

MA in Social Care

For students entering in October 2009

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Social Policy and Administration and Social Work
Faculty:	Social Sciences
Programme length:	Minimum 1 Year (part-time)
Date of specification:	15 th July 2009
Programme Director:	Prof. Jan Keene
Programme Adviser:	Dr. Lidiya Godina
Board of Studies:	Postgraduate PQ and Social Work
Accreditation:	No professional accreditation

Summary of programme aims

Building on the 120 credits acquired through the Postgraduate Diploma in either Social Work, Leadership and Management (PPTLMSWKD) or Social Work with Children and Young People and their Families and Carers (PPTSWCYPD) (PQ Higher Specialist Awards), this programme aims to enable successful candidates to gain an MA in Social Care by completing a dissertation in their area of research interest. By the end of this programme students will be able to plan, conduct and write up a research project of MA standard.

Transferable skills

Students will be qualified social workers with a wide range of skills and learning needs that would have further developed to a higher level. These skills will be in keeping with the University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning and will include educational and research skills, interpersonal, leadership, collaborative working, reflection in practice and critical analysis. As a part of their Postgraduate Diploma Students would also have had the opportunity to further extend their skills to career management, written and oral communication, information management, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology. It is expected that students will have transferred these skills to their practice setting.

Programme content

This part of the programme focuses exclusively on the completion of a dissertation. This requires independent study and regular tutorials with an appointed Research Supervisor. The supervision process will be supported by the use of Blackboard, and through School dissertation workshops.

Progression requirements

The expectation is that students will attend this programme on a part-time basis and complete the award in a minimum of 1 year. Upon successful completion of their dissertation, students will be eligible to receive an MA in Social Care.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Students will be expected to work independently in conducting their research. They will also benefit from the support offered by their research supervisor. The supervision process will be supported by the use of Blackboard and workshops held by the School for all dissertation students. Students will be assessed through a dissertation.

Programme classification

This award will not be classified.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this Programme are normally required to have:

- 1) The Postgraduate Diploma in either Social Work, Leadership and Management (PPTLMSWKD) or Social Work with Children and Young People and their Families and Carers (PPTSWCYPD), PQ Higher Specialist Awards;
- 2) A mark of 60% or higher in the HCMQ03 Research Methods module for Social Work, or equivalent; and,
- 3) Sufficient motivation to work independently to ensure that they can complete their research effectively.

Admissions Tutor: Prof. Jan Keene

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme.

Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online (www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk), or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student Diary (given to students at enrolment) or on the Student website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

A range of appropriate professional journals are available at the Bulmershe Library. Students will also have access to 'Blackboard', a managed learning environment, which offers a web based learning resource. This will be utilised to support learning on all modules and promote support and communication between students, and university staff. Interactive white boards are used in the classroom environment to offer innovative approaches to learning and teaching.

Career prospects

Evidence of continuing professional development is a requirement for the renewal of professional registration for qualified social workers. This qualification will provide evidence of student commitment to their continuing professional development. It is anticipated that it will also have a beneficial impact on their career progression.

Opportunities for study abroad

There are no arrangements for study abroad on this programme.

Placements

Placement does not form a part of this qualification.

Educational aims of the programme

This programme is intended to develop informed and critical practitioners who will be committed to the improvement of social work standards. Continuing academic and professional development will be promoted to enable students to attain higher-level research skills combined with the knowledge required for excellence in social care practice.

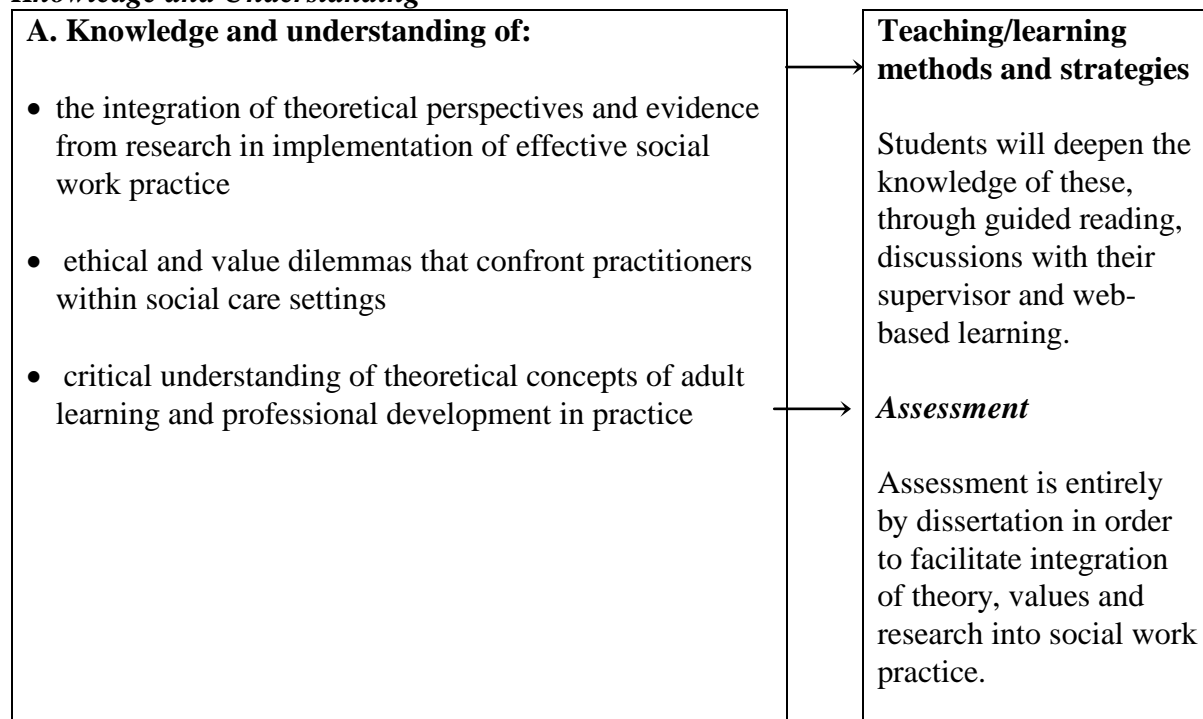
Subject Benchmarking

Close attention has been given to the Social Work benchmark statement in designing the programme outcomes in such a way as to enable practitioners to have “contextual” as well as “analytic, explanatory and practical understanding of their work” (2000 *Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education*, p 12).

Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding



Skills and other attributes

<p>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• select, critically appraise and evaluate sources of evidence within their own field of practice• demonstrate and exercise the ability to analyse and synthesise information and to demonstrate independence of thought• be sensitive to the values and interests of self and others• Propose research questions with a sound rationale, and draw on appropriate research methods for their investigation	<p>→</p> <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Research students will be undertaking is designed to promote evaluative and critical thinking and encourage independence of thought.</p> <p>Students will be supported to use the library effectively, and to search information databases.</p> <p>→</p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>Dissertation.</p>
<p>C. Practical skills – able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• design a research project pertinent to student's area of interest• collect data• analyse data• communicate their conclusion clearly	<p>→</p> <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Individual supervision is ongoing in order to assist the student to conduct their own research project.</p> <p>Students will be supported to use the library effectively, and to search information databases.</p> <p>→</p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>Dissertation.</p>
<p>D. Transferable skills – able to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• independent learning in order to facilitate continuing professional development• initiative and personal responsibility• effective time management skills	<p>→</p> <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>These skills will be fostered through one to one discussions.</p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>Dissertation.</p> <p>→</p>

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.