SOCIAL WORK

Medway
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INSPIRATIONAL TEACHING

Kent is one of the UK’s leading universities and the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research – which includes Social Work – is rated highly for both research and teaching.

World-leading research
In the most recent Research Assessment Exercise, the School was ranked 4th nationally for research quality, with 70% of our research rated ‘world-leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’.

The School’s academics are actively engaged in research as well as teaching, giving you the chance to study alongside influential thinkers who are at the forefront of their field.

Passionate teaching
In the latest independent assessment of our teaching, we were rated as ‘excellent’ and our Social Work degree was ranked 8th in the UK in The Times Good University Guide 2014 and 6th in The Complete University Guide 2014.

You will be studying within a challenging and inspiring academic environment. Teaching is through a variety of methods including lectures, seminars, group tasks and workshops. Our students do not sit formal exams. Academic work is assessed through written assignments, in-class tests, presentations and video work.

Global reputation
Kent has a reputation as the UK’s European university and has developed international partnerships with a number of prestigious institutions. We have an international community on campus, with 140 different nationalities represented.

Broaden your outlook
The degree is based on the new curriculum for Social Work and allows you to gain a broad base in the key issues related to social work, such as the values and ethics that underpin social work, how social policies are formulated and put into practice, and the role of the law in social work. There are also modules that focus on specific areas of social work with children and families, with adult service users and community care. The curriculum is based on the new Professional Capabilities Framework.

Social Work is an area where it is important to consider a wide range of views and learn from others’ expertise. Service users and carers deliver sessions in modules highlighting their experiences of receiving social care services. Every year, a number of external public speakers visit the University to talk about contemporary issues and debates.
On completion, graduates will be eligible to apply to register with the Health and Care Professions Council, which regulates the profession.

Supportive academic community
The Social Work degree is very popular and we limit the number of students accepted onto the course to 60 per year so that students feel fully supported in their studies. Each student has an academic adviser to help monitor their academic progress.

Funding
Home and EU students are normally eligible for a non-means-tested Department of Health bursary of approximately £4,575 per year in the second and third year only. This includes a basic grant, an amount for placement travel expenses and a contribution towards tuition fees. Not all students will receive this bursary as there is a limit at each university to the number that can apply. For full and current details, please refer to www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk

A successful future
As well as providing a first-rate academic experience, we want you to be in a good position to face the demands of a tough economic environment.

Graduates from our Social Work degree programmes have excellent employment prospects and we ensure that they have all the transferable skills they might need. See p8 for further details.

DID YOU KNOW?
Kent is one of the top ten universities in the UK for overall student satisfaction according to the National Student Survey 2013.
SUPERB STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our modern, shared campus at Medway provides a stunning location for your studies and offers first-class academic and leisure facilities.

Historic setting
Our campus adjoins Chatham Historic Dockyard and combines many beautiful old buildings with modern interiors, offering outstanding study facilities in which the University has invested millions of pounds. There are also cafés, a shop and a student pub on campus, all of which helps to create a sense of community. The impressive Rochester Cathedral is the venue for the University’s degree congregations.

Excellent study resources
The University’s general study resources are excellent. The £8 million Drill Hall Library is well-stocked with books, journals and a range of electronic information, and students also have access to the Templeman Library on the Canterbury campus. You have access to one-to-one support from expert librarians, and to a range of IT equipment, including public PCs and printers. In addition to well-equipped teaching rooms and study spaces, you have the support of the Student Learning Advisory Service.

Diverse environment
Our students come from a variety of backgrounds, ages and countries. This mix means you learn not only from your lecturers, but also from the experiences of your peers.

Live by the riverside
If you join Kent as a full-time student, you could be living in an attractive new ‘waterside village’ on the banks of the River Medway. Our student flats are part of a multimillion-pound investment and have modern fully-fitted kitchens and en-suite study bedrooms linked to the University’s computer system.

Good location
The Medway campus is ideally located with easy access to two of the world’s greatest cities: London and Paris. The high-speed train service from Ebbsfleet International to London St Pancras takes less than 20 minutes. The service from Chatham station to London Victoria or London Charing Cross takes only 45 minutes. Trains from Ebbsfleet International arrive in Paris in around two hours.

In addition, the Medway area offers a dry ski slope and toboggan run, an ice rink and a karting circuit. Kent students can also use the state-of-the-art sports centre, Medway Park, at discounted rates.
Sally Lunnun is in her final year of a Social Work degree.

What attracted you to studying Social Work at Kent?
With a professional background in early years and childcare, I’ve had a long-standing interest in social work. A change in my personal circumstances and the availability of student funding meant I was able to give up my job to pursue full-time study. Kent was top of my list because of the excellent reputation of the Social Work degree offered here and the convenience of the campus location.

How is your course going?
It’s been an amazing journey, which has involved careful juggling of my work and family life. But I’ve loved every minute of it. Although I’m looking forward to starting a new chapter of my life as a qualified social worker, I will really miss my university days.

How would you describe your lecturers?
They have all been fantastic. On the Social Work programme, you are taught by the people who have written the books you are reading. They have made a big impact on my learning.

What do you think about the level of support in your studies?
The support has been great. The tutors are always around to listen if you have any questions about your work. We also have the support of the Student Learning Advisory Service, which runs workshops on topics such as essay writing, and there’s careers help available on everything from CV writing to interviews.

Which modules have you enjoyed the most?
The Social Work with Children and Families module has definitely been a highlight for me because I have a passion for this area. I also liked the law and social policy modules because I’m interested in policy and legislation. But there hasn’t been a single module I haven’t enjoyed and I’ve learned so much from all of them.

What about your fellow students?
I have made some good friends on the course who will now be friends for life. We all support each other with our work, too, which has been really helpful.

Have you completed any work placements?
One of the requirements to become a qualified social worker is to complete two work placements. For my Year 2 placement, I worked in the area of domestic abuse, where I learned to carry out risk assessments. This is specialist training you don’t normally receive as part of your degree so it has been invaluable. I’m now working with Medway’s duty child protection team for my Year 3 placement, which is exactly what I want to do. It’s a challenging job, but I’m absolutely loving it.

What are the facilities like on campus?
I worked a lot in the library in my first year and, in terms of resources, it’s always well stocked. I’ve never had a problem finding what I need.

What about the social life?
There’s a lot going on. Coopers bar always has something on and we regularly receive emails about organised student social events off-campus.

What’s next for you?
I’ve already been offered a post with Medway’s Children and Families team which was my ultimate goal so I’m in a really fortunate position. However, I’ve worked really hard to get here – I feel very proud of what I’ve achieved.

How have your studies prepared you for this role?
I think the course at Kent has fully prepared me to become a competent, emotionally intelligent social worker. You learn the theory and methods as well as the reflective skills critical to social work in order to tease out the issues in practice. That’s important not only for your work but also your well-being as a social worker.

Have you any advice for potential students?
Make the most of your degree as you will learn so much. Even if you don’t get the work placements you want, just embrace the experience.
Kent equips with you with essential skills to give you a competitive advantage when it comes to getting a job. We are consistently in the top 20 of graduate starting salaries and, six months after graduation in 2012, only 6% of Kent graduates were without a job or further study opportunity.

Wide-ranging career options
The degree programme provides the nationally required standard in knowledge and skills needed by professional social workers. This means that a degree in Social Work can lead to a career in local authority and health settings (for example, working with children and families, disabled people, older people or people experiencing mental health problems). Some graduates choose to take on agency supply work. Other employers include charities (such as Barnardos and the NSPCC) and private agencies (such as fostering agencies).

There is also a range of options for further study or professional training.

For those who are interested in conducting research related to social work, we offer a PhD programme.

Gain transferable skills
Nowadays, most employers are looking for a range of transferable skills which you develop within your studies.

The degree in Social Work qualifies you for professional practice, but it also provides a high level of transferable skills that are valued by all employers. You learn to analyse information, to seek imaginative solutions to problems, demonstrate logical thinking and be sensitive to the values and interests of others. Analysing complex data, getting to grips with challenging ideas, writing well, gaining confidence and experience in expressing your ideas in front of others, are all important skills and ensure that our graduates will be strong candidates whatever career they wish to follow.

Careers advice
The Careers and Employability Service can give you advice on how to choose your future career, how to apply for jobs, how to write a good CV and how to perform well in interviews and aptitude tests. It also provides up-to-date information on graduate opportunities before and after you graduate.

Further information
For more information on the careers help we provide at Kent, see www.kent.ac.uk/employability

“When recruiting newly-qualified social workers, we always welcome applications from Kent graduates – they seem well-prepared for their future careers.”

Michelle Woodward
Professional Development Manager, Kent County Council, Children’s Social Services
Antonietta Ogundimu graduated with a degree in Social Work from Kent and now works as a social worker with the Rochester Community Mental Health Team, based at St Bartholomew’s Hospital.

Why did you choose to study Social Work at Kent?
I wanted to become a social worker because I was attracted to the empowering principles that underpin social work values.

I chose Kent because of its good academic reputation and its location.

What was your degree course like?
The degree course was interesting, challenging and informative. It meant that I had to re-evaluate myself; this was something I struggled with initially, but which I have now become accustomed to.

The lecturers played a significant role in helping me to realise how crucial it is to have a full understanding of the basis and position before proposing and justifying academic arguments. They really knew their subjects!

How did your degree course lay the foundations for your career?
Academic learning and placement learning have helped me to develop engagement, assessment, intervention and analytical skills.

After leaving Kent, I got the first job I applied for as a care co-ordinator in a community mental health team. The team is multidisciplinary, consisting of nurses, an occupational therapist, a clinical psychologist, a consultant psychiatrist and social workers.

Could you describe a typical day in your current role?
My caseload consists of clients with varying degrees of psychosocial needs and varied mental health diagnoses, ranging from depression to substance misuse, obsessive compulsive disorders, schizophrenia, bi-polar, personality disorders and anxiety. A typical day includes home monitoring visits, organising or attending outpatient appointments and care plan reviews.

What are your future plans?
I am keen to improve my understanding of mental health by completing a Master’s degree. The Mental Health Social Work with Children and Adults course will help me gain more insight into current and innovative ways of, for example, conducting evidence-based interventions.

I really enjoyed the academic aspect of my first degree. Having been awarded a First Class, I am confident that I will be able to complete a Master’s degree and make the transition from a recently qualified social worker to a more experienced and knowledgeable one.

Do you have any other happy memories of Kent?
The joy of completing my degree in an atmosphere that was empowering and enriching, with like-minded individuals, will always remain with me.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of coming to Kent?
Anyone applying to undertake the Social Work degree at Kent should be prepared to work hard and to be challenged academically and otherwise. One thing is certain – your hard work will pay considerable dividends. Not only will you obtain a degree from a reputable university, but you will also have the confidence that comes with knowing your stuff! This is because you will be exposed to brilliant lecturers, excellent facilities, a great location and fantastic placements.
STUDYING AT STAGE 1

Stage 1 represents the first year of your programme.

Teaching methods include lectures, seminars, workshops, group work, experiential work and directed individual study. You are assessed through a mixture of written module assignments and presentations.

All students take the following modules:
- Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- Law, Rights and Justice
- Lifespan Development
- Readiness for Direct Practice
- Social Policy and Social Problems
- Social Work Theories, Interventions and Skills
- Sociological Perspectives for Social Workers
- Values, Ethics and Diversity
- What is Social Work?

You also take undertake 30 days of skills development work during the programme.

Modules: Stage 1

Communication and Interpersonal Skills
This module enables you to develop your communication skills in line with the key principles of ethical and anti-oppressive practice. Theoretical models are studied, but the primary focus of the module is on developing your skills through role-play, simulations, exercises, and giving and receiving feedback. You work in a co-operative small group environment, developing self-evaluation strategies through a reflective diary and the use of video recordings.

Law, Rights and Justice
You are given an introduction to the English legal system, particularly as it impacts upon contemporary social work practice. You look at why social workers need to understand the law and you are introduced to legislation relevant to the main areas of social work practice, focusing on the powers and duties of social workers. Other areas studied include the role and nature of courts, evidence and the legal profession, and human rights and equality law.

Lifespan Development
You gain an understanding of lifespan approaches to human development, and study topics including: neurobiological and genetic factors in human growth and development; cognitive and moral development; theories of developmental attachment; adolescence and the transition to adulthood; theories of adult development; the psychological, social and cultural aspects of ageing; and recognising diversity and difference including cross-cultural differences. The topics are considered from a range of perspectives, and their relevance to social work practice is explored.

Readiness for Direct Practice
It is a national requirement that students’ readiness for direct practice is assessed before they undertake their first period of practice learning in Stage 2. As well as successfully completing all the Stage 1 modules, you are required to undertake a number of skills development days linked to the Readiness for Practice assessment, including a two-day observational placement.

Social Policy and Social Problems
Social policy links directly to the day-to-day work of social care and the overall context in which social work is located. This module looks
at issues such as the growth of the welfare state and explores policy in a number of areas including domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, changing gender roles and immigration. It also examines the extent to which social work helps to drive social change or simply responds to it.

**Social Work Theories, Interventions and Skills**
You study the assessment process in social work and evaluate the merits of contrasting theories and approaches, including systemic, psychodynamic, person-centred, task-centred, cognitive behavioural, postmodern, strengths-based, solution-focused, narrative approaches and crisis intervention models. You discuss how to use these approaches in a range of situations.

**Sociological Perspectives for Social Workers**
You are introduced to the main theoretical perspectives in sociology and the relevance of sociological theory to social work practice. Topics include contemporary social theories of the family, social divisions, poverty and social exclusion, health and illness, concepts of community, race and ethnicity, disability, identity, gender, sexuality, risk, crime and deviance.

**Values, Ethics and Diversity**
This module challenges you to explore the choice you made to study social work. You discuss the values and ethics that underpin social care and social work, and look at what you understand ‘values’ and ‘ethics’ to be. You examine your own views and ideas on issues of inequality, human justice and social need, and look at how to ensure that the needs of the service user are central to your practice. You also study the ethical basis of social work and consider the codes of practice relevant to the profession.

**What is Social Work?**
This module introduces you to key aspects of the nature and contemporary context of social work and the various roles social workers may undertake in their work and in society in general. You look at the nature of problems and needs that may lead to social work support and intervention, and how social work services are organised and provided in the statutory, private and voluntary sectors. The experiences and perspectives of service users and carers form an important part of this module.

**Skills Development Days**
All students undertake 30 days of skills development work during the programme. Twenty of the days take place in the first year: the equivalent of 14 of these are incorporated in the Readiness for Direct Practice module, four in Communication and Interpersonal Skills, and two within Social Work Theories, Interventions and Skills. You then undertake a further five days in each of Stages 2 and 3.

“I have enjoyed learning about things I never knew, such as the history of slavery, different cultures and religions, mental health, and the inequalities minority groups face.”

Miranda Scott
Social Work
STUDYING AT STAGE 2

Stage 2 represents the second year of your degree.

All students complete a 70-day practice learning placement and five skills development days. You also take the following taught modules:

- Issues for Families
- Making Sense of Mental Health
- Social Work with Adults
- Social Work with Children and Families

Modules: Stage 2

Issues for Families
In this module, you explore emerging trends in contemporary family life, the legal and policy framework for both adults’ and children’s services across the spectrum, and issues involved in interagency working between services for adults and children. You study key issues affecting families: caring, disability, mental health, alcohol and substance misuse, illness, learning disability and loss.

Making Sense of Mental Health
Through this module, you develop the knowledge to equip you to respond and intervene appropriately in your work with individuals who are experiencing mental distress and their families. You critically examine key definitions, theoretical models, professional roles and tasks, the concept of risk, ethical and professional dilemmas, and the importance of understanding diversity and the impact of stigma, social inequalities and oppressive social relations on the lives and experiences of people with mental health needs. You also gain an insight into the legal framework and different models of care in mental health services.

Social Work with Adults
In this module, you develop a thorough understanding of the issues around care for adults, including discrimination, social inequalities, disability, the disability movement, services for older people, and government policies and initiatives in this area. You critically analyse concepts such as ‘care’ and ‘risk’, and evaluate issues and trends in social policy and their relationship to contemporary social work practice and service delivery. You also learn to plan strategies for protecting vulnerable adults and to communicate effectively with others to put those strategies into action.

Social Work with Children and Families
Positively transforming the life and circumstances of a vulnerable child lies at the heart of social work with children and families. In this module, you examine key frameworks, principles and processes involved in assessment and intervention with children in need and their families. You develop your understanding of family support, ways in which children may be subject to neglect and abuse, assessment of risk and significant harm, child protection and safeguarding work, and working with children in care. Principles of partnership working, best practice, critical analysis and professional judgement are discussed in depth.

Practice Learning
All students complete 70 days of practice learning at Stage 2 and 100 days at Stage 3. Practice learning allows you to try out the skills, knowledge and values you have learnt. Placements are in a variety of settings where social work services can be provided, and you have individual support and supervision. Kent has excellent links with local service providers.

“This degree is the pathway to a range of different opportunities. There is increasing demand for social workers and the employment prospects are excellent.”

Melissa Comins
Social Work
STUDYING AT STAGE 3

Stage 3 represents the final year of your degree.

All students complete 100 days of Practice Learning (see opposite page) and five skills development days. You also take the following taught modules:
- Advanced Interventions
- Critical and Reflective Practice
- Research for Social Work Practice
- Social Work Practice in a Multi-Agency Context.

Modules: Stage 3

Advanced Interventions
This module builds on the Stage 1 module, Social Work, Theories, Interventions and Skills. You learn theories and methods of engaging with diverse families, groups and networks, and develop your skills in intervening effectively. You also reflect on previous experience and apply your new learning to practice across a range of settings and service user groups.

Critical and Reflective Practice
In this module, you explore the nature of critical, reflective and ethical practice. You consider how the contemporary organisational, political, demographic and ideological context impacts on social work practice, and look at perspectives on risk, professional judgement and decision making in social work. Dealing with the impact of working in complex, unpredictable and emotionally demanding situations, using supervision and support and promoting emotional resilience is also a focus of this module, as is exploration of the possibilities for creative and transformatory practice in social work. In addition, you explore the development of skills in leadership and appropriate professional authority and assertiveness, and reflect on your strengths, learning needs and strategies for continuing personal and professional development.

Research for Social Work Practice
Social workers need an understanding of theories of research methods used to collect social data. You cannot assume that research and policy developments are objective, neutral and rational: social information may be accurate or faulty, complete or partial, disinterested or biased. These ‘qualities’ can affect the ways in which we think and interpret the nature of social work practice. This module provides basic skills in understanding how social information is generated and used. It familiarises you with the strengths and weaknesses of different research approaches, perspectives and methods relating to social work practice. It enables you to judge a piece of research and evaluate its applicability to practice issues.

Social Work Practice in a Multi-Agency Context
The failure of partner agencies to work together can lead to tragic consequences. Recent legislation has emphasised the need for education, health, police, mental health, social work and related staff to collaborate. In this module, you develop the skills to establish effective relationships across organisational and professional boundaries. You consider the potential benefits and tensions of partnership working and look at the reasons why effective partnerships are important. You discuss the way in which issues such as status, roles and assumptions, professional language, gender, ethnicity and class variables can contribute to, or erode, effective multi-agency work.
VISIT THE UNIVERSITY

Come along for an Open Day or a UCAS Visit Day and see for yourself what it is like to be a student at Kent.

Open Days
Open Days are held in the summer and autumn for potential students, and their families and friends, to have a look round the campus. The day includes a wide range of subject displays, demonstrations and informal lectures and seminars, and the chance to tour the campus with current students to view accommodation and facilities. For more information, see www.kent.ac.uk/opendays

UCAS Visit Days
UCAS Visit Days take place between December and April and include a tour of the campus with a student guide and a talk about University life. You also have the chance to talk to one of the academics and discuss any queries about the course. For more details, see www.kent.ac.uk/visitdays

Informal visits
You are welcome to visit the campus at any time. We produce a leaflet that can take you on a self-guided tour and you may be able to meet up with an academic member of staff, although we cannot guarantee this. For more details, or to download a tour leaflet, please see www.kent.ac.uk/informal

More information
For more information about the University, or to order another subject leaflet, please contact the Information and Guidance Unit.

Tel: +44 (0)1227 827272
Freephone (UK only): 0800 975 3777
Email: information@kent.ac.uk

You can also write to us at:
The Information and Guidance Unit,
The Registry, University of Kent,
Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NZ

For the latest departmental information on studying Social Work at Kent, please see www.kent.ac.uk/sspssr
Terms and conditions: the University reserves the right to make variations to the content and delivery of courses and other services, or to discontinue courses and other services, if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary. If the University discontinues any course, it will endeavour to provide a suitable alternative. To register for a programme of study, all students must agree to abide by the University Regulations (available online at: www.kent.ac.uk/regulations).

Data protection: for administrative, academic and health and safety reasons, the University needs to process information about its students. Full registration as a student of the University is subject to your consent to process such information. The information given in this booklet is correct at the time of going to press. The University reserves the right to modify or cancel any statement in it and accepts no responsibility for the consequences of any such changes.

Location
Medway.

Award
BA (Hons).

Degree programme
• Social Work (L508:K).

Offer levels
BCC at A level, IB Diploma 34 points (14 at Higher).
Access candidates must achieve at least 65% of level 3 credits at Merit or above.
Mature students who do not hold these qualifications may apply, but need to satisfy the University that they have the ability to study at degree level.

Required subjects
GCSE grade C (or equivalent) in both English and Mathematics, and relevant experience including awareness and understanding of the needs of a person requiring social care assistance.

Offers are subject to a Health and Care Professions Council health check and enhanced DBS clearance.
All applicants must demonstrate in their UCAS personal statement that they have gained sufficient experience to evidence their interest and suitability to study social work.
Candidates must attend for a written test, which is the first part of the process. If successful, candidates are invited back for an interview and observed group discussion.

Professional recognition
Graduates are eligible to apply for professional registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

Offer levels and entry requirements are subject to change. For the latest course information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/ug
COME AND VISIT US

We hold Open Days at our Canterbury and Medway campuses.
For more information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/opendays