 Possess a good honours degree or higher or a professional qualification equivalent to an undergraduate degree normally in a cognate area.

2 Have GCSE Maths and English or equivalent at least to grade C or above and basic IT skills with reliable access to the internet, preferably through a broad band connection.

3 Candidates who did not complete the GCSE English language in the UK will be asked to obtain one of the following:

IELTS (International English Language Testing System) with a score of 7.0 overall and with no category scoring below 6.5

Cambridge Certificate in Proficiency in English: Grade C or above

Experience and skills

Candidates should have experience of paid or voluntary work with vulnerable people. This experience should be sufficient to enable the candidate to clearly demonstrate their commitment, motivation and understanding of Social Work's knowledge, skills and values.

4 This would typically be the equivalent of one year's full-time experience of social care or health care related practice in either statutory or the voluntary sector. Caring in a personal capacity may in some instances be acceptable as relevant experience.

5 Successful applicants must submit where possible, a recent practice reference from a social care employer in the UK who can verify that they have met the DoH requirement:

Ensure that all students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to ensure their safety to undertake practice learning in a service delivery setting. This preparation must include the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the experience of service users and the opportunity to shadow [for at least one full day] an experienced registered Social Worker.

(Department of Health 2002)

Other criteria

6 Undertake an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

7 All applicants must be screened for fitness to practice and suitability to practice Social Work.

8 We welcome applications from individuals as well as those sponsored or supported by their employer.

The selection process

Candidates who are short listed for interview will undertake a full selection day. This includes: a written test, observed team exercise and an individual interview.

Candidates may be admitted with credit from APL or APEL for the University based part of the programme. In exceptional circumstances where the student can demonstrate the required capabilities and meet assessment criteria, credit for placement learning will be considered.

Updated May 2016

6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

All applicants must be screened for fitness to practice and a Disclosure and Barring Service check will be undertaken.

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Upon successful completion of the MA or PG Dip students will be eligible to apply for registration as a social worker with the Health and Care Professions Council. Current data (2012) indicates that all PG Dip and MA students have secured employment before finishing the course.

Once qualified, many social workers go on to secure employment in particular statutory, private, voluntary or independent areas such as children and families, older people, mental health, disabilities, or work with offenders.

The programme team has regular contact with social work employers and other HEIs in the region under the umbrella of MKOB and B, SWEG. (Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, Social Work Education Group). The aim of this group is to Co-ordinate plans and actions in regard to the introduction of the new SW degree, specifically the practice placements, the Practice Educator Framework and CPD programmes. The main employers are local authorities and Health Trusts however the programme is in the process of involving the third sector placements (PVI) in these developments.

Social work employers are also involved in a variety of other aspects of the OBU social work course: selection of students on the interview panel, the assessment of students on placement as members of the Practice Assessment Panel (PAP), and Programme/ Course annual reviews.

The programme also has an active service user and carer involvement group, known as the Voices of Experience who contribute to a range of activities including recruitment and selection of students, teaching, assessing and programme committees.