

## Graduate profiles

Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. [Get the latest Flash Player](#) [Get the latest version of QuickTime](#)

### Richard, BA Social Policy



Richard took the single honours social policy degree. He decided to study social policy as it allowed him to study a wide range of subjects and issues. Over the course of his studies, Richard enjoyed the criminal justice and diversity modules. Richard graduated with a 2:1 and worked for youth charity in London, providing after-school activities for young people and leadership training for hundreds of young adults, to enable them to lead in the organisations' residential support programmes. Since then Richard has progressed to work for the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) on their National Graduate Programme. As part of the programme, Richard works in prisons directly with the residents and is on a fast-track scheme to becoming a prison governor working his way through the operational roles in prison. Richard feels that the knowledge and skills he gained from his degree, in addition to the fantastic support and guidance he had access to while at Birmingham, have aided him on his prestigious career path. He would recommend the Social Policy BA to anyone looking to engage in interdisciplinary study.

### Naqeeb Ahmed, BA Social Policy (2008)



Naqeeb studied Social Policy at Birmingham and over the course of his studies, particularly enjoyed exploring the theme of citizenship and how government policy affected the lives of citizens. On leaving University, he wanted to work in an environment where he would be involved in key contemporary issues. He therefore took up a research internship with the Young Foundation in London, which involved undertaking literature reviews, researching case studies and drafting articles, speeches and briefings. He then moved on to Bellenden Public Affairs (BPA) where he was involved in providing communications and research support. This included drafting political briefings and conducting media monitoring for clients such as UK Youth. His internship at BPA was followed by an internship at Society Media. Here, he provided project support for an initiative aimed at creating an index of the top 100 social enterprises in the UK. Naqeeb now works for the Citizenship Foundation in London where his work involves coordinating the nationwide Young Muslim Leadership Network, an initiative designed to promote civic engagement amongst young people. His role is very diverse and incorporates an element of project management and the implementation of governmental policy. Naqeeb feels his achievements thus far are a testament to having studied in a first class academic environment, hard work, commitment and perseverance.

### Naila Begum, BA Social Policy



I found the Social Policy Department to be very supportive; personal tutors prioritise the welfare of students and ensure that they are on task with their academic work. I particularly enjoyed the Crime and Justice Modules as they provided me with really good insights into the way that public issues can influence the way that the law develops. My dissertation focused on Islamophobia and education as I was interested in researching the nature and prevalence of this issue. During my studies, I also had an invaluable opportunity to volunteer with a charity which assisted women suffering from domestic violence. This not only enabled me to enhance the diverse skills I gained from the course, but also the opportunity to make a real difference to people's lives. After completing my undergraduate degree, I successfully completed the Graduate Diploma in Legal Studies (GDLs) at the College of Law at the University, and found that the knowledge gained from studying Social Policy is very relevant to different areas of Law. As a member of the Pro-Bono group at the University of Birmingham, I have taken part in various activities which focus on social policy issues, for example, providing information to people about parental rights at the Birmingham Probation Office. My undergraduate degree in Social Policy at the University of Birmingham was the most incredible 3 years. I would thoroughly recommend a social policy degree for anybody with an interest in law. The expertise and knowledge that I gained from studying Social Policy has opened up an excellent career path for me which is a priceless asset to have in today's competitive world.

### Caroline Cresswell, BA Social Policy



Caroline came to the University of Birmingham in 2005 and has since completed both the BA Social Policy and MA Social Research Programmes. She says "I've recently started my PhD here in Social Policy. The decision to come to university as a mature student has definitely changed the course of my life. There's not much else I'd rather be doing! I am enjoying the autonomy of carrying out my own research whilst also being aware that support from within the department is here if necessary. The IASS has a friendly atmosphere making it a good working environment. It is also a very dynamic and exciting department to be part of at the moment, given the breadth of research interests amongst the academic staff and students and success in the research ratings."

### Sam King, BA Social Policy (2005)



One of the features I valued most about the Social Policy programme at Birmingham University, was that it offered me a broad and varied programme of study; I particularly enjoyed the modules on criminal justice. Studying at Birmingham was a fantastic time for me, I was able to combine an active social life with academic work. The support and encouragement from staff really helped, and made for a very enjoyable three years. Since then, I've completed the Masters in Social Research and a PhD, both at Birmingham. I've been able to develop my interest in criminal justice, and have focused upon desistance from crime and the role of the Probation Service. I've received great support from staff along the way, and have been given the opportunity to gain substantial teaching experience on a range of modules. I feel confident that the experiences I've had while studying at Birmingham will stand me in good stead as I begin my academic career as a lecturer, and have fond memories of my time there.

### Will Monaghan, BA Social Policy (2006)



Will Monaghan studied social policy at Birmingham University. He had a particular interest in refugees and the way faith interacts with politics. His dissertation focused on whether or not the government should fund faith schools. In his final year he applied for several positions, all within the public sector, as he developed an interest in government services over the course of his Social Policy degree. Will is now working as the Cancer Commissioning Manager for Bristol Primary Care Trust, as part of the NHS graduate management training scheme. As part of the training scheme, Will is undertaking a Masters degree in Health and Public Sector leadership based at Birmingham and Manchester Universities. Will loved the time he spent with fellow social policy

## Siying Poole, BA Social Policy and Political Science (2012)



I chose to study at the University of Birmingham because of its international prestige and excellent reputation in both academic research and teaching. The successful completion of an Access to Higher Education Diploma enabled me to join this dynamic and vibrant university as a mature student. Throughout my degree programme, my expectations were fulfilled in every single respect: my subjects were intellectually interesting and challenging; my lecturers provided inspiration and support and comprehensive welfare and social life programmes were available from Student Services. A degree in Political Science and Social Policy has enabled me to gain a variety of valuable skills. These include verbal and written communication skills, research and analytical skills, project management, team working, IT skills in research software including NVIVO and SPSS, and the creation of wikis and the use of other social media such as facebook and twitter. Whilst studying at the University, I have researched intensively into the Third Sector and my voluntary work at Birmingham Children's

Hospital has complemented and informed my research in this area. I have worked closely with consultants and nurses at the Dermatology Department and have chaired an exzema support group since 2009. I successfully completed my degree in July 2012 and obtained a high 2:1 and a 1st with my thesis. Overall, my degree programme has provided me with a really solid foundation for a career in the public or third sector.

## Jo Robinson, BA Social Policy



The Social Policy degree programme really suited me as it combined two of my favourite A-level topics, Sociology and Politics, as well as other disciplines. The dynamic and flexible nature of the programme also provided the opportunity to focus on my studies on my own personal interests. I particularly enjoyed learning about the history of social policy and political and social theory, which formed the basis of my dissertation; the freedom to choose a topic that I was interested in made my dissertation work really enjoyable. Due to the dynamic nature of teaching and learning methods, I have developed a range of key skills such as: report writing, individual and group presentation skills, research and analytical abilities and creative skills such as creating a motion presentation. The Social Policy into Practice module enabled me to develop both practical work based skills and also apply my academic knowledge to real life

employment through a placement at the Citizens Advice Bureau. I also gained really valuable experience through an internship at a major Local Authority, working as a research assistant, where I produced a piece of work based on 'Timebanks', a new kind of mutualism. In my final year, I was the secretary for the Social Policy Society and helped to organise and host many successful events, including pub crawls, quizzes, curry nights and a successful careers event. Throughout my 3 years I had many great experiences and excellent support from the department. As a result I graduated with a 2:1 honours degree and developed a great passion for social policy which inspired me to create a blog, so that I can continue to comment on issues and debates that I really care about. I would definitely recommend this degree to anyone who is interested in the wide spectrum of social issues faced by society, both past and present.

## Hannah Smith, BA Social Policy



I chose to study Social Policy at the University of Birmingham, because the degree programme covers such a broad range of contemporary social issues and enables students to take a focus on their particular interests. I particularly enjoyed learning about young people, the third sector and the history of the welfare state and loved the freedom of being able to write a dissertation on a topic of my own choice in my final year. The social policy programme helped me to develop skills such as research, report-writing, presentations and policy analysis, skills I was able to use in activities outside of the university setting, too. For example, I undertook an internship as a social research assistant with a small charity working with Bosnian refugees; I also volunteered with a national charity, raising young peoples' awareness of global poverty issues. Throughout my three years at Birmingham, I had fantastic support from the lecturers in terms of writing essays and feedback and was also encouraged to continue with my studies. As a result, I graduated with a 2:1 and have been accepted to

study a Masters in Socio-Legal Studies at the University of Bristol which combines social policy with law, as well as social research methods training. I am currently employed in a major Housing Association and am engaged in a really interesting and inspiring area of work, exploring the housing needs of vulnerable people. I would recommend Social Policy to anyone who is interested in exploring and discovering more about society and contemporary social issues. My time at the University of Birmingham was life-changing; I wouldn't have chosen any other university to study at!

## Josie Smith, BA Social Policy



I gained a place at the University of Birmingham through the Access to Birmingham (A2B) Scheme and chose the Social Policy programme due to its highly contemporary and interdisciplinary nature. I enjoyed the fact that a wide range of topics were covered over the course of the programme and became particularly interested in the themes of housing and globalisation and focussed my third year research dissertation on exploring the implications and impacts of globalisation on social policy. I successfully completed the Personal Skills Award module which provided me with a range of highly transferrable skills and in the role of Academic Events Representative I also organised a very successful careers event this year for the Social Policy Society. The Careers and employability support provided was very good indeed; I was able to gain a range of valuable experiences, for example, an internship in the Corporate Strategy Team of a major Local Authority, working on a project exploring the rights and duties of local authorities as embodied in the Localism Act 2011. I am

currently planning to undertake some further research in a third sector organisation. The support I received over my three years was excellent and at the end of the programme I was delighted to graduate with a First class honours degree. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my time on the Social Policy programme and would highly recommend this course to anyone wishing to gain a wide range of experiences and skills and succeed in their chosen careers.

## George Wilson, BA Social Policy (2010)



George took the single honours social policy degree. Over the course of his studies, George enjoyed the criminal justice modules and developed a particular interest in British Security Policy and Counter Terrorism, a topic which he chose to form the focus of his final year dissertation in which explored the impacts of Security Policies upon British Muslims. During his degree, George also competed for the University of Birmingham men's football team, was a student representative and gained work experience at a top human rights law firm and the Metropolitan Police. Graduating with a 2:1, the knowledge gained during his degree contributed to George's success in the initial stages of an application to the Metropolitan police. However, George was also offered a football scholarship at a prestigious university in North Carolina to complete a Master in Liberal Arts and Sciences which he accepted. George feels that the knowledge and skills gained from his degree and the unparalleled support and guidance of his academic supervisors over his time in Birmingham have been the catalyst for an incredible 3 years, and would recommend the degree to anyone looking to engage in interdisciplinary study.