

Course Information Document: Undergraduate

For Academic Year 2025/26

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	BA (Hons) Social Work
Award type	Single Honours
Mode of study	Full-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 6
Normal length of the programme	3 years
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	The BA (Hons) Social Work programme is approved by Social Work England.
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS); Social Work England
Tuition Fees	UK students: Fee for 2025/26 is £9,535* International students: Fee for 2025/26 is £17,700**

How this information might change: Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

* These fees are regulated by Government. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study in response to changes in government policy and/or changes to the law. If permitted by such change in policy or law, we may increase your fees by an inflationary amount or such other measure as required by government policy or the law. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

** These fees are for new students. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

2. What is a Single Honours programme?

The Single Honours programme described in this document outlines the professional nature of our programme which allows you to focus exclusively on Social Work. The programme enables you to demonstrate a distinctive range of graduate attributes and enables graduates with the BA (Hons) Social Work to apply for registration with Social Work England subsequently to practise as a social worker in England.

The QAA in Social Work (2019:9) articulates that 'the study and practice of social work in the UK reflects the key principles of the Global Definition of the Social Work Profession. As an academic subject applied through professional practice, social work is characterised by a distinctive focus on practice in complex social situations to promote and protect individual and collective well-being'.

3. Overview of the Programme

Keele was the first new United Kingdom University of the 20th Century, established with degree awarding powers in 1949 as the University College of North Staffordshire. University status, as the University of Keele, followed in 1962. The University was founded to promote interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary scholarship and makes a distinctive contribution to higher education by emphasising the strength of a broad educational programme. It is the UK's largest integrated campus university and occupies a 617-acre estate, with Grade II registration by English Heritage, the central feature of which is 19th Century Keele Hall.

Keele's campus estate is one of the exceptional features of the University, and is integral to the quality of experience enjoyed by students, staff and visitors alike. A one hundred acre area of the estate, adjacent to Keele Hall, has designated conservation status confirmed by Newcastle Borough Council. Many architectural and landscape features dating from the 19th century are of regional significance. Keele has built on its pioneering campus role by maintaining the highest proportion, around 70%, of full-time students in campus residence of any university in the country. On-campus housing is also provided for a large proportion of academic staff. It is situated in outstanding countryside about two miles west of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and about six miles west of the centre of the Potteries.

Keele has an enviable record in Education. We have a TEF Gold award and have 96% graduate employability; the Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence (KIITE) brings together expertise in academic development, student learning, employability and employer engagement as well as global opportunities.

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

The Faculty consists of the following three schools: School of Allied Health Professions and Pharmacy, School of Medicine, and the School of Nursing & Midwifery. Schools are responsible for delivering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and for generating and supporting research, enterprise and knowledge exchange activities, hosting visiting academics, organising research seminars and conferences and for the training and supervision of research students.

The Faculty has a long tradition of providing professional programmes leading to registration with regulatory bodies and as such, as the social work programme benefits from cross-faculty support for different activities. In 2019 we launched Keele Deal Health setting out our commitment to work with partners in Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent, Shropshire and South Cheshire, to address local health and care priorities, whilst our strong regional networks extend across not only the West and East Midlands but also to the North West and beyond. Our geography is diverse, covering remote and rural areas of the country in addition to highly-deprived inner cities locations.

The BA Social Work programme design follows the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education: The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK degree-awarding Bodies level descriptors (QAA, 2014); UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part B1 (QAA, 2018). The programme has been mapped to the Social Work England standards (SWE) (2020 and 2021), QAA Subject Benchmark Statement Social Work (QAA, 2019) and the British Association of Social Workers Professional Capabilities Framework (BASW) (2018).

The School of Medicine at Keele University enjoys an excellent reputation in both education and research and embraces a multidisciplinary approach to health and social care education. In addition to Social Work the School offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes including Counselling and Psychotherapy, Medicine, Physician Associate, Public Health and Paramedic Science.

The BA Social Work programme has been developed for prospective students wishing to obtain a recognised initial qualification in social work at undergraduate level and who want to work in a variety of social work organisations upon successful completion of the course and successful registration with the relevant national or regulatory body. In collaboration with statutory, voluntary and independent social work agencies who deliver services to young people and adults, the course seeks to produce safe, effective, critically reflective and able social workers. Students who successfully achieve all the programme requirements are eligible to apply for registration with Social Work England (SWE) and may subsequently work in a range of organisations providing social work services.

Complex social issues require multi-faceted approaches, and the course rises to this challenge by promoting social work practice, inter-disciplinary knowledge, learning, and intervention. Students must demonstrate commitment to professional social work practice, with the necessary capability and ongoing suitability to develop knowledge and skills.

The programme provides a rich learning experience based on a recognition of the importance of equality, human, political, and socio-economic rights, thus equipping graduates with the tools to undertake professional social work practice. Culturally sensitive practice competencies are promoted and enhanced through learning opportunities and practice experiences.

As a teaching and research led institution, the BA Social Work programme at Keele meets the aims of the University 'by providing innovative, high-quality education for students from all backgrounds and by undertaking

research that transforms understanding and brings benefit to society, communities and individuals'. Social work at Keele fosters 'a culture of engagement, inclusion and cohesion that allows a progressive view of the world to flourish and gives our students and graduates the skills and opportunities to thrive' (Keele 'Our Future' Strategic Mission, 2020: 8).

The principal philosophy of the programme is to create a community of learners who are committed to developing a reflexive approach to their own personal and professional development. Based upon scholarship, professional and ethical practice, the programme will enable participants to critically examine a wide range of contemporary social work issues relating to their future practice as social workers.

4. Aims of the programme

The aims of the programme are to develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and values that underpin contemporary social work practice and enable you to develop the techniques of analysis and enquiry within the discipline of social work.

You will acquire decision-making skills to enable you to undertake evidence based social work practice in partnership with people with lived experience and colleagues. The programme will enable you to develop the competencies required for autonomous practice in a diverse range of social care settings; offered full-time over 3 years and providing substantive professional placement experiences. The professional placement component of the degree will normally be in at least one statutory social work organisation in order to meet regulatory body requirements and to more fully prepare students for practice upon graduation.

The broad aims of the programme are to:

- Develop autonomous social workers who are able to practice effectively in a range of settings, and able to foster a professional approach to lifelong learning.
- Provide a high quality educational experience which ensures that all students are able to address and critically engage with the formal knowledge base underpinning Social Work practice.
- Prepare students to be fit for employment as a contemporary social worker in a range of organisations through the development of key, specific and transferable skill.
- Facilitate students to learn the importance of multi-agency working, including the value of professional judgment and reasoning in complex areas of social work practice, while meeting service user needs.
- Enable students to achieve the requirements, capabilities and professional standards set by Social Work England and the British Association of Social Workers.
- Encourage the acquisition of new knowledge and competencies through the integration of evidence based practice and research into contemporary social work practice.
- Develop the knowledge, skills and values required for effective anti-discriminatory practice in a diverse society.
- Develop students' resilience and intellectual qualities so that they are able to respond effectively to changes in society and social work practice.
- Prepare students for employment and lay the foundations for continuing professional development.

5. What you will learn

By the end of this qualifying programme, you as a newly qualified social worker, will have demonstrated capabilities in applying social work approaches with a range of service user groups, the ability to undertake a range of tasks and social work interventions at a foundation level and evidenced the capacity to work effectively with more complex situations. These capabilities will have been demonstrated through the last placement together with the final assessment of other work in the qualifying programme such as skills.

Preparation for social work practice involves development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, professional behaviours and competence. Content is driven by Social Work England's Qualifying Education and Training Standards (SWE 2021), SWE Professional Standards (2020) and QAA Academic and Practitioner Standards for Social Work (QAA 2019). On successful completion of the BA Social Work, you will have achieved the required standards to apply for registration with Social Work England by meeting their Professional Standards (2021):

1. Promote the rights, strengths and wellbeing of people, families and communities
2. Establish and maintain the trust and confidence of people
3. Be accountable for the quality of my practice and the decisions I make
4. Maintain my continuing professional development
5. Act safely, respectfully and with professional integrity
6. Promote ethical practice and report concerns

In addition, students will be expected to achieve the requirements of the BASW Professional Capabilities

Framework (end of second placement). By the end of the final placement and successful completion of the programme students will have developed knowledge, skills and ability in relation to all nine domains in the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework:

1. **Professionalism**
2. **Values and Ethics**
3. **Diversity and Equality**
4. **Rights, Justice and Economic Wellbeing**
5. **Knowledge**
6. **Critical Reflection and Analysis**
7. **Skills and Interventions**
8. **Contexts and Organisations**
9. **Professional Leadership**

These will be introduced, developed and enhanced via specific modules carrying different amounts of credits (see table later in this document) over the course of the programme, as well as through tutorial support to encourage an holistic approach to professional and academic development. The curriculum also facilitates the progression from novice to advanced beginner to competent practitioner (Benner, 2001; Benner, 2009) with a clear progression in terms of understanding and managing complexity and uncertainty and with an emphasis upon research-minded practice throughout.

You will learn from experiential opportunities based in social work practice and be supported by a Practice Educator on placement who supports you to evidence the PCF. Our programme utilises informal and formal supervision to offer a range of learning and teaching strategies to develop understanding and professional competence. Whilst on placement you will also have access to a University Academic Mentor for further support and guidance as well as support in University recall sessions throughout your placement. Here we will develop the Keele graduate attributes of 'ability and motivation to participate responsibly and collaboratively as an active citizen in the communities in which you live and work' and 'flexibility to thrive in rapidly changing and uncertain external environments and to update skills and knowledge as circumstances require'. Small group tutorials will support the integration of theory and practice and offer peer-peer learning and sharing of experiences in order offer further support and also further learning opportunities as well as modelling group supervision experiences in practice.

Subject specific skills

Social work education and training at Keele is based on the principles and practice of anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice and lawful, effective practice. Equality of opportunity also applies to student life as well as the curriculum and course philosophy. Students can expect to be treated fairly and with respect at Keele University and our programme will establish and develop the basis for an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice in social work by ensuring that all students:

- develop a critical awareness of the processes of structural oppression and how this results in inequality in the context of race, class and gender;
- develop knowledge and skills to counteract the impact of stigma and discrimination;
- demonstrate a critical awareness of both individual and institutional racism and ways to combat anti-racist practice;
- develop an understanding and application of anti-sexism in social work practice;
- identify and respond to the need for and seek to promote policies and practices which are non-discriminatory and anti-oppressive;
- have knowledge of the cultural, political, linguistic and economic factors which affect service individuals in relation to social, community and family structures.
- demonstrate ethnically sensitive practice and prepares students to combat institutional oppression and discrimination.
- a sound understanding of the impact and complexity of intersectionality in regards to multiple forms of discrimination and oppression.

Readiness for Practice

To prepare you for professional practice you will learn the knowledge, core skills and values in order to work collaboratively with colleagues and engage effectively with service users and carers. You will be expected to demonstrate the following capabilities via completed assessments prior to commencing your first placement: meeting any conditions of entry to the programme (e.g. where DBS or health check is outstanding), initial level of professional conduct, appropriate communication skills, ability to engage with service users, capacity to work as a member of an organisation, willingness to learn from feedback and supervision, and demonstrate basic social work values, knowledge, theories and skills to be able to make effective use of your first practice placement (SWE, 2021 and BASW, 2018). The capabilities described provide the foundation and rationale for good quality practice and how social workers should always explain and be accountable for their actions (BASW, 2018).

The Keele Graduate Attributes

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

6. How is the programme taught?

Learning and teaching methods used on the programme vary according to the subject matter and level of the module, both insitu and through online learning. They include the following:

- **Lectures** - in which the lecturer provides students with a framework for reading and independent study, and summaries of current social work knowledge; there will be use of audio or video presentations. Some lectures may feature guest speakers, particularly with those with experience of social work practice or the experience of using social work services.
- **Tutorials** - provide opportunities for students to ask questions about, and suggest answers to, social work problems in a responsible way, and to present their own ideas to members of staff and other students using an appropriate medium of communication.
- **Guest and specialist workshops** - provide extended opportunities for students to develop their knowledge of current practice or particular issues of relevance to social work practice.
- **Interactive learning** - which comprises activities such as group exercises, role play and simulation exercises, and discussions. These various forms of interactive learning provide opportunities for students to express their own opinions and develop an appreciation of other perspectives, discuss their own knowledge and experience, engage in the exploration and application of ideas and knowledge, develop professional skills and interact with the lecturer.
- **Independent study** - will be required in each module; some study will be guided by tutors where necessary, but will also be self-directed depending upon the various demands of each module and its assessment.
- **Skills Workshops** - provide students with the opportunity to develop and rehearse a range of appropriate and relevant skills. Skills workshops are organised and delivered by members of the academic staff, registered social workers, practice educators and people who use services.
- **Learning in the practice environment** (practice experience) where you are able to develop your practice and professional skills under the supervision of allocated practice educator(s).
- **Report** - in the final year students will have the opportunity to engage with, critique social work research.
- **Web-based learning using the Keele Virtual Learning Environment (KLE)**: this medium is used by all modules and provides a platform for students to share online discussions and to access a wide range of learning resources. In addition, applications such as Microsoft Teams and web-based audience feedback systems are used to support and monitor learning. Content capture and videos are also important adjuncts that are available to support your learning.

In addition to formal teaching sessions, there are opportunities for students to meet with their Academic Mentor to discuss their progress and any concerns they may have.

7. Teaching Staff

Teaching staff will normally have Social Work England (or equivalent UK Care Council) registration as a social worker and have extensive experience as social work practitioners or leaders in practice. Academics from other Departments and Schools who contribute to the programme are registered with the appropriate regulatory or professional body. The majority of staff also have membership of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) or are working towards this, with some also holding National Teaching Award/Fellowship status too. Social work academics have experience of teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level and some are experienced external examiners at other universities. Staff are actively encouraged to hold honorary contracts (or equivalent in-kind or knowledge exchange arrangements) with social work provider organisations and to utilise this to ensure they remain updated with contemporary issues within their own field.

The School has a number of staff who hold PhDs and Professional Doctorates or are studying at doctoral level and/or whom have published widely. The School has a robust professional development strategy, which includes an annual research and scholarship programme, alongside annual appraisal and personal development planning which incorporates professional as well as academic development aspects.

Honorary lecturers, visiting lecturers and leading practitioners and practitioners are integral to the delivery of modules within the programme and are utilised where appropriate to enhance the student experience and to provide practitioners with the experience of working with student groups too.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's delivery (SWE requirements will continue to be met through quality monitoring processes). The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

8. What is the structure of the Programme?

The academic year runs from September to June and is divided into two semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from programme to programme, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between the end of September and mid-December, and from mid-January to the end of April. On professional courses such as this, the vacation and examination periods around the December/January and March/April standard breaks may be reduced to accommodate all placement and academic requirements.

The structure of the programme has been designed to support students' gradual transition from education to employment on completion of the programme.

Our degree courses are organised into modules. Each module is usually delivered as a self-contained unit of study and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. This is supported by a sequence of group and individual tutorials that will support students to integrate learning across modules. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided in the tables below.

All modules within your programme are compulsory, that is, you are required to study them.

Modern Language modules: You are able to take up to 60 credits across your degree programme as Faculty Funded additional Modern Language modules in order to graduate with the Enhanced Degree Title. [Please see [link](#) for more information on Enhanced degree titles.]

A summary of the credit requirements per year is identified below, with a minimum of 120 subject credits required for each year.

Year	Compulsory	Optional	
		Min	Max
Level 4	120	0	0
Level 5	120	0	0
Level 6	120	0	0

Module Lists

Level 4

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Life Course Development	SWK-10036	30	Semester 1
Social Justice, Ethics and Values	SWK-10024	30	Semester 1-3
Introduction to Professional Learning and Development	SWK-10040	30	Semester 1-3
Introduction to Law, Policy and Safeguarding	SWK-10034	30	Semester 2

Level 4 Module Rules

All assessment elements of all modules must be passed to progress to the second year of the programme.

Level 5

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Understanding Contemporary Society: Key concepts	SWK-20022	15	Semester 1-2
Social Work Practice Placement (1): Practice, Theory and Methods	SWK-20026	30	Semester 1-2
Children and Families Social Work	SWK-20012	30	Semester 2-3
Social Work with Adults	SWK-20016	30	Semester 2-3
Research Mindedness	SWK-20024	15	Semester 2-3

Level 6

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Authority, Leadership and Partnership in Social Work	SWK-30032	30	Semester 1-2
Research for Social Work: Individual Project	SWK-30034	30	Semester 1-2
Contemporary Social Work Practice: Issues and approaches	SWK-30036	15	Semester 1-2
Social Work Practice Placement (2): Practice, Ethics and Critical Approaches	SWK-30038	45	Semester 1-2

9. Final and intermediate awards

Credits required for each level of academic award are as follows:

Honours Degree in Social Work	360 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at levels 4, 5 and 6 and must successfully complete the practice training and placement modules. Graduates of the BA (Hons) Social Work are eligible to apply for registration with Social Work England and on successful registration are entitled to practice Social Work in England. If you are not able to achieve any of the practice training or placement components you may be eligible for the award of Diploma in Higher Education. This award does NOT confer eligibility to apply for registration with Social Work England and recipients are not entitled to use the title of Social Worker.
Diploma in Higher Education	240 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher and at least 120 credits at level 5 or higher and must successfully complete the practice training and placement module. If you are not able to achieve any of the practice training or placement components you may be eligible for the award of Certificate in Higher Education. This award does NOT confer eligibility to apply for registration with Social Work England and recipients are not entitled to use the title of Social Worker.
Certificate in Higher Education	120 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher. This award does NOT confer eligibility to apply for registration with Social Work England and recipients are not entitled to use the title of Social Worker.

The programme is designed to educate student social workers. Consequently, the expectation is that you will complete the full programme of study obtaining 360 credits and so be awarded the BA (Hons) Social Work. As a student you usually accumulate 120 credits per academic year. If you leave the programme before completing 360 credits you may be eligible for an alternative award.

Should you not achieve the award of BA (Hons) Social Work you will not be eligible for registration with the SWE and so will not be able to practise as a Social Worker. You may be eligible for an interim award, but should be aware that any such award will not contain the term 'social work' or "Social Worker".

Social workers must complete an approved programme of study in order to be eligible to apply for professional registration and use the title 'Social Worker' as it is a legally protected title. Successful completion of the BA (Hons) Social Work programme will offer eligibility to apply for SWE registration, successful SWE application then offers entitlement to practise in England as a Social Worker and may be recognised in a reciprocal or equivalent manner by other national or regulatory bodies in other countries.

10. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme and also align with professional skills. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

- **Written work/assignments** test the quality and application of subject knowledge. In addition, they allow you to demonstrate your ability to carry out basic literature searches, communicate your ideas effectively in writing and support your arguments with appropriate referencing. Written pieces vary in their length depending upon the module.
- **Examinations** test students' understanding of legal processes and specific legislation that relates to social

work practice. Examinations may be 'seen', where the essay questions are seen in advance of the examination, or 'unseen' where questions are drawn from module themes but the students do not know the questions in advance of the examination. The examinations may be online or in situ.

- **Reflective assignments** enable you to develop your skills of reflective learning and practice and support portfolio development. These are fundamental skills used by all health and social care professionals as part of their continuing professional development.
- **Verbal presentations/verbal examinations** assess your subject knowledge and understanding. They may also be used to test your ability to work effectively as a member of a team, to communicate what you know orally and visually, and to reflect on these processes as part of your own personal development.
- **Practice placement assessment** is undertaken via completion of a professional placement in statutory and non-statutory placement areas. You will be undertake supervised practice with service users and carers and will be required to demonstrate your ability to meet Social Work England Professional Standards by the end of the course and demonstrate capability linked to the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework at the appropriate level. Assessments linked to the placements will directly help to prepare you for qualified practice. When undertaking placements, students receive ongoing feedback and support from a suitably qualified practice educator and/or work-based supervisor. The practice educator provides a written report at the end of each practice learning opportunity, evaluating the work the student has undertaken and makes recommendations for future learning needs.
- **Portfolios** may consist of a range of different pieces of work but routinely include a requirement that students provide some evidence of critical reflection on the development of their own learning.

Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also usually provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

The assessment strategy aims to include a range of assessment modes that will serve to recognise the strengths of students with different life and work experiences. Assessment points have been designed to provide continuous feed forward and feedback so that students gain a deep understanding as to the requirements pertaining to each professional development theme. Assessment points are dispersed throughout the learning experience and have been mapped to Social Work England's requirements, QAA level 4 - 6 requirements and the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework at each level from pre-entry to final placement in order to encourage student engagement throughout the programme.

Formative Assessment Methods

The value of formative assessment in higher education is well documented and evidenced. Primarily, formative assessment methods are adopted in this programme to empower learners and encourage self-regulated learning and reflection. Tutorial support and formative feedback will be available to support students as they develop within their learning.

[1] Summative assessment - the assessment of student performance against a standard where a final mark is awarded.

[2] Formative assessment - informal assessment processes designed to provide feedback to students to improve their learning.

11. Contact Time and Expected Workload

This contact time measure is intended to provide you with an indication of the type of activity you are likely to undertake during this programme. The data is compiled based on learning patterns of students on similar programmes in previous years. Every effort is made to ensure this data is a realistic representation of what you are likely to experience, but changes to programmes, teaching methods and assessment methods mean this data is representative and not specific.

The figures below are an example of activities that a student may expect on your chosen course by year stage of study.

Contact time includes scheduled activities such as: lecture, seminar, tutorial, project supervision, practical classes, workshops, practice placements and external visits.

The figures are based on a norm of 1,200 hours of student effort each year for full-time students. However, on professional courses, students can reasonably expect additional hours to be required due to the length and nature of placements.

Activity

	Scheduled learning and teaching activities	Guided independent Study	Placements
Year 1 (Level 4)	29.7%	68.6%	1.8%
Year 2 (Level 5)	16.9%	54.1%	29%
Year 3 (Level 6)	21%	40.5%	38.5%

12. Accreditation

The updated programme was approved by Social Work England in April 2022.

In order to use the title 'Social Worker' a practitioner must be registered with SWE. Graduates of this programme are eligible to apply for registration with Social Work England (SWE). Registration with SWE, or the relevant Care Council in Scotland, NI or Wales, is a pre-requisite for employment as a Social Worker in the UK.

The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) is an overarching professional standards framework, updated in August 2018 by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW), which sets out consistent expectations of social workers at every stage in their career.. This programme has been designed to support the development and assessment of all domains of the PCF at the appropriate level. Link: [Professional Capabilities Framework \(PCF\)](#)

Module Selection: All modules are compulsory.

Regulations: Your programme has professional accreditation and there are course specific regulations, which you have to agree to abide by (see the Annex titled 'Programme-specific regulations').

13. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

14. Other Learning Opportunities

You may have the opportunity to engage in some wider curriculum activities such as conferences, BASW seminars and theatre workshops. A contribution from the School towards the costs incurred in these ventures may be available and will be considered on an individual basis. Such opportunities occur outside the normal timetabled programme; thus will require a commitment of time on your part.

15. Additional Costs

During the programme there may be some additional mandatory costs:

Activity	Estimated Cost
Enhanced DBS Clearance (estimated £49.20) and annual update (£13 per year)*	c.£90.80
Travel from home to placements	varies depending upon location

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Clearance for an enhanced DBS check is mandatory. Students will be provided with instructions on how to apply

for a DBS check, including a link to apply via a company called UCheck. There is also an online DBS update service to sign up for once the DBS certificate has been received, which allows employers to check DBS status and lets students keep their DBS certificates up to date online.

*The current costs for a DBS check are detailed on the additional costs webpage:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/tuitionfeesandfunding/undergraduatetuitionfees/additionalcosts>

These costs have been forecast by the University as accurately as possible but may be subject to change as a result of factors outside our control (for example, increase in costs for external services). Forecast costs are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain representative. Where additional costs are in direct control of the University we will ensure increases do not exceed 5%. As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

Placement Travel Costs

Students will be required to undertake a minimum of 170 days of practice-based learning, split as follows: Year 2, 70 days; Year 3, 100 days.

Every effort will be made to allocate a placement experience close to your term time address, but this may not always be possible. Therefore, you may have to travel some distance to undertake your placements (up to 1.5 hours each way especially in rural areas in particular) which will incur some costs. If you are in receipt of a bursary this will include an element to contribute to travel costs for placements. If you do not receive a bursary you may be able to apply for the NHS Social Work Placement Travel Allowance, if you meet the eligibility criteria as set out by the NHS BSA.

Students who are in receipt of the social work bursary/travel allowance currently receive an element worked into the bursary each year towards the cost of travel to and from placement. Many agencies also pay work-based travel expenses within the placement.

If a student is required to undertake a repeat placement for any reason, the same costs above apply. In addition, a further DBS Disclosure may be required and the cost of this is borne by the student. In addition, no guarantee regarding ongoing bursary support can be made given the usual ineligibility of students for repeat placement funding according to NHSBSA rules.

16. Annex - Programme-specific regulations

Programme Regulations: BA (Hons) Social Work

Final Award and Award Titles	Honours Degree in Social Work
Intermediate Award(s)	Diploma in Higher Education Certificate in Higher Education
Last modified	July 2025: DBS and OH information added September 2025: Repeat year text clarification (Variation 2)
Programme Specification	https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmespecifications

The University's Academic Regulations which can be found on the Keele University website (<https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/>)[1] apply to and regulate the programme, other than in instances where the specific programme regulations listed below over-ride them. These programme regulations list:

- *Exemptions* which are characterised by the omission of the relevant regulation.
- *Variations* which are characterised by the replacement of part of the regulation with alternative wording.
- *Additional Requirements* which set out what additional rules that apply to students in relation to this programme.

The following **exemptions**, **variations** and **additional requirements** to the University regulations have been checked by Academic Services and have been approved by the Faculty Education Committee.

A) EXEMPTIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where an exemption from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

For the whole duration of their studies, students on this Programme are exempt from the following regulations:

- **No exemptions apply.**

B) VARIATIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where a variation from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

Variation 1: This programme varies from regulation D5 in that students must successfully complete all assessments in all modules and there will be no compensation/ condonement in any module.

Variation 2: University Regulation D2 (1.1.4, 1.2.4 and 1.6.4) - From the Academic Year 2023/24 onwards, the following will apply: the repeat year options outlined in the regulation will be subject to approval by the Progression and Award Board. In making decisions, the Progression and Award Board will offer repeat options based on the prospect of the student progressing or completing the failed modules or assessments. Students with approved exceptional circumstances will be granted repeat options, subject to the caveat noted below. For students without approved exceptional circumstances, Progression and Award Boards will take the following into account when making decisions: students must have achieved a module mark on all failed modules within 10 percentage points of the module pass mark and/or demonstrated engagement with their studies through an attendance record of at least 80% (not including reported absences) to be eligible for a repeat year option. If it is identified that additional support is required, students will be guided towards the Support to Study process.

Where a repeat year or module option requires a clinical placement, this option may be deferred depending on placement capacity and students may be required by the Progression and Award Board to take a leave of absence until such time that the placements can be undertaken.

Additional Requirements

The programme requirements listed below are in addition to the University's Academic Regulations:

Additional requirement 1: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Clearance for an enhanced DBS check is mandatory on this programme. Students will be provided with instructions on how to apply for a DBS check, including a link to apply via a company called UCheck. Students must also sign up to the online DBS update service once the DBS certificate has been received.

Any student who has not completed the DBS application and sign up process, or who has not made the Programme Team, Student Support, Admissions Team aware of any Exceptional Circumstances, by the first working day in November (for September start programmes) or the first working day in March (for January start programmes) will be in breach of regulation B8 (11.1) in relation to providing incomplete information during the application process, and will enter the formal termination of studies process.

Additional requirement 2: Social Work England require that academic regulations for the approved BA Social Work programme are appropriate. As such they may be more stringent than University norms in some areas in order to ensure safe and effective social work practice.

Additional requirement 3: As a professionally regulated programme the BA Social Work and its students are subject to the Fitness to Practise regulation (Regulation B5) and Health and Conduct processes if required. Further details of these can be found in the programme handbook. References to University Regulations in this document apply to the content of the University's Regulatory Framework as set out on the University website here <https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/>.

Additional requirement 4: Prior to undertaking their first placement experience, all students must be approved by the Readiness to Practise Panel. For approval to be confirmed all elements of the readiness to practise module (SWK-10040) must be successfully completed and the student must have an approved enhanced DBS certificate for both adults and children's social work. This additional requirement is needed to comply with regulatory requirements.

Additional requirement 5: Attendance

Due to the professional nature of this course, students are expected to attend and engage in all scheduled learning sessions. Whilst we understand that there may occasionally be valid reasons why students cannot attend, apologies to the module lead responsible for the session will be expected in line with professional standards of courtesies and learning missed will need to be made up. Where attendance drops below an acceptable standard on academic modules (with 'acceptable' usually being 80% of sessions), regardless of circumstances, students will be required to engage in appropriate learning activities to be confirmed by the relevant module lead in order to ensure no gaps in essential knowledge. Where placement days are missed for any reason, they must be made up before the placement ends in order to ensure that the required number of days are completed. In addition, any skills days missed for any reason must be made up in consultation with the relevant module lead. Whilst all appropriate efforts will be made to support students who may be struggling to attend and/or engage with taught sessions, where absence presents professional concerns, the Programme Director may decide to refer the student to either Fitness to Practise processes or Health and Conduct processes as appropriate.

Additional requirement 6: Student Additional Placement Requirement

An additional placement may be required where you:

- Fail your PSRB capabilities in a planned placement and an additional placement is required to support your regulatory standard attainment
- are outstanding skills and capabilities to support your programme progression.
- are outstanding your required PSRB capabilities to support professional registration.
- are outstanding PSRB work based practice days to support your course completion and professional registration. (**N.B.** this list is not exhaustive)

The following guidance applies to any circumstances where an additional placement is required.

Work Based Placement Provision

Work based placements are provided by Local Authorities, NHS Trust and Private Voluntary and/or Independent Organisations (PVIO) for programmes in FMHS. All Local Authorities, NHS Trust/organisation providers manage and coordinate their own work based student placements for all learners. This is done through liaison with the university.

Work Based Placement Pathway

Each university has a planned work based placement pathway for every student cohort group completing PSRB training and education programmes. This is to ensure that you meet all the professional practice capabilities and requirements for your programme of study. The planned work based placement pathway is agreed with the university.

Additional Work Based Placements

Should you need an additional work based placement, outside of the agreed placement pathway, the university would need to liaise closely with the educational team for the relevant Local Authority, NHS Trust/PVIO organisation provider. An additional placement request would need to be made.

Additional Work Based Placement Considerations

The ability to accommodate you with an additional placement outside of the normal placement pathway, is dependent upon several variables. For example, the number of mentors, practice assessors/educators, available in placement areas to support your learning and assessment and the numbers of student learners already situated in planned placements from other cohort groups and or other universities. The above factors sit mostly outside of the university's sphere of control.

Additional Work Based Placement Requests

If you require an additional work based placement, this will be requested and managed by the School's Placement Team (at the point at which the team are informed that additional placements for students are required and numbers are known). For social work courses, these placements are located by the placement coordinator, and in counselling by you with quality assurance checks undertaken by the relevant academic staff member

Additional Work Based Placements Timings

There may be times when it is not possible to secure an additional placement at the point at which you require an additional placement, and some organisations may not be able to offer any additional placements for you outside of the university agreed plans. You may therefore need to wait until a suitable placement opportunity becomes available within a Local Authority, NHS or PVIO provider organisation and the organisation is able to accommodate your additional placement request.

Additional Work Based Placement Progression Delay

Additional placement opportunities may not occur for you again until the next cohort group undertakes the equivalent placement experience in the next academic year. The need for any additional placements may lead to a delay which may affect your ability to continue to progress on programme with your cohort group.

Additional Work Based Placement Travel and Accommodation

Your school will make every effort to secure you an additional placement, however, this may mean that you will be expected to make informed decisions and take responsibility about travel, accommodation, and financial subsistence when the additional placement area secured is not within the normal placement pathway. The decision you will need to make will be between continuing with your current cohort group or delaying your progression on programme.

Programme Progression

Where your programme progression or course completion end date is impacted, it is important for you to seek advice and guidance from your programme specific Academic Mentor or Student Support Services, and if applicable your School International Director. Delays in your progression may have consequences for your professional registration and employment/financial/accommodation offers, visas, and or other contractual arrangements.

[1] References to University Regulations in this document apply to the content of the University's Regulatory Framework as set out on the University website here <https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/>.

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 16 September 2025

What's Changed

Repeat options wording clarified

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1.3	2025/26	CATH HOLMSTROM	22 August 2025	Programme specific regulations updated.
1.2	2025/26	CATH HOLMSTROM	21 August 2025	Additional costs and Annex - programme specific regulation sections updated.
1.1	2025/26	CATH HOLMSTROM	07 July 2025	Updated information relating to DBS and Occupational Health requirements added to the programme-specific regulations annex
1	2025/26	CATH HOLMSTROM	19 March 2025	
1	2024/25	CATH HOLMSTROM	31 May 2024	Additional placement requirements added to the programme-specific regulations in the Annex (Additional requirement 6)
2	2023/24	KIM SARGEANT	13 March 2024	Variation added to the regulations section regarding repeat options
1	2023/24	CATH HOLMSTROM	07 March 2023	
1	2022/23	CATH HOLMSTROM	21 January 2022	
1	2021/22	CLAIRE CARTWRIGHT	25 March 2021	
3	2020/21	KAREN ROSCOE		
2	2020/21	CLAIRE CARTWRIGHT		Please add
1	2020/21	KIM SARGEANT	04 February 2020	
2	2019/20	CLAIRE CARTWRIGHT		Please add
1	2019/20	EDWARD MCCAULEY	26 July 2019	