SOCIAL WORK BA (HONS)
Welcome to the School of Social Policy

The mission of the School of Social Policy is to ‘understand the world – but also to change it’. This means doing high-quality and relevant research, but using this as a starting point for making a practical difference in the real world through our teaching, our professional training, our policy advice and our work with local communities, the public and the media.

Our achievements
In turning this mission into practice, we are proud of our many achievements, including running the UK’s oldest social work training programme dating back to 1908, our multiple-award-winning NHS Management Training Scheme, the relationships we have with local partners in the public and voluntary sectors, and our leading role in the largest senior leadership development programmes in the history of the National Health Service. More than three-quarters of our research is rated as ‘world leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’ in terms of its rigour, significance and originality, and we have extensive international links with like-minded partners at Harvard, Melbourne, Peking, Vancouver, Seoul and beyond.

Our departments
The School is made up of two departments, the Department of Social Policy and Social Work and the Health Services Management Centre.

The Department of Social Policy and Social Work offers a variety of exciting undergraduate programmes in a number of areas of social policy, including criminology, health, social care, housing and communities.

The Health Services Management Centre has a range of postgraduate courses that provide a challenging and stimulating study experience for both aspiring and existing practitioners in health and social care organisations.
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Social Work is a career where you can make a real difference to the lives of individuals, families and communities. Using principles of human rights and social work values, social workers work in partnership with service users, carers and other professionals. They apply relevant theories, the law, knowledge and evidence to support individuals and families, promote independence and prevent harm, neglect and abuse.

This degree will enable you to develop important skills, knowledge and understanding of key areas of social work including, law, theories, methods and values. It will equip you with an understanding of evidence-informed practice, making professional judgements, and the ability to employ a range of interventions and apply these in practice.

Our BA Social Work programme is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). This approval provides our students with eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC as a Social Worker in England.

Professional practice
There is a clear progression from the Social Work programme to professional practice. A significant number of our graduates go on to work with the agency or authority where they completed their placement. Others have gained employment across the region, many in a statutory setting, others in voluntary organisations or the private sector. Where our graduates have sought employment outside of the region or overseas they have been in the advantageous position of having a qualification from a university that is acclaimed both nationally and internationally.
You will have the opportunity to develop core academic skills and explore the key disciplines of Social Work.

**Year 1**
In the first year, you will study five modules introducing you to the social and organisational content of social work. This introduction to social work will provide you with the opportunity to develop your skills to prepare you for working with service users and carers.

**Year 2**
In your second year, you will complete 70 days professional practice learning, in addition to six academic modules designed to help you develop and apply the knowledge, values and skills required in social work practice.

**Year 3**
In your final year, you will complete a further 100-day professional practice placement. As part of this you will also complete a risk analysis. In addition to practice, the academic modules during this year will consolidate your learning and prepare you for social work practice.

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<tr>
<th>Year 1 modules</th>
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<th>Year 3 modules</th>
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<tr>
<td>Psychology (20 credits)</td>
<td>Enhancing Skills for Social Work Practice (20 credits)</td>
<td>Advanced Practice: Individuals, Families and Communities (30 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research for Evidence Based Learning (20 credits)</td>
<td>Law for Professional Practice (20 credits)</td>
<td>Dissertation A (30 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Welfare and Social Inequalities (20 credits)</td>
<td>Placement and Case Analysis (20 credits)</td>
<td>Placement and Case Analysis 2 (30 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Work Contexts (30 credits)</td>
<td>Research for Evidence Informed Practice (20 credits)</td>
<td>Dissertation B (30 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Work Skills, Values and Approaches (30 credits)</td>
<td>Theory, Methods and Practice (20 credits)</td>
<td>Social Identity, Citizenship and Social Work Practice (as part of this module, students have the opportunity to take part in our International Exchange Programme) (20 credits)</td>
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This leaflet was written several months in advance of the start of the academic year. It is intended to provide prospective students with a general picture of the programmes and courses offered by the School. Please note that not all programmes or all courses are offered every year. Also, because our research is constantly exploring new areas and directions of study, some courses may be discontinued and new ones offered in their place.

The Social Work regulatory body, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the Department of Social Work and Social Care require that all students are assessed before going out on placement to ensure you have the necessary skills required to work with a variety of people, including service users and practitioners. As part of this assessment, you will participate in a role-play scenario with a service user or carer. You will also spend time gaining experience within a local social care organisation.

**Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Registration**
Where our graduates have sought employment outside of the region or overseas they are in the advantageous position of having a qualification from a university that is acclaimed both nationally and internationally.

Our BA Social Work programme is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). Upon graduation, this approval provides our students with eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC as a Social Worker in England. To find out more visit: [www.hpc-uk.org/apply](http://www.hpc-uk.org/apply)
Social Work entry requirements

The application process is rigorous, due to the nature of social work and the strict criteria set by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). On receipt of your application, your qualifications, experience and reference will be carefully considered. If your application passes the initial screening process, you will be invited to attend an applicant assessment day, comprising a written test and interview. All the above elements are considered in the decision-making process, and the strongest applications will be made a conditional offer.

Stage 1 – application form
Your application form must detail your academic qualifications, including Maths and English. In addition, you must include a personal statement detailing how you meet the entrance criteria, highlighting relevant experience and your motivations for wanting to study Social Work. You must also provide an academic reference as part of your application form.

Stage 2 – written test
If you get through the first stage, you may be invited to sit a written entrance test. Applicants have previously been given an extract from an academic journal to test their ability to read, assimilate and respond accurately, within the time allowed, to questions asked in relation to this article.

Stage 3 – interview
After the written test you will be invited to undertake an interview. Applicants have the opportunity to talk about what they have learnt through their related social care experiences, their reasons for wanting to study social work and the strategies they would employ to help them cope with the demanding nature of the Social Work programme and professional social work practice. The interview panel is made up of two panel members including practitioners, service users and carers and an academic. Offers are made after all elements of the application have been considered and will be conditional on a further review of the suitability form, DBS Check, health questionnaire and a professional reference. Once you have been made an offer you will receive further information to help you take the next steps towards becoming a student at the University of Birmingham.

How to apply
Visit www.ucas.ac.uk to apply online.

Entry requirements
A level grades: ABB (2 grades lower for A2B applicants). Alternative routes such as ACCESS and BTEC are also accepted. Maths and English GCSE grade C or equivalent. You must also have at least three months (60 working days) relevant practice-based experience or a combination of practice-based and related personal experience. All applicants must confirm prior to interview/offer decision making that they have the ability to use basic IT facilities, including word processing, internet browsing and the use of email, and be asked to specify how these skills have been obtained.

Funding
For the latest information regarding the NHSBSA bursary, please go to their website: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students. Please note that NHSBSA bursaries are not available to students from Northern or Southern Ireland, Scotland, Wales or those classified as ‘overseas’.

Entry level capabilities
At the point of entry to professional social work education, applicants should be able to demonstrate that they meet the Entry Level Capabilities of The British Association of Social Workers Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF). We therefore advise you to consult these at their website: www.basw.co.uk/pcf

Access to Birmingham (A2B)
We were one of the first universities to set up a fair access scheme for local students in 2000 and are proud to be able to offer prospective applicants the support of our A2B scheme. Our Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme is designed to help students from families and communities in the West Midlands, who have little or no experience of higher education, find out about what studying at university involves. The University of Birmingham has a long history of welcoming students from a wide variety of social and cultural backgrounds.

LEARN MORE
To find out more about how to apply to study social work at the University of Birmingham contact:
Tel: 0121 414 5716
Email: basocialwork@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Social Work with Year Abroad

The department of Social Work and Social Care are now offering BA Social Work course with a year abroad option.

This four-year programme offers you the opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge of a range of Social Work modules whilst enhancing this knowledge and understanding by undertaking a Year Abroad placement.

Graduates with both academic abilities and practical experience in a real world environment are much in demand and can have a significant advantage in today’s competitive employment market.

Places for this programme will be based on academic performance during the first year of the BA Social Work programme. Students cannot directly apply to the Year Abroad option. Please contact us to find out more.

Modules

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<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Final Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychology (20 credits)</td>
<td>Enhancing Skills for Social Work Practice (20 credits)</td>
<td>Year Abroad (120 credits)</td>
<td>Advanced Practice: Individuals, Families and Communities (30 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research for Evidence Based Learning (20 credits)</td>
<td>Law for Professional Practice (20 credits)</td>
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You will be required to take the equivalent of 120 credits per year depending on the module weighting system at the host institution. You will only be allowed to sign up to institutions where the correct level modules fit within the topics taught at University of Birmingham to ensure progression. Exchange tutors will advise on the most appropriate choices. You will be required to select 75% of your modules from social sciences disciplines and 25% from any other discipline.

Assessment

If you choose to take the Year Abroad option you will be expected to register for 120 credits at the host institution in line with other Schools in the College of Social Sciences. These credits will be assessed on a pass/fail basis and will not contribute to your University of Birmingham degree classification due to the professional requirements of the Social Work programme. However, you will be expected to undertake these credits to comply with due diligence.

All of the exchanges will take place at universities approved by the University of Birmingham.

LEARN MORE

To find out more about how to apply to study social work at the University of Birmingham contact:

Tel: 0121 414 5716
Email: basocialwork@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Introducing the Social Work Team

**PROFESSOR BARBARA FAWCETT**
Professor Barbara Fawcett carries out research in the areas of adults, communities, mental health, older people and disability. She also focuses on participatory action research and forms of analysis drawn from postmodern feminism.

**DR NICKI WARD**
Dr Nicki Ward is a Lecturer in the School of Social Policy. Nicki’s primary role, as a social work lecturer, enables her to combine her interests in social work, social care and social justice. Nicki is particularly interested in issues of diversity, intersectionality and care ethics. Nicki is currently advancing work around the development of an LGBTQ inclusive curriculum in higher education with colleagues across the School.

**DR TARSEM SINGH COONER**
Dr Tarsem Singh Cooner is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work, and Programme Director for BA Years 2 and 3. In 2011, Dr Singh Cooner was awarded a University of Birmingham Teaching Fellowship in recognition of his wide-ranging and significant interventions in learning and teaching across the institution.

In his work across the institution Dr Singh Cooner serves on the Board of the Valuing Teaching at Birmingham initiative, the University Learning Environment Group and the University Massive Online Open Courses (MOOC) Steering Group.

**SURINDER GURU**
Surinder Guru is a Lecturer on both BA and MA Social Work courses. Surinder’s research interests focus primarily on issues of race and gender, specifically exploring the role and position of South Asian women within the family and their experiences of domestic violence, divorce and the transmission of femininity.

**DR JASON SCHAUB**
Dr Jason Schaub is a Lecturer in Social Work, and Programme Director for BA Year 1. His areas of teaching and research include gender and sexuality, integrated health and social care, and children and families social work. He co-ordinates the external seminar series for the department.

He is chair of the international Sexuality in Social Work interest group, is on the academic board of Independent Academic Research Studies International Institute (IARS), and is a founding member of European Social Work Research Association.
Service user and carer involvement on the Social Work programme

Involving service users and carers in all aspects of admissions and the development and delivery of our social work qualifying programmes is a priority for us. We believe it offers students the opportunity to have a thorough grounding in service users' and carers' experiences and expectations from the very start of their social work training and careers.

**Survivor Arts Project**

Recovery through the Arts Workshops have been running alongside the Survivor Arts Exhibitions, which have been hosted by the Department of Social Policy and Social Work since 2006. Bringing together works by survivor artists in one progressive and dynamic space, the exhibition not only showcases diverse creativity and ability, but also challenges perceptions surrounding art, mental health and social inclusion. The workshops, led by survivor artists and poets, focus on the benefits of recovery through the arts and illustrate the value of working in partnership with service users.

Service users, carers and practitioners work alongside academics to create a dynamic learning environment, both within the department and during supervised practice. The department values highly the contribution service user and carer colleagues make and feedback from students confirms just how important the user perspective is in helping them to develop greater insight into the role social work can play in people’s lives. Birmingham’s close working relationships with service users – a key plank of recent social work reforms.

In what is seen as a gold standard for other universities, ‘survivors’ – who include care-leavers, users of mental health or drug and alcohol services, people with physical and learning disabilities, and carers – are involved in all aspects of the course, from admissions to role play, assessments and presentations at conferences and workshops.
‘Everyone is helping so much with my “survivor journey”. I think that service user and carer involvement at the University is beneficial to all.’
Janet, Service User/Carer Contributor

‘I appreciate being valued for my contribution...’
Ruth, Service User/Carer Contributor

‘I love their positive feedback about having “live” service users who can help and support them as they develop into social workers of the future.’
Helen, Service User/Carer Contributor

‘Very relaxed with lots of opportunity for creativity. Good balance between theory, biography and practical work. The activities were well structured and planned and the tutors and survivor artists were approachable, respectful and gave lots of space for the students to be reflective.’
Student

‘I appreciate the real partnership participation in teaching development which improves the overall student experience.’
Christine, Service User/Carer Contributor

‘I think it is a fantastic element of the social work course as it shows the very nature of the programme in thinking of new and exciting ways to support people through their journeys.’
Student

‘Attending the University has given me the most valuable skills and tools that are needed to become a social worker. Since leaving, I have gone from strength to strength, overcoming the challenges of social work. Without the knowledge of lecturers who have walked the path of social work, and the support and encouragement from personal tutors, I would not be where I am today.’
BA Social Work graduate

‘I feel I have learnt a lot in terms of how I can address my own strengths and weaknesses, and has enabled me to build on my reflective practice skills... I think it’s one of the real selling points of Birmingham’s social work course. I found working with service users was really helpful. It’s really built my confidence in working with service users. Service-user involvement is one of the best aspects of this module – their involvement and participation was invaluable. Hearing their feedback was a great learning opportunity. It is Birmingham’s focus on service-user involvement that attracted me to this particular course.’
Student
Our Social Work alumni

**ALICE BRANT**

‘The course has helped me to critically analyse theory and law and so as a safeguarding social worker I feel this has helped me to make informed and evidence-based decisions to safeguard vulnerable children and support families.’

**HARPIT RAI**

‘I chose to study at University of Birmingham as a recommendation from Birmingham City Council as they seconded me to do the MA Social Work. I was very honoured to be accepted when I found out I had got a place at the University.

‘I felt the course prepared me well for my career. The lecturers were brilliant and always willing to help and passionate about the subjects they were teaching. The course provided me with the theoretical knowledge that underpins everyday practice. I also had two very good statutory placements, first with the Disabled Children’s Team and the second at the Physical Disabilities Team.’

**ADAM BIRCHALL**

‘I chose to study social work at the University of Birmingham for many reasons. The reputation of the University and its staff speaks for itself. I remember the Open Day and application and interview process. Everyone was friendly and professional. The questions were challenging and for me, the service-user involvement in the interview process was a very powerful statement about the values of the faculty. It was a no-brainer about where I wanted to study.

‘No two days are the same: I can go from meeting with the Chief Social Worker; to supporting the roll-out of early help; to delivering training; to going on visits; to meeting with the Director of Children’s Services; to writing guidance.’

**ELIZABETH SPENCER**

‘Over my three years at Birmingham I developed my self-confidence to practise social work. This was achieved through the different topics explored within lectures and seminars and the tools provided to us to use in practice.

‘The University is known for being very high up in the tables for Social Work and other courses. Upon visiting the campus for the entry interviews and exam, I was sure I wanted to attend the University of Birmingham.’

**TONIA DUBIDAT**

‘The Social Work programme is very much about looking at yourself and about self-evaluation and where your values and your ethics come from, and being able to put them into practice. It is definitely an academic course, but it is also very much trying to get to the roots of who you are to enable you to practise. My reaction when I won the Student Social Worker of the Year Award was a bit like a deer in the headlights! I wasn’t expecting it; I had gone along to celebrate social work and celebrate everybody else and then I was told that I had won and was called up to the stage to collect my award!’
Birmingham...

a great place
to live and learn

The University campus offers a peaceful and tranquil haven, yet is right on the doorstep of the bustling city. So whether you’re looking for some quiet downtime to study or fancy a big night out, you’re never far from where you want to be.

Our campus

Striking architecture and 250 acres of parkland make for the stunning setting of our campus, which also boasts a whole range of amenities. You’ll find bars, shops, travel agents, opticians and major banks, as well as an art gallery, museum and concert hall all on site. Plus there is the added benefit of a full-time security team.

The University is investing £300 million over five years in new facilities for students and researchers. In the past year, we have opened a new student hub in our Aston Webb Building, a brand new hall of residence, Chamberlain, in the Vale Village and the Institute of Translational Medicine, to ensure pioneering research is transformed into medicines and treatments for patients. Some of the projects in the pipeline are detailed here.

Library

Our outstanding new library, which opened in 2016, provides state-of-the-art facilities for our students – incorporating new ways of learning and studying alongside the traditional. All study spaces allow students to work from multiple devices, and flexible training rooms have been incorporated in the design to allow the development of academic skills training and to support all modes of independent self-study. Desks in the light and airy new building are all near windows and benefit from stunning views across campus.

Green Heart

The Green Heart will be a vast landscaped park at the heart of our historic campus, with a range of spaces for activities ranging from ceremonial occasions to public performances. It will feature and showcase some of our extensive range of cultural collections and be a place for meeting and relaxing all year round.

Teaching and Learning Building

Due for completion in early 2020, the Teaching and Learning Building will underline the University’s commitment to providing the best buildings and facilities for its students, staff and researchers. A hub for education, the facility will provide a state-of-the-art teaching and social study space to support the modern learning experience at Birmingham. Adjacent to the new library, the building will be IT and audio visual-rich, with excellent access for students with a diverse range of needs and preferences. It will consist of: a 500-seater lecture theatre, a 250-seater interactive lecture theatre, learning spaces for up to 1,000 students, which will include areas for individual study, collaborative group work and creative break-out sessions and a café.

Sports Centre

Opened in 2016, Sport & Fitness, our new sports facility, features an exceptional range and quality of facilities for everyone from beginner to elite athlete. It is the University’s biggest investment in sport to date and underlines the University’s commitment to sport at all levels. There has never been a more exciting time to get involved with sport at the University.
Our city
When you study here, you’ll find it’s not just the perfect base for your work – it’s also the perfect place to begin your career and set down the foundations for a successful future as Birmingham is the youngest city in Europe, with under 25’s accounting for nearly 40% of its population.

Easily accessible from and to the rest of the UK, Birmingham is under two hours from London by train, and Birmingham Airport is around half an hour away from the city centre.

Birmingham highlights
All tastes are catered for in Birmingham. From a weekly street food event in Digbeth to the Chinese Quarter to our world-famous Balti Triangle, there are multiple food options across the city centre and region to cater to all tastes and budgets.

In your leisure time, you’ll find a huge range of activities to keep you entertained and occupied. Shopping areas include the famous Bullring, independent shops at the Custard Factory, the ever-growing Jewellery Quarter, and The Mailbox with its designer stores and upmarket restaurants. Birmingham also hosts a range of markets, including the famous Frankfurt Christmas Market.

If you are looking for some culture, then you’ll find plenty of art galleries – including the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery – theatres, cinemas and music arenas, such as the National Exhibition Centre and Arena Birmingham.

Why study at Birmingham?
Be part of a vibrant community of students and staff making real-world impact by addressing past, current and future challenges in the fields of social work and social policy.

The research-led teaching on our flexible degree courses ensures an inspirational and enquiry-based learning environment in the lecture theatre, seminar room, and on placement. You will graduate as a highly employable, independent global citizen with a broad range of transferable skills.
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