

Social Work

This version of the programme is no longer recruiting. Please refer to the updated specification for the programme of the same name <http://www.uel.ac.uk/postgraduate/specs/socialwork-ma/>

Final award	MA
Intermediate awards available	L512
UCAS code	N/A
Details of professional body accreditation	
Relevant QAA Benchmark statements	N/A
Date specification last up-dated	April 2013

The summary - programme advertising leaflet

Programme content

The MA in Social Work is a professional qualifying course in social work. It is intended for graduates in any discipline who are committed to a future career in social work.

MA in Social Work at UEL

The University of East London has interim approval from the Health and Care Professions Council to deliver this programme which was previously accredited by the General Social Care Council (GSCC). This MA is unique and distinctive in that it is taught collaboratively by professional social work tutors and experienced practitioners/clinicians from UEL and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust which has an international reputation in social work. All staff who are personal tutors are themselves qualified and experienced social work practitioners.

Admission requirements

Applicants must be graduates in any discipline who can demonstrate a clear commitment to social work. Applicants should normally have at least six months (full-time equivalent) experience of social work at the time of application. . There is a great demand for the programme and so applicants are normally only accepted if they have a minimum of a 2:i classification for their degree. Occasionally, where applicants already have several years' experience of social work they may be accepted with a 2:ii degree classification. The professional requirements from The College of Social Work and the Health and Care Professions Council apply to selection procedures for admission to this programme. These requirements include: assessment of personal capacity for social work, personal interviews, demonstration of literacy skills and includes the involvement of stakeholders and service users and carers in the assessment of applicants' potential for social work. In addition applicants must declare whether they have criminal convictions or have been subject to disciplinary proceedings in any prior employment (the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to professional qualifying courses in social work). Prior to enrolment all

applicants will be required to complete an application for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

Programme structure

This is a full-time two-year programme which incorporates 200 days practice learning as required by the Department of Health for all qualifying social work programmes. For all students practice runs alongside the taught element, with two days per week spent at the University or the Tavistock Portman NHS Trust during term time, and three days per week or a full working week spent in social work agencies for the rest of the programme.

Learning environment

Students will be taught through a combination of lectures, seminars, tutorials and individual practice supervision sessions. Approximately 50% of the programme is devoted to practice learning, for which students will be allocated a practice assessor. Personal development and reflection on practice is a key element of social work training, so there will be a substantial experiential component to learning and teaching. The Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust grounds its teaching in clinical practice and students will spend some of their time there. Teaching is also supported through web-based learning.

Assessment

Assessment takes two forms.

Academic modules are assessed through coursework, with each module having a number of prescribed tasks that students are required to undertake. In addition there is a dissertation module which requires students to demonstrate the integration of research into their social work practice. These assessments are graded in accordance with the standard system for Masters degrees.

Practice is assessed by reference to the Professional Capabilities Framework, (PCF) from The College of Social Work and the Health and Care Professions Council standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Students are required to demonstrate they have met the domains of the PCF at the end of the first and second placements linked to the corresponding Standards of Proficiency. These will be assessed by a Practice Assessor who will operate under the guidance of the Practice Assessment Panel which in turn follows the requirements specified by The College of Social Work and the Health and Care Professions Council. Students who successfully pass all assessed work will be eligible for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council at the point of qualification.

Relevance to work/profession

This Masters programme combines a professional qualification with a postgraduate degree. In order to attain the professional qualification a student must demonstrate competence to the level required by the professional body, the Health and Care Professions Council and The College of Social Work. This programme assesses students' competence and fitness to practice with reference to professional body requirements. Students must successfully pass all aspects of the programme to be recommended for a professional social work qualification although may achieve a qualifying social work diploma if a dissertation

pass is not awarded. A student who does not attain this level of competence may be awarded a postgraduate certificate or diploma in applied social studies.

Thesis/Dissertation/project work

This Masters is built firmly on the principle of integrating theory into practice, and encouraging evidence based practice. Students are required to complete a dissertation which applies research methods and principles to social work practice.

All students enrolled on the programme will be required to submit a dissertation. A student whose dissertation does not attain a mark of 50%, but who has passed all other academic and practice assessments, will qualify for a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work which will entitle them to practice as a qualified social worker.

Added value

Students on this programme will work with teachers and practice assessors who are at the forefront in developments in social work. The programme offers unrivalled opportunities to integrate theory and research into social work practice, and while it prepares students for all aspects of social work, UEL and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust offer special expertise in the areas of working with children and families and in the field of mental health.

Your future career

There is always a constant demand for qualified social workers in all areas of practice. Students who take Masters level qualifications are well placed to progress through a range of promotional opportunities in social services departments, statutory children's services, community and children and adolescent mental health trusts, voluntary agencies and the independent sector. There are opportunities for students to develop skills in management, but increasingly emphasis is laid on the development of advanced practice skills and after social workers have registered with The Health and Care Professions Council and The College of Social Work they are required to engage in CPD and post-qualifying training to maintain professional registration requirements and to deepen their knowledge in a specialist area of social work.

Students who qualify in social work will have a range of employment opportunities within a variety of settings. While salaries are competitive, what matters ultimately to any employer is your commitment and enthusiasm for working with people.

How we support you

In addition to offering personal tutors, this programme support students through practice assessors, who are ordinarily employed by social work agencies, although some practice assessment may be undertaken by UEL or Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust staff.

Bonus factors

The programme aims to offer a rich variety of learning about the social work experience. The emphasis will be on practice throughout.

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Outcomes section

Programme aims and learning outcomes

What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- become a qualified social worker
- acquire knowledge that is relevant to your chosen profession
- develop a range of skills that will equip you for social work
- undertake assessed social work practice under supervision and guidance

What will you learn?

Knowledge

- knowledge of theories that inform social work practice
- knowledge of human growth and development, including mental health
- knowledge of the law that is relevant to social work

Thinking skills

- ability to assess and analyse complex human situations
- ability to evaluate theory and research, and to apply the outcomes of research
- ability to reflect on self, on relationships, and on personal strengths and weaknesses

Subject-Based Practical skills

- communication skills, especially those that relate to working with vulnerable adults and children
- organisational skills, planning and evaluating direct work with people
- interpersonal skills

Skills for life and work (general skills)

- organising time and its effective use
- taking responsibility for your own work
- working in teams

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Structure section

The programme structure

Introduction

At the University of East London all programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

Credit rating

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 180 credits for the Masters in Social Work, but note that this qualification can only be awarded on successful completion of the practice placements.

A student who gains 60 credits is awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Social Studies.

A student who gains 120 credits is awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Social Studies.

Typical duration

Because the programme must include 200 practice learning days the minimum amount of time for completion of the MA Social Work to include the professional qualification social work is two years.

How the teaching year is divided

The teaching year begins in September and ends in June but students can expect to engage in practice throughout the calendar year, with a break in August. Students will combine studying and completing modules with attainment of professional practice requirements in placements. The sequencing of learning ensures that students can proceed at an even pace, but the incorporation of assessed practice learning does place significant demands on students.

What you will study when

YEAR ONE	SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER 20 DAYS	-	Introduction to social work and assessed preparation for practice	-
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YEAR ONE	OCTOBER - JANUARY	Practice 2 days	PSM 401 2days	study 1 day
1	FEBRUARY – MAY	Practice 2 days	PSM 402 1 day PSM 403 1 day	study 1 day
1	JUNE - JULY	Practice 2 days	Dissertation preparation 3 days	-
YEAR TWO	SEPTEMBER	Practice 4 days	Dissertation preparation 3 days	-
1	OCTOBER - JUNE	Practice 3 days	PSM 404 1day	study 1 day

Year	Code	Unit title	credit	Status
1	PSM 400	Introduction to social work practice	0	must be passed before continuing with remainder of programme
1	PSM 401	Values and ethics	30	Core
1	PSM 402	Law and social justice	30	Core
1	PSM 403	Human growth and development	30	Core
1	SKM 104	Professional Practice Placement 1 (70 days)	0	Core
2	PSM 404	Professional development	30	Core
2	SKM 107	Professional Practice Placement 2 (100 days)	0	Core
2	PSM 405	Dissertation	60	Core

Requirements for gaining an award

- In order to gain a Postgraduate Certificate, you will need to obtain 60 credits at Level M.
- In order to gain a Postgraduate Diploma, you will need to obtain 120 credits at Level M
- In order to obtain a Masters, you will need to obtain 180 credits at Level M. These credits will include a 60 credit level M core module of advanced independent research, which in this Masters will be directly related to students' professional practice. For this Masters you must also attain the required National Occupational Standards in social work through assessed practice learning.

Masters Award Classification

Where a student is eligible for a Masters award then the award classification is determined by calculating the arithmetic mean of all marks and applying the mark obtained as a percentage,

with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

70% - 100% Distinction

60% - 69% Merit

50% - 59% Pass

0% - 49% Not Passed

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Assessment section

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning

Knowledge is developed through

- practice experience on placements (practice learning opportunities)
- lectures, seminars, tutorials and presentations
- use of web-based materials and specific packages of learning

Thinking skills are developed through

- group and individual tutorials to reflect on practice
- integrated workshops and group exercises
- group and individual tasks both assessed and formative

Practical skills are developed through

- practice learning on placement
- use of a skills laboratory to develop communication with service users
- role-play and simulation exercises
- Infant/young child observation and institutional observation

Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through

- integration of practice learning right throughout the programme
- engaging in exercises and experiences with other professions
- continuous involvement with social work service users right through the programme

Assessment

Knowledge is assessed by

- written assignments of various kinds
- class based test in exercises
- delivery of presentations

Thinking skills are assessed by

- personal portfolios that include both PDP and professional development requirements
- reflective journals
- carrying out social work assessments under the guidance of a social work practice assessor

Practical skills are assessed by

- assessed practice placements
 - completion of specific assessed tasks
 - evaluation of work carried out in skills laboratory
 - observation studies portfolios
- assessed practice placements
 - completion of specific assessed tasks
 - evaluation of work carried out in skills laboratory
 - observation studies portfolios

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by

- successful completion of practice learning requirements through attainment of a national Occupational Standards in Social work
- demonstration of interprofessional learning in specific assessed assignments
- attainment of ECDL to demonstrate computer literacy

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Quality section

How we assure the quality of this programme

Before this programme started

Before this programme started the University checked that:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the University's Quality Standing Committee.

Once every six years the University undertakes an in-depth review of the whole field. This is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the University's quality assurance procedures.

The role of external examiners

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback to the University through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future;
- ensuring that students demonstrate attainment of the required levels of professional competence in accordance with General Social Care Council requirements

Listening to the views of students

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

- Module evaluations
- Student representation on MA programme committee

- student representation on Social Work Programmes Management Board which cover all social work qualifying programmes, and includes representatives from stakeholders and service users and carers

Students are notified of the action taken through:

- circulating the minutes of the programme committee
- circulating the minutes of Social Work Programmes Management Board
- newsletters
- providing details on the programme noticeboard

Listening to the views of others

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Through practice learning and students being placed in local authorities, voluntary or independent social work agencies
- Social Work Programmes Management Board
- Practice Assessment Panel
- reporting to General Social Care Council
- liaison with General Social Care Council Regional Inspector
- an annual service user and carer day conference
- Annual university student satisfaction questionnaire

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Further Information section

Where you can find further information

This MA is one of a portfolio of professional courses that are offered by the University of East London and the Tavistock and Portman NHS trust. Liaison with professional bodies is therefore of paramount importance, as is our relationship with local authorities and voluntary agencies. In addition to being accountable to the University, staff engaged in this programme are accountable to The Health and Care Professions Council and The College of Social Work for the quality of the total learning experience, especially in relation to practice learning. Staff engaged in teaching professional practice on this programme and assessing students' competence to practice as practice assessors are all themselves registered and experienced social work professionals.

Further information about this programme is available from:

- The UEL web site
- The student handbook
- Module study guides
- UEL Manual of General Regulations and Policies www.uel.ac.uk/qa/
- UEL Quality Manual www.uel.ac.uk/qa/
- Regulations for the Academic Framework www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/

- Cass School of Education and Communities
<http://www.uel.ac.uk/cass/postgraduate/socialwork/>
- The College of Social Work <http://www.tcsw.org.uk/home/>
- The Health and Care Professions Council <http://www.hpc-uk.org/>

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Admission Requirements

Applicants must be graduates in any discipline who can demonstrate a clear commitment to social work. Applicants should normally have at least six months' (full-time equivalent) experience of social work at the time of application, with preference to those who are sponsored by employers. There is a great demand for the programme and so applicants are normally only accepted if they have 2.1 degree or higher (i.e. first or a post-graduate award). Occasionally where applicants already have several years' experience of social work they may be accepted with a 2.2. degree. In exceptional circumstances applicants may be accepted with other equivalent qualifications, for example where someone has a qualification from abroad that does not count as an honours degree, but also has substantial practical experience and clear evidence of attainment through other means of academic standards equivalent to the level of a UK honours degree.

Department of Health requirements apply to selection procedures for admission to this programme. These requirements include: assessment of personal capacity for social work, personal interviews, demonstration of basic academic skills, involvement of stakeholders and service users and carers in the assessment of applicants' potential for social work. In addition applicants must declare whether they have criminal convictions or have been subject to disciplinary proceedings in any prior employment (the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to professional qualifying courses in social work). Prior to enrolment all applicants will be required to complete an application for an Enhanced CRB check.

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