University of Birmingham

Gary Hickman

Senior Lecturer and Director of Social Work Education

Applied Social Studies

Contact details

Telephone +44 (0)121 414 2284 (tel:+44 121 414 2284)

Email g.j.hickman@bham.ac.uk (mailto:g.j.hickman@bham.ac.uk)

School of Social Policy, IASS
Muirhead Tower
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT, United Kingdom

About

Gary Hickman is a registered social worker and as Director of the social work programmes, provides operational and strategic leadership for both the BA and MA courses.

Qualifications

- Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, University of Birmingham (2004)
- MCIPD (2003)
- CIPD Professional Qualification Award, Solihull College (2002)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education, Training and Development of Adults, City University (2002)
- MA (Child Care, Law and Practice), Keele University (1995)
- CCETSW's Practice Teaching Award, University of Birmingham (1993)
- MSocSc (Social Work) and CQSW, University of Birmingham (1988)
- BA (Combined Honours), University of Birmingham (1985)

Biography

Prior to coming into social work Gary spent 5 years as a police officer with the West Midlands Police Force. His social work career spans 14 years as a practitioner and manager, predominantly within Children and Families. He has managed a duty and assessment team, worked as a Child Protection Co-ordinator, and spent 3 years as a Training Manager all with Birmingham Social Services Department. Gary has completed the CIPD's Professional Qualification Scheme and he is a chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Teaching

Gary is a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and regularly presents at conferences on a variety of teaching initatives including service user involvement, practice learning and enquiry-based blended learning with regard to child protection. He is responsible for co-ordinating the specialist Children and Families module and teaching across a broad range of child care practice areas. He is particularly interested in child protection processes, direct work with children, the legal framework governing child care practice and continuous professional development. Gary also acts as both a practice tutor and as an off-site practice assessor.

In 2010 Gary was part of a successful partnership tender with Nottingham City Council for monies from Skills for Care to deliver specific supervision training and consultancy to social work team managers in Nottingham. This activity was subsequently shortlisted for the National Skills for Care Awards and in 2011 was awarded a School of Social Policy teaching prize for 'Excellence in Teaching and Supporting Learning'. As a result of the success of the initial two deliveries, Nottingham City Council has commissioned further involvement as well as Derby City Council. This module has aso been identified by Birmingham Children's Services as a core module for all their Team Managers to undertake as part of the Birmingham Social Work Academy agreement.

Gary has co-produced a video promoting the use of enquiry-based learning in teaching of child protection, which is now a case study resource on the university's EBL website. Gary is currently part of an inter-disciplinary group looking to develop a teaching resource on 'Safeguarding Children', which can be used with students from a number of different professional programmes within the University.

Postgraduate supervision

Gary is interested in supervising postgraduate students undertaking study in the field of social work with children and families. He is particularly interested in research that looks at service users' experiences of children's services provision.

Gary has also acted as a mentor on CWDC practitioner led research programme.

Research

He has completed a small scale evaluative study of 'open door' service provision and he was a member of the research team, which undertook a feasibility study regarding the national evaluation of the Children's Fund. In addition Gary is interested in the role of human resource management in social services departments, and career development and lifelong learning for professional social workers.

Other activities

In 2007, Gary was appointed External Examiner for the BA in Social Work at the University of Chichester and subsequently became the Chief Examiner for all undergraduate programmes at the University of Chichester. He has subsequently been invited by the University of Gloucester to be the external examiner for their BA in Social Work.

He is a member of the University's fitness to practice panel and represents the university at the Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee (JUCSWEC). Since January 2011 Gary has been the Honorary Treasurer for the Joint University Council. Gary regularly undertakes external training and consultancy with a variety of social care agencies. These have included CAFCASS, Family Action, Nottingham City Council and Derby City Council.

In 2009 Gary was instrumental in securing the involvement of Radio 4 to produce a series of programmes entitled 'Who would be a social worker?'. This involved interviews with staff and students from both the BA and MA social work programmes throughout the students' final year of teaching and first year of employment. Three programmes were then broadcast in May 2011.

Gary has a particular interest in Employability and has worked very closely with the College Alumni Office to enhance the social work web pages by including the career narratives of past graduates. In addition Gary has, together with the School E Learning Manager, produced a film about 'What makes a social worker' for inclusion on both the 'Progress' site and our own Social Work site. He has also developed with Sergeant Andy Tanner an exciting employability initiative for social work students with the West Midlands Police Service. The 'Custody Placement Project' provides final year MA and BA students with an opportunity to gain valuable experience as custody volunteers undertaking Level 3 and 4 constant watches of people in custody. This will primarily involve talking to prisoners and helping to identify and prevent self-harm, suicide or becoming unwell. Gary firmly believes that student participation in this initiative will enhance their employability and demonstrate their commitment to multi-agency working and their resilience to working with hostility.

Gary is an active member of the College of Social Work and has completed the College of Social Work's Media Spokespeople and Mentor training.

Gary's knowledge of social work education has also been recognised by the Health Professions Council (HPC), who will take over from the GSCC as the regulator of the social work profession. Following a successful interview in December 2011, Gary will commence in August 2012 as an HPC Visitor. This role will involve Gary visiting and assessing social work programmes and making recommendations to the Health Professions Council regarding approval and on-going approval of those programmes.

Publications

Cooner, T.S. & Hickman, G (2008) 'Child Protection Teaching: Students' Experiences of a Blended Learning Design', *Social Work Education* 27(6) p. 647-657

'The Children's Fund National Evaluation: A Feasibility Study' available at **www.cypu.gov.uk (http://www.cypu.gov.uk)** website.

'The Family Haven: An Evaluation of Family Support for Homeless Families' only available from the Agency.

Conference presentations

Hek, R and Hickman, G (April 2011) Portfolio Design for Robust Assessment of Students at SWAP, JUCSWEC *and Care Councils Conference on Assessment*: London.

Hek, R, Paris, A and Hickman, G (July 2010), Innovative interdisciplinary practice learning at *JUCSWEC Conference* at University of Hertfordshire.

Aiers, A, Cooper, S and Hickman, G (July 2008), Involving Looked After Young People in the design and delivery of the social work curriculum, At *JUCSWEC Conference*, University of Cambridge.

Aiers, A, Cooper, S and Hickman, G (November 2007), Involving Looked After Young People in the design and delivery of the social work programme, at UCLAN *Authenticity to Action Conference*, University of Lancashire.

Littlechild, R and Hickman, G (July 2005), Developing new partnerships in social work student selection, *JUCSWEC Conference* at University of Loughborough.

Cooner, T S and Hickman, G (July 2004), Knowledge transfer: utilising e-learning to level the playing field for child protection teaching, at *JUCSWEC Conference*, Glasgow University.

Hickman, G (November 2004), Service user involvement in social work education, at Tri-City Exchange Conference, University of Birmingham.

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