

SOCIAL WORK

MA

Full-time: 2 years



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

- Professional training for careers in a wide range of health or social care settings
- Recognised by the Care Council of Wales
- Welsh and English routes available
- Financial support available
- Begin working as a registered social worker upon completion





WHY STUDY SOCIAL WORK?

Social work is a varied and challenging career, and each working day is different. As a qualified social worker, you will work with all kinds of people, each with their own unique strengths, needs and hopes for the future.

You will fulfil a number of different roles, including case management, advocacy and protection. Most importantly, you can help to ensure positive changes to people's lives. It can be difficult work, but it is always rewarding and worthwhile. Social work offers opportunities to work with a wide range of people – from very young children to older people – in a variety of situations.

As social workers are placed in a highly responsible position, they require professional training. It is important for a social worker to be interested in people, but that is not enough in itself. Social workers need to be quick thinking, thorough and efficient.



Why Choose Bangor?

- Bangor University has a long tradition of social work education
- Students experience the advantages of living in a bilingual community and developing their social work skills within bilingual settings
- North Wales can offer experiences of social work practice in both very rural communities and in more urban environments
- With students studying and staff actively researching Social Policy, Sociology and Criminology, the School of Social Sciences offers a lively intellectual experience



"I feel very fortunate to have been able to pursue this course and to qualify as a social worker.

It has changed my world for the better and I feel that I have developed and strengthened as a person.

I have now secured a permanent role with the Children's Services unit at Anglesey County Council."

Sharon Wyn Williams, Caernarfon Social Worker, Anglesey County Council



MA SOCIAL WORK

The fundamental intention of the MA Social Work programme is to equip students to take up positions within the professionally qualified social work workforce. The overall objective is to provide a programme which satisfies the requirements of the Care Council 'Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales' (2012). To achieve this, the programme of study includes a suite of core academic modules and a requirement of at least 200 days on placement over the two years. Successful completion qualifies students to begin working as registered social workers.

The modules and practice learning opportunities are designed to provide graduating students with the required knowledge, skills and values to begin practising as newly qualified social workers. They are based on the QAA Benchmarks for Social Work, and the National Occupational Standards for Social Work.

The programme will have a Welsh and English route. Students will be able to pursue their studies entirely through the medium of Welsh or English. All the modules will be delivered in Welsh and English, and all assessments can be presented in either Welsh or English.

Modules

Year 1

Social Policy for Social Work Practice	20 credits
Knowledge and Skills Base for Social Work	20 credits
The Life Course	10 credits
Values and Ethics for Social Work Practice	10 credits
The Research Process	20 credits
Practice Learning Opportunity	30 credits

Year 2

Social Work Dissertation	60 credits
Legal Imperatives for Social Work	20 credits
Social Work with Children, Young People and Families	20 credits
Community Care	20 credits
Practice Learning Opportunity	30 credits



Partnership with Employers

The School of Social Sciences works in partnership with Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy local authorities to develop, deliver and manage this MA Social Work programme. Partner local authorities are involved in recruitment and student selection, contributing to teaching and assessment of students.

The primary partners also provide practice learning opportunities along with other employing agencies, and ensure that students develop a strong understanding of social work practice in North Wales alongside their academic development.

MODULE GUIDE

Social Policy for Social Work Practice

The module deals with the context of social policy and considers why the subject is relevant to social work. A number of key themes and considerations in the field will be dealt with, such as the rights and responsibilities of citizens, social inequalities, and poverty and social exclusion. Particular attention will be given to critically analysing the various social policies which are relevant when practising social work, e.g. health, education, housing and income support.

Knowledge and Skills Base for Social Work

This module covers fundamental skills and knowledge required to begin developing as a social work practitioner. Major areas of social work theory, evidence-based practice, service user and carers' knowledge and messages from research will all be covered. The module will extend and deepen the student's knowledge and understanding of the theory and practice of social work intervention with users, carers, families, groups, communities and other professionals.

The Life Course

This module presents a life course approach which is grounded in sociological, psychological and social perspectives. It focuses on a person/process/context model. The module enables an understanding of the factors which inhibit growth and development and render a person vulnerable and those factors and circumstances which promote positive development and resilience in a person. It will look at the role of biography and life story in terms of locating development in the context of time and place. Life story from the perspective of people with dementia will be examined.

Values and Ethics for Social Work Practice

This module will provide students with an understanding of how social work values play a core role in their own practice, and in social work decision making more broadly, in a diverse society. The module will introduce students to the challenges posed by dilemmas and conflicts within social work practice. Ethical principles and the Care Council for Wales Code of Practice will be used to explore issues raised.

The Research Process

This module will provide postgraduate level training in the main varieties of both quantitative and qualitative research in the context of social work, and is intended to prepare students for their social work dissertation during the second year. The module will enable students to make informed choices about the selection of an appropriate research methodology for their own social work research. Students will understand how the use of knowledge of research and evidence informs professional practice.

Social Work Dissertation

This module provides students with an opportunity to conduct a small-scale yet significant piece of individual research supervised by a research supervisor. Students identify a research question, and collect and analyse data that bears on the research question, utilising an appropriate analytical framework. They then address the research question in the light of their findings. The research undertaken is presented in the format of a 20,000 word (max) dissertation employing the usual conventions.

Legal Imperatives for Social Work

This module aims to achieve three basic objectives, namely to introduce students to the methodology and implications of legal intervention; to provide a grounding in social work law; and, finally, to develop an ability to apply the law in relation to both adult and child protection. It will focus on the contested nature of legal imperatives and the constraints and complexities associated with legislation and case law in a family context.

Social Work with Children, Young People and Families

This module offers a broad foundation in the key aspects of work with children, young people and families, and will address some aspects of practice in more depth. It builds on learning gained in other modules about child policy in Wales; the impact of poverty on children; development over the life course; and use of research to inform practice. In the first part of the module the emphasis will be on safeguarding practice, later moving to address work with children and young people who are looked after, and those in transition and leaving care.

Community Care

This module will focus on the body of knowledge, legislative and policy context and skills that shape community care and social work services with adult service users and their carers. It will critically evaluate the range of epistemological models that inform the knowledge base of practice in the areas of disabilities, mental health and older people. It will examine evidence-based approaches in mental health, disabilities and working with older people.

Practice Learning Opportunities

The Practice Learning Opportunities provide the context for the application of practical skills, reflective analysis and the integration of academic learning. Students will undertake three placements of 20, 80 and 100 days during the period of their MA studies. Each student is hosted by one of the local authorities (Gwynedd, Anglesey or Conwy) in an arrangement which supports the student's development towards being a competent social worker. Most practice learning opportunities will be within the three counties, but some students will be able to benefit from opportunities further afield.

Students have enjoyed experiences in a range of different settings, including statutory social work roles within hospital social work, youth offending teams, mental health services, children and family services. There is also a range of opportunities in voluntary sector agencies such as Age Concern, Digartref Ynys Môn and Barnardo's.



CAREER PROSPECTS



After qualification you will be able to work in a wide range of health or social care settings, often working alongside other professionals such as occupational therapists or psychologists, in multidisciplinary teams. As well as statutory social work settings like children and families teams, older people teams and community mental health teams, social workers may be employed in hospitals, in community development projects or with non-statutory organisations perhaps supporting refugees and asylum-seekers, or working with young parents in need of support.



"I chose to study Social Work having already worked as a Support Worker for the Arfon Child and Family Team for over 10 years. I had achieved the full qualifications in the support role and I was eager to take the next step to improve myself professionally.

The course was extremely interesting and I learnt a great deal not only about myself, but also issues relating to social sciences, mental health, law, values and ethics, and social policy."

**Eurig Gwyn Williams, Caernarfon
Social Worker, Child and Family Team,
Gwynedd Council**

Entry Requirements

- Preferably a 2.1 degree and 6 months relevant experience. Applicants with a 2.2 degree who can demonstrate extensive strong relevant experience will be considered.
- The ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh is desirable.
- GCSE grade C or equivalent in Maths and English/Welsh first language.
- All candidates must pass checks deemed necessary for registration as a student social worker with the Care Council for Wales (including health and criminal conviction checks).
- All candidates will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability and capacity for social work practice.

We welcome applicants who have a full driving licence as the majority of the practice learning opportunity settings require drivers. Applicants should note that very few non-driving practice learning opportunities are available. Generally, these will be reserved for students with specific needs, such as a disability which prevents them from driving.

The Interview

The interview is an integral part of the selection process. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to speak to people working in various social work sectors, to research and read about social work, and to reflect on their own experiences prior to the interview in order to develop their understanding of the field.



BURSARIES AND FUNDING

In most instances, a student whose home address is in Wales will be eligible for funding support through the Care Council for Wales. The number of bursaries offered each year is limited, so it is important to apply early.

The funding available to students studying on a Masters degree is as follows:

- £6,640 non-income assessed bursary per year (up to two years); and
- Practice Learning Opportunity Allowance of £7.50 per practice learning opportunity day.

Students from other UK countries may be eligible for funding by their own Care Councils (in England the equivalent body is the Health and Care Professions Council). Care Council contact details are given below.

FEES

As a guide, the fees for 2014/15 were £5,250 per year (2 year course).

It is expected there will be a small increase in 2015/16.

For further information about the MA Social Work programme, contact:

Lynda Jones, Social Work Administrator
or Fiona Macdonald, Admissions Tutor
School of Social Sciences
Bangor University
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 2DG

01248 382127

socialwork@bangor.ac.uk

www.bangor.ac.uk/so



For further information about bursaries and funding:

Students from **Wales** should contact the Care Council for Wales:

Care Council for Wales
6th Floor West Wing
South Gate House
Wood Street
Cardiff
CF10 1EW

02920 226257 / 0845
0700249

info@ccwales.org.uk
studentfunding@ccwales.org.uk

www.ccwales.org.uk

Students from other UK countries should contact their relevant Care Council:

England: www.hpc-uk.org
Scotland: www.sssc.uk.com
Northern Ireland: www.niscc.info