

BA (Hons) Social Work Programme Specification

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/social-work-ba/>

Academic Year:	2024/25
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Programme Accrediting Body:	Social Work England
Target Degree Award:	Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Social Work [FHEQ Level 6]
Exit Degree Awards:	Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Social Care [FHEQ Level 6]; Bachelor of Arts in Social Care [FHEQ Level 6]
Exit Diploma Award:	Diploma of Higher Education in Social Care [FHEQ Level 5]
Exit Certificate Award:	Certificate of Higher Education in Social Care [FHEQ Level 4]
Subject Benchmark Statement:	Social Work (QAA)
Programme Mode of Study:	September start, Full-time for 3 years (UCAS Code L500)

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Minor Modifications Schedule

1. April 2018: Annual changes for 2018/19
2. March 2019: Annual changes for 2019/20
3. December 2020: Specification made accessible.
4. April 2021: Specification reformatted. Updated admissions and progression scheme section
5. July 2021: Clarified programme regulations, eligibility to progress to registration, and international admissions.
6. May 2022: Updated Bradford Progression Scheme eligibility. Annual changes for 2022/23
7. May 2023: Module changes following annual review, including changes to the Readiness for Direct Social Work Practice Module.
8. April 2024: Annual changes for 2024 academic year.

Introduction

The aim of our BA (Hons) Social Work is to produce confident, competent, qualified social work practitioners. The programme therefore offers both academic and professional outcomes. Academic outcomes are available at Certificate of Higher Education in Social Care, Diploma of Higher Education in Social Care, and the BA (Hons) in Social Work levels.

The professional status of social worker is conferred by Social Work England and successful graduates are eligible to register with Social Work England as a qualified social worker. We offer a well-established programme with a national reputation for producing high calibre workers. Our programme is designed, managed, and delivered by a

Programme Management Board that includes practice placement agencies, students, lecturers, and practitioners.

Stakeholder involvement ensures that our programme maintains a dynamic, outward-looking approach towards social work education with a clear focus on the needs of people with lived experience of social work. The following groups and organisations play an active part in the life of the programme:

- **Employers:** We are part of the Bradford Social Work Teaching Partnership with Bradford Council and Bradford College. The partnership works to provide good quality placements with the local authority. We also have a number of partnerships with third sector organisations.
- **People who use services:** User involvement is vital to the life of our programme and is an area we are committed to expanding. At the present time, people with lived experience of social work are employed as module teachers and guest speakers. They are also involved in local action-based research, and they co-run local and national conferences and provide advice on programme design.
- **Students:** We seek feedback from students on every aspect of the programme, including placement provision, module content and teaching, and programme management and design.
- **Lecturers:** The majority of lecturers teaching the programme are qualified social workers, with substantial practice experience. We work within a strong team ethos that ensures all lecturers are involved in the management and running of the programme.
- **Practitioners:** Social Work Practitioners are involved in the teaching and assessment of practice placements, and in teaching within the academic setting. They also monitor placement standards and interview programme applicants.

Programme Aims

The programme is intended to:

- A1. Provide knowledge of social work services and people with lived experience of social work, the service delivery context, values and ethics in social work, theories and methods of social work, and the nature of social work practice.
- A2. Develop skills in assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation with individuals, families, carers, groups, and communities.
- A3. Develop the ability of students to support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances.
- A4. Improve student awareness of the management of risk to users, self and colleagues.
- A5. Build transferable skills in workload management and accountability, self-reflective practice and professional competence, communication and information technology and numerical skills, problem solving skills, information gathering, analysis and synthesis, intervention and evaluation, communication skills, skills in working with others, and skills in personal and professional development.

Programme Learning Outcomes

To be eligible for the award of Certificate of Higher Education at FHEQ level 4, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and a critical understanding of factors that shape identity, are able to take into account and challenge discrimination and oppression on a personal and institutional level.
2. Identify and apply in practice the principles of social justice, inclusion and equality and how legislation and guidance serves to advance or constrain people's rights.
3. Apply critical reflection and analysis to inform and provide a rationale for professional decision-making by being able to identify, distinguish, evaluate, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge and evidence.

Additionally, to be eligible for the award of Diploma of Higher Education at FHEQ level 5, students will be able to:

4. Demonstrate awareness of the need for professionals to have a commitment by taking responsibility for their own conduct, safe practice and learning as a qualified social worker; be able to reflect on the importance of being able to manage their time and workload effectively with support through supervision and maintain professional integrity in their work.
5. Critically reflect on social care values and principles and with guidance recognise, reflect on and work with competing values and ethical dilemmas; work in partnership with people with lived experience of social work taking into account their needs, views and rights within relevant legislation.

Additionally, to be eligible for the award of Ordinary Degree of Bachelor at FHEQ level 6, students will be able to:

6. Apply critical reflection of social care skills and methods in response to the diverse physical, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual needs of people using critical evaluation of the available evidence. This will facilitate a reflective and creative approach encompassing legal and policy frameworks, human growth and development, research, and professional judgment.
7. Apply critical reflection of theory and approaches in the use of initiative, judgement and authority to communicate, assess, engage and intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support and prevent harm, neglect and abuse; reflect on the need to share and communicate verbal and written information appropriately and within relevant timescales.
8. Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing economic, social, political and organisational contexts; critically reflect on multi-agency and inter-professional partnerships and settings within diverse organisations and the development of appropriate culturally sensitive services and organisations.

Additionally, to be eligible for the award of Honours Degree of Bachelor at FHEQ level 6, students will be able to:

9. Apply social work skills and methods in response to the diverse physical, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual needs of people using critical evaluation of the available evidence. This will facilitate a reflective and creative approach encompassing legal and policy frameworks, human growth and development, research mindedness and professional judgment.
10. Use initiative, judgement, and authority to communicate, assess, engage, and intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support and prevent harm, neglect and abuse. Share and communicate verbal and written information appropriately and within relevant timescales.
11. Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing economic, social, political, and organisational contexts. Operate effectively within multi-agency and inter-professional partnerships and settings within diverse organisations and contribute to the development of appropriate culturally sensitive services and organisations.
12. Understand and fulfil the standards and values requirements for social work training: the Social Work England Standards of Proficiency for social care workers, the DOH and DOE (Department of Health and Education) requirements for social work training, The Professional Capabilities Framework (BASW) and the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) benchmark statements for social work.
13. Take responsibility for the professional learning and development of others through supervision, mentoring, assessing, research, teaching, leadership, and management.

Curriculum

There are no optional or elective units on the course; all 360 credits are core and as there are no optional units on the course, the regulation on substitution of options will not apply.

Students must successfully complete SOW4001-B Introduction to Social Work, SOW4002-B Social Work Values and Ethics and SOW4009-B Readiness for Social Work Practice before they can take up their first placement.

Please note: The curriculum may change, subject to the University's programme approval, monitoring and review processes.

The first year of study (**Stage 1**) provides students with beginning knowledge and understanding of the context of social work practice and equips them with the required practice skills to undertake their first social work placement. There will be a requirement to develop and maintain a CPD (continuous personal and professional development) file as part of this process. Academic work dovetails with this and provides: an understanding of historical perspectives and contemporary issues within social work; social policy underpinning social work practice; values and ethics; communication skills; sociological and psychological explanations of human development; skills in assessment, planning,

intervention and evaluation. At the end of stage one, students will be assessed by a panel in terms of readiness for direct practice. This forms the end point of the Readiness to Direct Social Work Practice module (SOW4020-Z) that acts as a central hub to the curriculum. Within this module students will learn from experts by experience including both people who use social work services and social work practitioners. This module prepares students for their first professional practice placement and must be passed as professional body requirement.

Stage 1 Core Modules (CHE Social Care)

Level	Module Title	Credit	Study Period	Code
FHEQ 4	Readiness for Direct Social Work Practice	20	Academic Year	SOW4020-Z
FHEQ 4	Introduction to Social Work	20	Semester 1	SOW4001-B
FHEQ 4	Academic Personal & Professional Development	20	Semester 1	SOW4006-B
FHEQ 4	Communication Skills: Children and Adults	20	Semester 1	SOW4005-B
FHEQ 4	Social Work Values and Ethics	20	Semester 2	SOW4002-B
FHEQ 4	Co-production and Inclusive Practice	20	Semester 2	SOW4019-B

At the end of stage 1, students will be eligible to exit with the award of Certificate of Higher Education in Social Care if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes. THIS AWARD DOES NOT CONFER ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER WITH SOCIAL WORK ENGLAND.

The second year (**Stage 2**) builds upon this foundation and focuses upon the development of specialist skills with particular people with lived experience of social work groups. Students will learn about: the law and implications for practice; mental distress, childcare, disability and work with older people, communication and interviewing skills and level two social work theories, models and methods of working with individuals, families, and carers. Students study 4 taught modules in Semester 1. In Semester 2 students will undertake a placement that is assessed at the End of First Placement level of the Professional Capabilities Framework.

Stage 2 Core Modules (DHE Social Care)

Level	Module Title	Credit	Study Period	Code
FHEQ 5	Child and Family Social Work	20	Semester 1	SOW5001-B
FHEQ 5	Law	20	Semester 1	SOW5002-B
FHEQ 5	Working with Adults	20	Semester 1	SOW5004-B
FHEQ 5	Mental distress across the Life Course	20	Semester 1	SOW5010-B
FHEQ 5	Practice Learning 1	40	Academic Year	SOW5003-D

At the end of stage 2, students will be eligible to exit with the award of Diploma of Higher Education in Social Care if they have successfully completed at least 240 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes. THIS AWARD DOES NOT CONFER ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER WITH SOCIAL WORK ENGLAND.

The final year (**Stage 3**) work emphasises the importance of autonomous learning, the acquisition of evidence-based practice skills and final preparation for paid employment. Student academic work focuses upon reflective practice; research and evaluation; theories of leadership and management in organisation; and developing cultural competence in social work.

In Semester 2 students will undertake a block placement which is assessed at the End of Last Placement level of the Professional Capabilities Framework.

Stage 3 Core Modules (BA Social Work)

Level	Module Title	Credits	Study Period	Code
FHEQ 6	Research Methods for Social Workers	40	Academic Year	SOW6003-D
FHEQ 6	Cultural and International Perspectives in Social Work	20	Semester 1	SOW6008-B
FHEQ 6	Leadership and Management in Social Work	20	Semester 1	SOW6014-B
FHEQ 6	Practice Learning II	40	Academic Year	SOW6004-D

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Ordinary Degree of Bachelor in Social Care if they have successfully completed at 120 credits in both Level 4 and 5 and 60 credits at level 6 and achieved the award learning outcomes. THIS AWARD DOES NOT CONFER ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER WITH SOCIAL WORK ENGLAND.

Students who do not pass the placement element in Stage 3 will not be eligible to register as a qualified social worker. Students in this situation will be transferred to module SOW6006-D to become eligible for the award of Honours Degree of Bachelor in Social Care if they have successfully completed at least 360 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes. THIS AWARD DOES NOT CONFER ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER WITH SOCIAL WORK ENGLAND.

Students will be eligible for the award of Honours Degree of Bachelor in Social Work if they have successfully completed at least 360 credits including all placement elements in Stage 3 and achieved the award learning outcomes.

BA (Hons) Social Work graduates can apply to join the Social Work England register upon payment of a registration fee and meeting the SWE application requirements.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Our programme is built around high-quality practice placements, coupled with a clear system of curriculum development as students' progress through the stages of the programme. Our skills in teaching rest upon a commitment to clear learning outcomes, a structured system of progression, imaginative assessments and the provision of safe, stimulating learning environments. Our lecturers have a variety of specialist practice, academic and research skills as well as a commitment to providing high quality teaching and learning. Teaching on the programme is delivered through face-to-face lectures, online learning activities and tutorials (individual and small groups).

Assessment Strategy

All assessments test skills in critical analysis and reflective practice in the integration of the practice and theory of social work. Assessment for the modules Practice Learning I (Stage 2) and Practice Learning II (Stage 3) includes passing a placement at the required level and the provision of evidence for 'fitness to practice' at the next stage of the degree. Other forms of assessment include: essays; individual and group presentations and exercises; video and taped practice submissions; and participation in 'virtual learning' exercises.

If students fail the practice element of the course, then normally they will not be allowed another placement opportunity and will not be able to progress to complete the award of BA Social Work. If a student fails the practice learning assignments, which is the assessed academic component of the placement, they will have one further opportunity to resubmit the revised piece of work. In Year 1, students must pass and complete the Readiness for Social Work Practice module and Readiness for Practice CPD portfolio before they can progress to Year 2. Both components of the Practice Learning I module must be passed in order to proceed to Practice learning II. Teaching on the Practice Learning modules must be undertaken in tandem with the placement element.

Assessment Regulations

This Programme conforms to the standard University Undergraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at the link: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations/>

However, there are five exceptions to these regulations as listed below:

1. To pass and proceed from each stage to the next, and also to be eligible for a classified Honours award, students must achieve, at each of the three stages, at least 40%/pass in all their modules.
2. If students do not achieve 40% at the first attempt, they will be permitted only one further attempt at supplementary assessment.
3. If students fail to achieve at least 40%/pass in all elements of the professional practice modules they will not be given an automatic right to supplementary assessment. Supplementary assessment of these modules will only be permitted if this is agreed by the Board of Examiners.
4. Referral of Practice learning 1 will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where the practice component has been passed.
5. Students undertaking the BA (Hons) Social Work who may be considered for an Aegrotat award must only be eligible for the fall-back award of 'Social Care'.

Study Abroad

This programme is not currently eligible for Study Abroad opportunities.

Admission Requirements

A **typical** offer to someone seeking entry through the UCAS scheme would be 120 points with Grade 4 (national Grade C) or above in GCSE English and Maths.

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make contextual decisions based on your potential to thrive at university and beyond. Applications are particularly welcomed from adult learners (those aged 21+ at the start of the programme), armed forces families, carers and care leavers, estranged or orphaned learners, refugees and asylum seekers, and Romani or Traveller families. To find out more about the University of Bradford Progression Scheme, visit the webpage: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/applicants/progression-scheme/>

BA (Hons) Social Work applicants have to fulfil specific programme requirements regarding 'fitness to practice' as a professional social worker. To fulfil this requirement, students will need to demonstrate they have a **minimum of 100 hours of relevant social care work experience**, either paid or voluntary. This should have been undertaken within the last two years. Relevant social care experience includes direct work with people and could include:

- Direct work with people who need practical or emotional help or support either through face-to-face work or on an individual or group basis or telephone work.
- Mentoring or counselling.
- Care work (such as working as a health care assistant).
- Youth work.
- Working with children or young people who are socially excluded or have additional emotional and/or practical support needs.
- Placements through school or college which has been undertaken within the last 2 years at the point of application.
- Personal experience of caring for a relative or friend where you have had first-hand experience of social services or social work intervention; having a parent(s) who is a foster carer.
- Personal experience as a service-user of social work intervention.

We attach importance not only to the amount of experience that you have gained but crucially to the learning that you have gained from it and are able to bring to the course and your professional development. It is helpful if you include in your personal statement, **your roles and responsibilities**, and **reflections on the ways in which your experience has helped to prepare you for social work**.

As part of the selection process, we interview short-listed candidates prior to making offers. The interview will use your personal statement to discuss your commitment to social work as a career and demonstrate that you can be entrusted to work with vulnerable

children and adults. We will also take into consideration any factors which indicate students may be unsuitable to become a social worker, and examples of this include certain previous criminal convictions or episodes within your health record. **All places are therefore offered subject to undertaking a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.**

International students

This programme welcomes international applicants. We also welcome experience in social work overseas, either because you lived there or because you have undertaken paid or voluntary work in another country. For information on what qualifications are equivalent to the above, visit the Entry Requirements page for your country by visiting:

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/international/country/>

This programme requires that all students have English language proficiency equivalent to **Minimum IELTS at 7.0**. You can find more information, including equivalent test scores we accept, online at: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/>

If you do not meet the IELTS requirement, you can take a University of Bradford pre-session English course in Bradford at our Language Centre:

<https://www.brad.ac.uk/courses/other/pre-sessional-english-language-programme/>

Access and Recognition of Prior Learning

The University of Bradford has always welcomed applications from disabled students. To discuss adjustments or to find out more about support and access, you may wish to contact the Disability Service before you apply at: www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before/

Applications are welcome from students with non-traditional qualifications, and/or significant personal/professional experience.

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme.

For more information about the University's Recognition of Prior Learning processes visit: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/teaching-quality/prior-learning/>

Please note: These admission requirements are correct for the contemporary recruitment cycle and may be different when you are reading this document. The UCAS tariff applicable may vary and is published here <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/social-work-ba/>
