

# Postgraduate Diploma and MA in Social Work

## Information for employers in England

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## Structure and content

The postgraduate programme will be in two stages:

### Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work

*K832 Developing social work practice + K833 Advancing social work practice*

A Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work, which will be the qualifying award for entry to the HCPC register for social workers in England. 120 academic credits studied over 17 months, including two practice learning placements.

### MA in Social Work

*KXK829 Transforming professional practice*

A Masters project/dissertation module, which will enable students to extend their skills in research and analysis. 60 academic credits studied over 9 months. Completion of all three modules leads to the award of MA in Social Work.

### Module content

Relevant teaching has been integrated into *K832 Developing social work practice* and *K833 Advancing social work practice* to provide a thematic approach to exploring law; digital and information literacy; values and ethics; safeguarding practices; theories and approaches in social work intervention; and research methods and evidence-based practice. There are study pathways in each of the practice-related modules, so that students working with particular service user groups can study relevant learning guides alongside their placement, to support their practice learning.

#### K832 Developing social work practice

*Start date:* late January

*End date:* early-September

*Credits:* 60

*Practice-based learning:* 80-day placement (normal attendance pattern 4 days per week for 20 weeks)

#### *Content:*

- Foundations for social work practice
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Social divisions and diversity
- Human growth and development
- Social work practice with children and families OR Social work practice with adults  
(*students take both pathways, one on K832 and one on K833*)

#### *Teaching, learning and assessment:*

- Supported by two OU tutors, a module tutor and a programme (practice) tutor
- Residential weekend
- Three face-to-face workshops
- A range of online collaborative activities and discussion seminars
- Online self-directed learning, accessible 24/7
- Two tutor-marked assignments and an end-of-module assignment related to practice learning

### K833 Advancing social work practice

*Start date:* early October

*End date:* late May/early June

*Credits:* 60

*Practice-based learning:* 90-day placement (normal attendance pattern 4 days per week for 20 weeks)

*Content:*

- Research-based practice
- Social work practice with children and families OR Social work practice with adults (*students take both pathways, one on K832 and one on K833*)
- Mental health
- Professional development

*Teaching, learning and assessment:*

- Supported by two OU tutors, a module tutor and a programme (practice) tutor
- Three face-to-face workshops
- A range of online collaborative activities and discussion seminars
- Online self-directed learning, accessible 24/7
- Two tutor-marked assignments and an end-of-module assignment related to practice learning

### KXK829 Transforming professional practice

*Start date:* October

*End date:* June

*Credits:* 60

*Practice-based learning:* no

*Content:*

- A guided enquiry into advanced social care/ social work practice leading to recommendations for improvement in a practice setting
- Includes an investigation of both evidence and experience and explores different means for dissemination of best practice

*Teaching, learning and assessment:*

- Project/dissertation
- Supported by an OU module tutor
- Online group tuition and individual contact
- Online self-directed learning, accessible 24/7
- Four tutor-marked assignments and an end-of-module assignment

### Time to complete

The presentation pattern will allow students to complete the PG Dip within 18 months, and the MA within 30 months. The maximum time allowed is 5 years for the PG Dip and 9 years for the MA.



## Entry requirements

All candidates must meet minimum entry requirements before applying for entry onto the postgraduate social work programme.

1. Applicants must hold a first degree (BA (Hons)/BSc (Hons)), which must be:

EITHER

A minimum of a 2:1 classification in a relevant health/societal/psychology or other cognate discipline such as:

- Health and Social Care
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychology
- Sociology/Social Studies
- Law/Legal studies
- Teaching/Education

OR

A minimum of a 2:2 classification in any discipline together with a proven record of experience of engaging directly with Service Users in a professional setting. Candidates' experience will be considered individually on application but we would normally expect a minimum of one year's experience – either paid or voluntary – in a setting such as a local authority or a health or social care provider in the private, voluntary or independent sector.

2. In addition, all candidates must:

- Have a minimum grade C/4 GCSE in English and mathematics or certified equivalent
- Demonstrate IT competence through self-declaration
- Achieve an International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) score of 7 if English is not their first language
- Have an enhanced DBS with lists check (i.e. checks against all registers including both children and vulnerable adults) dated within one year prior to starting the programme
- Complete a health check. If, in exceptional circumstances, there are serious doubts about a student's fitness to practise on health grounds, the University's doctor may ask him/her to undergo a medical examination. This examination will be at the applicant's own expense.

## Selection process

There is a formal admissions process, requiring applicants to:

- Complete an OU application form, which will include a personal statement, references and employer endorsement
- Complete a declaration of suitability for social work
- Undertake a written test
- Take part in an interview

For further information see 'How to apply' below.

## How to apply

This course includes two compulsory periods of assessed practice learning, which must be undertaken in a suitable work environment. The work-based learning is delivered in collaboration with employers, who are responsible for ensuring that suitable placements are available. For this reason, we are unable to accept applications from individuals. Candidates must already be working in a social care environment, and applications must be made through a supporting employer.

These are the steps to making an application:

What	When	Who
If you are an employer who is not currently supporting students on the OU programme and would like to find out more about what's involved, you can contact the social work admissions team directly by email or phone: <a href="mailto:wels-sw-enquiries@open.ac.uk">wels-sw-enquiries@open.ac.uk</a> or 01908 654229	At any time	Employer
Employers who are supporting a student for the first time or after a break, complete an <a href="#">Expression of Interest and Agency Information Form</a> , available via our <a href="#">website</a> . We will arrange for a member of the OU social work team based in your area to meet with you to explain and discuss the programme in more detail, and to ensure that you are able to provide practice learning opportunities that meet the requirements for social work students.	Can be done at any time, but Expression of Interest must be submitted by:  <b>1st July 2019</b>  if you wish to put forward candidates for January 2019 start.	Employer  OU
We will send you an application pack for your candidates to complete: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application form</li> <li>• Medical Fitness to Practise form</li> <li>• Self-Declaration form</li> <li>• Selection Day Request form (choice of interview dates)</li> </ul>		OU
Applicants return completed forms to the employer, who signs them to confirm their support before returning them to us by the due date.	No later than:  <b>2nd September 2019</b>	Applicant and Employer
Applicants will need to provide evidence that they meet the academic entry requirements (normally their examination/degree certificate(s)) and show that they have the necessary DBS clearance – we need to see the originals and candidates will be asked to bring these with them if invited to interview.	In advance of the allocated Selection Day	Applicant
Applicants attend a Selection Day, which includes a formal interview, group exercise and a written test.	September – December 2018	Applicant
Applicants who are offered a place, will be sent a Student Registration Agreement to complete and return before the final enrolment date for their module. If the student is paying their own tuition fee, they will return the Registration Agreement directly to the University. If you are paying the tuition fee, you will be asked to complete a Corporate Sponsorship Form and return it with the student's Registration Agreement.	No later than:  <b>9 January 2020</b>	Applicant (and Employer, if you are paying the module tuition fee)

## Fees

*The fee information provided here is valid for modules starting before 31 July 2019. Fees normally increase annually in line with inflation and the University's strategic approach to fees.*

<i>Module</i>		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Fee</i>
K832	Developing social work practice	60	£3,680
K833	Advancing social work practice	60	£3,580*
KXK829	Transforming professional practice	60	£2,100

\*tbc

There's information about different ways to pay for our postgraduate social work qualifications, including postgraduate student loans, in our Funding Options leaflet which can be downloaded from our website (see contact details on back page).

### Contact us

Go to [www.openuniversity.co.uk/socialwork](http://www.openuniversity.co.uk/socialwork) and follow the link to the Postgraduate Diploma and MA in Social Work.

Call our social work enquiry line on **01908 654229**

Lines are normally open:

Monday to Thursday 09:00 to 17:00

Friday 09:00 to 16:30

Email the social work admissions team [wels-sw-enquiries@open.ac.uk](mailto:wels-sw-enquiries@open.ac.uk)