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Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) MA/PGDip

The MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) is recognised by the ESRC as a research training pathway designed to provide participants with a sound background in overall research design and the most up-to-date training in methods, including data collection and analysis for potential doctoral students. It is aimed at those who have practice experience in the fields of social work, health and social care or criminal justice, and who are interested in undertaking an academic or research career. The MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) welcomes applications from international students.

Take a look at the **collaboration map (/schools/social-policy/international/collaboration-map.aspx)** in our **international section (/schools/social-policy/international/index.aspx)** and find out what it is like to be an international student living and studying in Birmingham, as well as the global reach of the School.

You can also **find out why our students love living and studying in Birmingham (/undergraduate/birmingham/mybham/index.aspx)** .

Download MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) course brochure (PDF) (/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/course-brochures/2013/ma-social-research-sw-and-prof-practice.pdf)

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham has been awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

Type of Course: Taught

Study Options: Full time, part time

Duration: MA: 1 year full-time, 2 years part-time; Diploma: 9 months full-time, 18 months part-time

Start date: September 2014

Related courses

Social Policy MA/PGDip/PGCert (/postgraduate/courses/taught/social-policy/social-policy.aspx)

Social Research (Social Policy) MA/Diploma (/postgraduate/courses/taught/social-policy/social-research-soc-policy.aspx)

Contact

*Got a question? **Find your answers here (http://bham.hobsons.co.uk/ask.aspx?cid=1223&did=24)***

Ms Pat Wright
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5708
Email: **p.m.wright@bham.ac.uk (mailto:p.m.wright@bham.ac.uk)**

School of Social Policy (/schools/social-policy/index.aspx)

Institute of Applied Social Studies (IASS) (/schools/social-policy/departments/applied-social-studies/index.aspx)

Details

The MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) is recognised by the ESRC as a research training programme designed to provide participants with a sound background in overall research design and opportunity to apply these within the context of professional practice and service provision. It is aimed at those who have practice experience in the fields of social work, health and social care or criminal justice, and are interested in undertaking an academic or research career.

The core elements of this programme are delivered by staff from across the College of Social Sciences, many of them engaged in cutting-edge research in their particular fields.

The MA programme includes assessed core modules and short courses (120 credits) and the completion of a 10,000 word dissertation (60 credits), while the Postgraduate Diploma includes the assessed courses only (120 credits).

Why study this course

If you have practice experience in the fields of social work, health and social care or criminal justice and are interested in undertaking an academic or research career, then this programme could be for you. The MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) offers students a rigorous and systematic social research training, and an opportunity to apply this to their particular areas of policy and practice interest.

The Institute of Applied Social Studies at the University of Birmingham is an internationally leading centre for research in social policy and social work. The Institute has developed a reputation for delivering high quality teaching and learning which enables students to develop into reflective and research informed professionals.

Video courtesy of PGS TV (http://www.postgraduatesearch.com/)

Modules

The core modules of the course are:

- **Introduction to Social Research**
  This module aims to provide a general introduction to studying and research methods and prepares you for your disseration, emphasising key skills such as searching literature, finding datasets and presenting and criticising arguments. It also covers ethnics of research, the role of theory and philosophical bases for understanding the social world.
- **Research Design**
  This module links the introductory module and data collection module through consideration of research, design, questions, warranting practices and sampling methods. All the elements of research design are linked into an over-arching theme of the full cycle of research activity.
- **Social Research Methods I**
  This module introduces the principles and practices of data collection and explores rationales of the various methods. It will focus on the different stages of data collection, including various methods used to gather textual and numerical data.
- **Social Research Methods II**
  This module introduces students to a range of aproaches for analysing and handling data. It will include covering statistical methods for quantitative data and methodological approaches for qualitative data. It emphasises that the method of analysis is not determined by the method of collection.
- **Researching Professional Practice**
  This module enables students to explore professional practice using different research approaches and considering the role of service users and professional practitioners as stakeholders of the research. Students are encouraged to draw on their own experiences of professional practice within social work and social care organisations.
- **Researching Social Policy ***
  This module is concerned with the politics of social research, rather than research methods and methodology. It addresses issues such as: how are certain topics identified as subjects for research, how is research commissioned and funded, and what are the relationships between research and the policy process. It draws on real-life experiences of doing research and being researched to explore these issues.

The modules on Social Research Methods I and Social Research Methods II cover a wide range of approaches, including the 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' traditions, plus mixed methods.

For courses marked * you may instead select various intensive short courses on research methods from a wide range, including narrative analysis, advanced qualitative analysis, logistic regression, factor analysis and others.

Fees and funding

Fees for 2014-2015: Home and EU (full time): £5,940; Home and EU (part time): £2,970; Overseas (full time only): £13,665.

PG Diploma
Home and EU (full time): £3,960; Home and EU (part time): £1,980; Overseas (full time only): £9,110.

Standard fees (/postgraduate/pgt-fees/fees.aspx) apply
Learn more about **fees and funding (/postgraduate/pgt-fees/index.aspx)**

Scholarships and studentships
Scholarships may be available.

International students (/International/students/finance/scholarships/index.aspx) can often gain funding through overseas research scholarships, Commonwealth scholarships or their home government.

Entry requirements

A good Honours degree or equivalent is normally required. This will usually be in a social science, although applications from those with degrees in other disciplines will be considered. Applications are also encouraged from those without an Honours degree who have five years or more relevant work experience in a policy or practice area.

Learn more about **entry requirements (/postgraduate/requirements-pgt/index.aspx)**

International students:

We accept a range of qualifications from different countries – our country pages show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

English language requirements

You can satisfy our English language requirements in two ways:

- by holding an **English language qualification (/postgraduate/requirements-pgt/international/index.aspx)** to the right level.
- by taking and successfully completing one of our English courses for international students.

How to apply

When clicking on the Apply Now button you will be directed to an application specifically designed for the programme you wish to apply for where you will create an account with the University application system and submit your application and supporting documents online. Further information regarding how to apply online can be found on the **How to apply pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)**

Apply now (https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/COS010.htm)

Learning and teaching

If you can see this message rather than a virtual tour then please click here to install the adobe flash player.
If you are still unable to view the virtual tour then you may need to enable javascript in your browser (click here for instructions).
If you are still experiencing problems then please email Revolution Viewing at support@revolutionviewing.com

The Institute of Applied Social Studies, School of Social Policy, has close links with a range of governmental or non-governmental/third sector organisations and our teaching draws upon both individual research interests of School staff.

All students are supported by a personal academic tutor and can draw on the support of the School's Welfare tutors and the University's learning support services. Participants will also benefit from access to e-learning resources as well as the University's main library and student services.

Assessment methods

The MA programme includes assessed core modules and short courses (120 credits) and the completion of a 10,000 word dissertation (60 credits), while the Postgraduate Diploma includes the assessed courses only (120 credits).

Related staff

Dr Jerry Tew (/staff/profiles/social-policy/tew-jerry.aspx)

Employability

Video courtesy of PGS TV (http://www.postgraduatesearch.com/)

This course is designed for those considering research as a career. That includes those wanting an academic career, for whom this degree is ideal preparation for undertaking a doctorate (PhD). It also includes those seeking a research career in such areas as central government, charities and in consultancies and social research. The degree also provides good transferable skills in evaluation and in analysing data and the ability to critique published research.

"**Clare Hill, MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice),** "Birmingham appealed to me not only simply because it was my local university. I was particularly attracted to the Institute of Applied Social Studies at Birmingham because of its established tradition of Social Work teaching, strong links with practice settings and reputation as a leading centre for research. Having worked within the youth justice system for a number of years, I was keen not only to further my education, but also to be able to apply the knowledge which I had gained through practice experience. The MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) allowed me to do just that, with modules specifically designed to enable students to critically explore policy and research within their own areas of interest.

Studying alongside work can be very challenging, but all of the staff whom I came into contact with were really encouraging; helping me to get the most out of my course and offering support when I needed it. The teaching which I received was excellent and this, together with the opportunity to interact with students from differing backgrounds, meant the learning environment was great. Throughout my time at Birmingham I have felt really valued, it's good to have a sense that you are contributing and can take a proactive role in your own and others' learning experiences. I would whole heartedly recommend the MA Social Research (Social Work and Professional Practice) to practitioners interested in either furthering their knowledge of the role of research within a particular setting, or keen to undertake their own research. The course has allowed me to develop personally and professionally; opening up a whole new world of opportunity. The ESRC recognised research training equipped me with the skills and confidence necessary to apply for a doctoral studentship and, having been successful in my application, I am now studying full time towards a PhD."

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