SOCIAL WORK

Medway
Kent is a leading UK university, ranked 23rd in the UK in *The Guardian University Guide 2017*. In the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, Kent is ranked 17th* for research intensity, outperforming 11 of the 24 Russell Group universities.

**World-leading research**

In the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, the School was ranked 2nd nationally for research power; 99% of our research was judged to be of international quality, with 88% world-leading or internationally excellent. In *The Times Good University Guide 2016*, Social Work at Kent is ranked 1st in the UK for research quality.

The School’s academics are actively engaged in research as well as teaching, giving you the chance to learn from 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’.

You study within a challenging and inspiring academic environment. Teaching is through a variety of methods, including lectures, seminars, group tasks and workshops. Academic work is assessed through written assignments, a small number of open-book, in-class tests or exams, presentations and video work.

**A 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 37% of our academic staff coming from outside the UK and students representing 148 different nationalities.

**Broaden your outlook**

The degree is based on the nationally agreed curriculum for social work and allows you to gain a broad knowledge base in the key issues related to social work, such as the values and ethics that underpin it, 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 in mental health, adult services, and with children and families, and modules which enable you to develop your skills in research and critical and reflective practice.

The involvement of people who use services and carers is an essential part of the Social Work programme at Kent. Through the University of Kent’s Partnership Initiative, service users and carers are involved in the design, delivery and review of the degree programme as well as contributing to teaching within modules and research.

*of 122 universities, not including specialist institutions.
Every year, a number of external public speakers visit the University to talk about contemporary issues and debates.

**Theory and practice**

Social Work is about changing lives for the better. Kent offers a rewarding academic programme, developed with professional practice in mind and taught by qualified social workers. You have access to placements across a range of settings to enable you to develop your skills, apply knowledge to practice and become a confident, competent social work practitioner.

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**Professional recognition**

The degree programme provides the nationally required standard in knowledge and skills needed by professional social workers.

On completion, graduates are eligible to apply to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), which regulates the profession. The HCPC visited Kent in summer 2014 and approved the BA in Social Work as meeting their standards for social work education.

**Supportive academic community**

The Social Work degree is very popular and we limit the number of students accepted onto the course so that students are fully supported in their studies. Each student has an Academic Adviser to help monitor academic progress and provide academic guidance throughout their studies. Your Academic Adviser is also able to help you with your own personal development plan and direct you to other sources of support if needed.

**Funding**

For full and current details of financial support available from the Department of Health, 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 competitive economic environment.

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

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

Kent received the 5th highest score nationally for overall student satisfaction in the National Student Survey 2015.
SUPERB STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our modern, shared campus at Medway provides a stunning location for your studies. As well as outstanding teaching and learning facilities, the campus also has a real sense of community.

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 you can also use 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.

Kent’s Student Learning Advisory Service also provides information and advice on all aspects of effective learning and study skills, and is available to all students from the time they arrive at the University. See www.kent.ac.uk/learning for more information.

Good location
The Medway campus is near The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, which was built at the start of the 20th century. The campus has award-winning buildings, atmospheric cafés and a new student hub, creating a lively social life and a great sense of community. Five minutes’ walk from campus, the Dockside retail outlet offers a range of shops and restaurants.

Nearby is the town of Rochester with its stunning cathedral, which is the venue for Kent’s degree congregations. Bluewater shopping centre is within easy driving distance and there are good bus and train links. In addition, the Medway area offers a dry ski slope and toboggan run, an ice rink and a karting circuit. Kent students can use the state-of-the-art sports centre, Medway Park, at discounted rates.

There is a free regular shuttle bus between the Medway and Canterbury campuses, which operates seven days a week during term-time.

The Medway campus is quick and easy to reach from central London. Travel to London from stations at Gillingham or Chatham takes about 50 minutes. There is a high-speed train to London St Pancras from nearby Ebbsfleet International that takes under 20 minutes. You can take the Eurostar from Ebbsfleet and be in Paris in around two hours.

Kent Extra
Kent Extra is an excellent way to get more from your time at university. It provides opportunities to enhance your knowledge, learn new skills and improve your CV. You can do this in many ways, for example, by attending one of our summer schools; by volunteering; or by taking a Study Plus course in an area that interests you. For details, see www.kent.ac.uk/kentextra

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 and gain a truly global perspective.

Live by the riverside
If you join Kent as a full-time student, you could be living in an attractive ‘waterside village’ on the banks of the River Medway. Our student flats have fully fitted kitchens and en-suite study bedrooms linked to the University’s computer network. The development also has its own social area, convenience store and fast-food outlets. Cargo, our new bar and bistro, which won the ‘Best Bar’ concept in the UDine Awards 2015, is in Victory Pier, alongside the Liberty Quays accommodation, and provides the perfect social space to meet with friends. As well as a great lunch and dinner menu, the bistro has a variety of entertainment, such as live music and student events.
STUDENT PROFILE

Davina McMahon is in the second year of her Social Work degree.

Why did you choose Kent?
I was interested in social work and when I visited the Medway campus, it was so fantastic I felt I had to come here.

Why social work?
I was always interested in social work but had worked in finance or retail. Then, when I had my daughter, I thought if I don’t do it now, I probably never will. So, I took an Access course and here I am.

Was it easy to adapt to university study?
I was very nervous; I left school 15 years ago and had thought university wasn’t for me but I have surprised myself. Studying here is very intense but because I love the subject area, I find it enjoyable.

Do you have a favourite module?
In my first year, every lecture I went to, I came out thinking that is the area for me! The lecturers are so passionate about their subject and that is inspirational. I think the sociology module has had the biggest impact on me. It has helped me to understand how society is constructed and how I interact with society. I feel I can see and understand the wider picture now, which is important when you are trying to help individuals or families. I have used this knowledge in my other modules and that has improved my grades.

What about your lecturers?
They are motivational, very supportive and always happy to help. You can see how they apply their social work skills in the classroom – the way they relate to people and build relationships is the way I would like to be. All are qualified practitioners and some are currently in practice.

And your fellow students?
It is more mixed than I expected and quite diverse, which is good because we have to share our own life experiences so you get to hear from very different people. I have built some amazing friendships. We all help each other through the difficult times. I am sure we will stay friends long after the course is over.

What do you think of the facilities on campus?
They are fantastic. The library is great and there are a lot of e-books and e-journals available; everything is set up to make study easy and convenient. There is also plenty of support on offer and the Student Learning Advisory Service helps with general study skills; I also went to see the Medway Literary Fellow early in my course, which really helped me improve my writing.

Tell us about your placement.
I worked with older people and I loved it; I was well supported and supervised while on placement. Quite a lot of the work involved dealing with mental health issues, which I found interesting. The initial transition from academia to the workplace was challenging and you have to work quite hard not to get swept up in the practicalities of the placement. It is quite complicated getting the theory off the page and into actual practice, but without the theory you would be overwhelmed. For me, the academic knowledge gave me the confidence to believe that I could be successful in that environment and the links I built in my first year helped to carry me through.

What do you plan to do next?
I would like to work in mental health, which wasn’t on the cards when I started. I think it will give me an opportunity to be creative in finding ways to improve the situations of the people I am working with. Now that I have made that decision, I feel even more focused.

What advice would you give to a prospective student?
Embrace university life and take advantage of the opportunities on offer. I have enjoyed every minute of it, even the challenging bits. You have such a sense of achievement when things go well.

If you are studying social work, increase your understanding of the field before you start; I started following the lecturers on Twitter, which was very useful and kept up with relevant stories in the media. As a social worker, you have to be very self-aware and reflect on your practice. You are always learning, which makes for an interesting career. I was always passionate about social work, but now it feels as if it is part of who I am.
Kent equips with you with essential skills to give you a competitive advantage when it comes to getting a job; more than 95% of Kent students who graduated in 2015 were in work or further study within six months.

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 to experience a range of situations and workplace settings. Other employers of social work graduates include charities (such as Barnardo’s 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

We find that 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 award-winning 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
Kent County Council, Children’s Social Services
Faye Egalton graduated from the Social Work programme in 2014. She is now a practising social worker.

What attracted you to Kent?
Kent had a good reputation within the local authority where I was working and I had met former Kent students who shared their good experiences. I looked at other universities but decided that Kent would be my first choice.

How were your studies?
I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Kent. As a children and families practitioner, I was drawn to modules in that area; however, I also enjoyed modules on social policy, communication, law and research. I was delighted to be taught by Professor David Shemmings, whose work had originally inspired me to work within child protection.

What did you think of the teaching at Kent?
I consider myself very fortunate to have been taught by some amazing lecturers, who have had their work published and have frontline experience of social work. I gained a great depth of knowledge, which has been invaluable in my practice, particularly when assessing children and their families.

How would you describe your fellow students?
Our cohort of students was a wonderful and diverse group of people, from young students to mature students in their 50s/early 60s. As part of the Communication module, we worked in groups according to areas of interest. It was intriguing to learn about different cultures, to discover how people's own experiences impact on their values and how they view the world. The mix of people led to many healthy debates and I found developing my understanding of other people's experiences in this way to be very valuable.

Has the course changed you?
The course has made me aware of the macro factors that impact upon local services and has increased my awareness of the deprivation and stigma that individuals experience on a daily basis. I am now able to critically analyse the factors that may have led an individual or group to take a particular path and have the confidence to challenge others who oppress or stereotype individuals.

I use the skills I learnt at Kent every day, specifically relating theoretical frameworks to frontline social work practice. I believe that my degree has enhanced my professionalism and promoted ongoing joint work with partner agencies.

What were the facilities like at Kent?
I adored the library and spent many hours/days there! There are also a variety of clubs and activities which many students take advantage of; however, as a mature student, working and caring for three children, I wasn't always able to take part. I met some wonderful people though, and the social life at Kent is great.

Did your degree help you find work?
I was thrilled to graduate with a first-class degree, which allowed me to find employment with a local authority as a social worker. I initially worked in an Assessment and Intervention Team with children and their families, before transferring to the Adolescent Team.

I recently completed the Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE) and am now looking to progress my practice and work towards becoming a senior practitioner.

I thoroughly enjoy the direct work I complete with children and young people. When working with children and families, no two days are the same; many crises arise and there is a need for crisis intervention and solution-focused work.

I enjoy my work but, believe it or not, I miss studying and writing essays, and am still considering applying for the MA in Child Protection.

What advice would you give to prospective students?
I would say, always remain focused and choose your course wisely. Attend open days and, if you can, talk to the lecturers. If you want to study social work, I would certainly recommend Kent and wish you all the very best for your chosen studies.
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.

Please note: the module list below is not fixed as new modules are always in development and choices are updated yearly. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/ug for the most up-to-date information.

All students take the following modules:

- Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- Law, Rights and Justice
- Learning to Learn
- 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 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 practiced. 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
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.

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 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.

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.

“Values, Ethics and Diversity is a really interesting module, which makes you think about your place in society and the environment in which you were socialised.”

Connor Crook
Social Work
STUDYING AT STAGE 2

Stage 2 represents the second year of your degree.

Please note: the module list below is not fixed as new modules are always in development and choices are updated yearly. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/ug for the most up-to-date information.

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.

“IT has been an exciting tim e, meeting so many new peop le from varying backgrounds. I have loved havin g the opportunit y to work wit h students of all ages and from all walks of life, and despite our differences, we are sharing an amazing journey.”

Laura Ballantyne
Social Work
Stage 3 represents the final year of your degree.

Please note: the module list below is not fixed as new modules are always in development and choices are updated yearly. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/ug for the most up-to-date information.

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
You explore the nature of critical, reflective and ethical practice, considering how the contemporary organisational, political, demographic and ideological context impacts on social work practice. You 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 transformative 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 the 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. Here, you gain skills in understanding how social information is generated and used and are able to assess the strengths and weaknesses of different research approaches, perspectives and methods relating to social work practice.

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 benefits and tensions of partnership working and 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 an Applicant Day and see for yourself what it is like to be a student at Kent.

Open Days
Kent runs Open Days during the summer and autumn. These provide an excellent opportunity for you to discover what it is like to live and study at the University. You can meet academic staff and current students, find out about our courses and attend subject displays, workshops and informal lectures. We also offer tours around the campus to view our sports facilities, the library and University accommodation. For further information and details of how to book your place, see www.kent.ac.uk/opendays

Informal visits
You are also welcome to make an informal visit to our campuses at any time. The University runs tours of the Canterbury and Medway campuses throughout the year for anyone who is unable to attend an Open Day or Applicant Day. It may also be possible to arrange meetings with academic staff, although we cannot guarantee this. For more details and to book your place, see www.kent.ac.uk/informal

Alternatively, we can provide you with a self-guided tour leaflet, which includes the main points of interest. For more details and to download a self-guided tour, go to www.kent.ac.uk/informal

Applicant Days
If you apply to study at Kent and we offer you a place (or invite you to attend an interview), you will usually be sent an invitation to one of our Applicant Days. You can book to attend through your online Kent Applicant Portal. The Applicant Day includes presentations in your subject area, guided tours of the campus, including University accommodation, and the opportunity to speak with both academic staff and current students about your chosen subject. For further information, see www.kent.ac.uk/visit

Scholarships and bursaries
For details of scholarships and bursaries at Kent, please see www.kent.ac.uk/ugfunding

More information
If you would like more information on Kent’s courses, facilities or services, or would like to order another subject leaflet, please contact us on:
T: +44 (0)1227 827272
Freephone (UK only): 0800 975 3777
www.kent.ac.uk/ug

For the latest departmental information on studying Social Work at Kent, please see www.kent.ac.uk/sspssr
Location
Medway

Award
BA (Hons)

Degree programme
• Social Work (L508:K)

Offer levels
BBB at A level, IB Diploma 34 points (15 at Higher level).
BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma (formerly BTEC National Diploma) candidates must achieve DMM (Distinction, Merit, Merit).
Access candidates must achieve at least 75% of level 3 credits at Merit and must include English and Maths at GCSE equivalent if not already obtained.
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.
Applicants who do not have English as their first language must complete the International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) qualification and achieve a score of 7.0 overall and in each subtest.

Required subjects
GCSE grade C or above (or certified equivalent) in both English Language 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 complete an online written test, which is the first part of the process. If successful, candidates are invited 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

To find out more about visiting the University, see our website:
www.kent.ac.uk/visit