

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Graduate Certificate in Social Care**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2017**.

Introduction

This programme will provide people with experience of working or volunteering in social care the opportunity to demonstrate that they can study at level 6. The programme will introduce students to the legal, policy and organisational contexts and the roles and responsibilities of a social worker and social care worker working with children, young people, adults and their families.

The aims of the programme are:

- To develop knowledge of academic subjects relevant to the role of the social care worker and social worker, and to develop the ability to critically analyse relevant research literature to inform social care and social work practice.
- To develop verbal and written communication skills essential for social work practice.
- To provide specific and integral study skills in critical thinking and writing skills to support students to be autonomous learners and complete the course successfully.

The Certificate is delivered over one year of part-time study. On successful completion of the programme students will receive the Graduate Certificate in Social Care award. Students who successfully complete the programme and achieve an overall average mark of 60% or above will provide proof of their ability to study at a level in the relevant subject of social care that meets the academic requirement for application to the MSc in Social Work at Royal Holloway.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors that might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

The research interests of staff from the Social Work department closely inform teaching and learning in the programme. This course will provide students with an overview of the social care and social work role and the requirements of a registered professional. Students will learn to understand and apply underpinning knowledge from psychology, sociology, law, social policy, service user and carer perspectives and social work practice to

understanding people's lives over the life course and decide on helpful and effective social work interventions. The focus of the programme is on preparing candidates academically to apply to Master's level social work training. Although students will not be provided with opportunities for practical experience as part of the course it is expected they will be working or gaining voluntary experience or experience provided by the employer to support and enhance the academic learning on the course.

Knowledge and understanding

- Analyse the roles of social care worker and social worker in their wider social policy context.
- Compare and contrast the range of roles and functions of a social care worker and social worker in different settings and the required standards, professional values and codes of practice.
- Identify and analyse the impact of personal values and experience on providing an anti-oppressive service to children, young people, adults and their families from diverse communities.
- Apply concepts from psychology, sociology and social policy to understand the inner, familial, social and cultural worlds of children, young people and adults in an ecological context.
- Examine the varied social care and social work roles in assessing, planning and providing interventions with children, young people, adults and families, providing care and protection.
- Critically evaluate power and partnership in practice with children, young people, adults and families and when working with other professionals within the required legal and social policy frameworks.

Skills and other attributes

- Demonstrate the ability to be an organized, critically reflective and self-directed learner who can study at level 6.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyse and distill relevant information and present this in written and verbal presentations at level 6.
- Identify and apply social work skills and values when communicating with children, young people, adults and their families and professionals.
- Illustrate the ability to use observational skills to understand peoples every day experiences in social care settings.
- Reflect on the role of the social care worker and social worker as a team member within an organisational setting.
- Devise strategies for developing resilience and self-care strategies as an adult learner and social care worker and social worker.

Teaching, learning and assessment

The design of the curriculum reflects the need to develop critical thinking and writing skills to level 6 for non-traditional mature students from diverse backgrounds. Teaching and learning will take place over three terms. Students will attend one day a week in term time, 10 sessions per term (10am -4pm), including two days of self-directed study time. Teaching sessions will consist of lectures with group work that may include case studies, role play, use of the arts and drama, working with service users and carers, and seminars in which smaller groups of approx. 10-12 students discuss their learning and complete specific tasks such as observation of practice settings. Directed learning on Moodle using a blended learning approach will support the learning in the classroom. There is an expectation that employers will provide time for students to attend the taught and study days.

Details of the programme structure(s)

Graduate Certificate in Social Care

Students must take the following **mandatory** course units:

SW1000 Study Skills: Critical Thinking and Writing Skills (15 credits, level 4)

SW3001 Introduction to Social Work and Social Care (15 credits, level 6)

SW3002 People in Context (15 credits, level 6)

SW3003 Towards Professional Practice in Context (15 credits, level 6)

The brief outline of the programme is shown below; however students can obtain further details from the Programme Handbook.

The programme will begin with the course on 'Critical Thinking and Writing Skills' in term 1. The assessment for this course will be submitted 2 weeks after the course has been completed. This will be followed by the 'Introduction to Social Work' course that will be delivered in the latter part of term 1 and the early part of term 2. The assessment for this course will be submitted 2 weeks after the course has been completed. The 'People in Context' course will then run for the rest of term 2. The assessment for this course will be submitted 2 weeks after the course has been completed. The 'Professional Practice in Context' course will run in term 3. The assessment for this course will be submitted 4 weeks after the teaching on the course has been completed.

Individual tutorials will be held termly with students' personal advisors. Each student's progression will be monitored through the use of formative assessments for each course, in which students will provide a plan for the assessed work required with verbal or written feedback from the tutor provided to each student. There will be small group seminars held as part of each course that will provide a place for students to present and discuss their work.

Progression and award requirements

The **Graduate Certificate in Social Care** will be awarded if a student achieves a pass mark of 40% in all four course units. Students who fail a course at the first attempt will be provided with one opportunity to resubmit relevant parts of the assessment, in accordance with RHUL *Undergraduate Regulations*.

Students who successfully complete the programme and achieve an overall average mark of 60% or above will provide proof of their ability to study academically at a level in a relevant subject to meet the academic requirements to apply for the MSc in Social Work at Royal Holloway. However, completion of this programme does not guarantee entry to a postgraduate social work programme.

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Student support and guidance

- The Programme Director meets with students on a regular basis to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. The Programme Director acts as a point of contact for pastoral support and any questions about the programme throughout the year.
- Course coordinators and tutors provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All students are allocated a personal adviser, with whom they meet twice in the first term, with the first meeting at the beginning of the course and once a term, and more regularly if required, to discuss all matters relating to their programme and for pastoral support.
- The Programme Director will provide an orientation and introduction to the Department and College.
- Study Skills are built into the programme to assist students develop their academic skills in critical thinking and writing skills.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- Students are provided with a detailed UG student handbook and course booklets.

- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources are available in College and University libraries, as well as the Computer Centre. However students are part-time, will be working and will be based at Bedford Square. Student's will be encouraged to access Senate House and SCONAL for local University access.
- Access to all College and University support services, including the Student Counselling Service, Students' Union, Carers and Employability Service.
- It is anticipated some students will have particular learning needs such as dyslexia and students will be encouraged to self-assess and seek guidance early on so support strategies can be put in place with access to the Disability and Dyslexia Services (DDS) from RHUL.

Admission requirements

- 5 GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths at grades A-C or Grades 4-9.
- Normally evidence of post-16 (level 3) educational achievements, i.e. at A level or BTech standard or equivalent.
- Currently working or volunteering in a social care setting.
- Evidence of the potential to study at level 6.

Stage 1

Application form to be completed with:

- Supporting statement
- Two references (one from the employer)
- Written support to attend the programme from the agency manager
- Proof of admission requirements
- The right to remain and work in the U.K.

Stage 2

Shortlisted candidates will attend an assessment centre where they will be interviewed, take part in a group discussion and be given a written exam. The exam will be double marked by a social work practitioner and a social work academic.

Further learning and career opportunities

Graduates from the Graduate Certificate in Social Care who meet the minimum entry criteria of an average programme mark of 60% will be in a position to apply to the MSc Social Work and / or potentially the Step-Up to Social Work Programme.

Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The scoring system for the REF 2014 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour and 3* indicating research that is internationally excellent. 81% of the College's research profile was deemed to be within the 4* or 3* categories, an increase of over 20% since 2008. This results for the quality of our research outputs placed Royal Holloway 15th in the UK based on an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) score and 20th in the UK for 4* and 3* research.

List of programmes with details of awards, teaching arrangements and accreditation

The Graduate Certificate leads to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College.

Graduate Certificate in Social Care

Graduate Certificate in Social Care (3152)

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