SOCIAL WORK
Medway
SOCIAL WORK AT KENT

Social work is about changing lives for the better. Our degree has been designed with professional practice in mind, helping you to develop the knowledge and practical skills you need to become a confident, competent social work practitioner.
# WHY STUDY SOCIAL WORK AT KENT?

## Professional recognition

Our Social Work degree is regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and meets the national standards for professional social workers. On graduation, you can apply to the HCPC for professional registration.

## World-leading research

We are home to world experts in specialist areas across the social sciences, with one of the most dynamic research cultures in Europe. The books and articles we write and the debates we are involved in help to shape your course and the topics you are studying.

## Academic support

University is different from school. You need to be self-motivated and well organised to succeed. We help you by assigning you an academic adviser, running a peer mentoring programme and offering help with academic skills, such as essay writing.

## Inspirational teaching

Most teachers on the Social Work degree are qualified social workers. Their wide-ranging experience of practice and academic research brings the subject to life, as they share their insights and challenge your perceptions.

## Student community

You benefit from access to the services and facilities run by both Kent Union and the Medway campus union, GK Unions. Societies and social events are run by students, for students, to help you make the most of life at Kent.

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## Excellent resources

Access more than 1 million books, ebooks, databases and journals at the University's Drill Hall and Templeman Libraries. Our expert subject librarians are on hand to help you find your way around and get the most from our collections.

## User-focused programme

We draw on the experiences and insights of service users and carers to make our programme current and relevant. Users and carers are involved in designing and reviewing our modules, as well as teaching on them and contributing to research.

## Friendly campus

Our Medway campus reinvents a former naval base as a 21st-century study space, with exceptional facilities and support. Close to the towns of Rochester and Chatham, with their fascinating histories, there is plenty to do both on and off campus.

## Career success

Employability is a priority at Kent. By studying, you sharpen skills that are useful in working life, such as time management and developing an argument. Our programme also includes many opportunities to gain practical experience of social work.
Our Social Work degree focuses on linking theory to practice, equipping you to approach challenging and sensitive situations thoughtfully and effectively. You learn about communication, human development and different theoretical approaches to social work. You explore issues relating to different user groups, such as families and children. You put your knowledge into practice on extended placements, developing the skills and professional judgement that will help you to succeed in social work.
Willis Atherley-Bourne is in the second year of his degree in Social Work. This is what he told us about his course.

What attracted you to studying at Kent?
I liked the fact that my lecturers all have experience of practice in a variety of social work settings. I hope to work in Medway once qualified, so having placements within the area appealed to me, too. I was also drawn to Kent's standing in the league tables and I was encouraged by feedback from previous students.

Which modules have you enjoyed the most, and why?
All the modules have been enjoyable and challenging in a variety of ways. If I were to choose, I would say my favourite module so far has been Social Policy. My seminar lead was enthusiastic and knowledgeable in her subject area, which in turn encouraged me to push myself further. I achieved one of my highest grades in this subject and now realise just how much I enjoy analysing policy documents in their relationship to social change, particularly for children and families.

How would you describe your lecturers?
All the lecturers are extremely approachable and supportive. I feel they offer opportunities for us to develop the skills we need, such as reflection, professionalism and critical thinking.

What do you think about the support you have received for your studies?
As a mature student with previous university experience, I have been impressed with the level of support readily available to students across the board. We have dedicated student support staff, who are familiar with our programme of study, so they appreciate the range of challenges we face on an emotional and intellectual level due to the rigorous training regime.

How would you describe your fellow students?
There is a diverse range of students on my programme, with ages ranging from early 20s to late 50s. The first year was a dynamic process of learning how we bridge the gaps between our cultural, ethnic and gender differences as a group.

You're on placement at the moment – how is it going?
Challenging, but amazing! I have had support from a highly qualified and experienced practice educator with a local authority. It is unusual to have a local authority placement at such an early stage but, due to an arrangement between the University and the local authority, I have had an invaluable opportunity to gain experience and insight into social work practice with children and families.

An important aspect of my learning has been about developing professionalism and an applied understanding of the Professional Capability Framework, which is key to social work practice. I have been able to shadow social workers engaged in assessments and be part of debriefing sessions. My on-site supervisor has been consistently supportive and encouraged me to take on challenges to stretch my depth of knowledge and build resilience as I approach my third year of training.

What are the facilities like on campus?
The library is amazing. I feel like an overgrown child in a sweet shop when I start looking for reading material. The online access is invaluable, as it means I can access resources 24 hours a day. The staff have been extremely helpful over all sorts of issues, everything from finding a stapler to finding obscure international journals. The Venue in the Pilkington Building is great for an early breakfast and is value for money. Parking has been fine for me during my studies too.

What are your plans for after graduation?
I aim to work with children and families. My experience has been in counselling and psychotherapy with children for over 23 years, and my aim has been to develop my knowledge of statutory requirements to bolster my previous experience and qualifications.
Your Study Programme

Our Social Work degree meets the national standards required for social workers and is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

The BA (Hons) in Social Work (www.kent.ac.uk/ug/250) is a full-time degree that provides a balance of theory and practice, ensuring you have a broad knowledge base in the key issues relating to social work.

The University has excellent links with local service providers, and at each stage of your course you spend time in a range of social work settings.

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

Stage 1

In Stage 1 (first year) you are introduced to the issues, approaches and theories that underpin social work practice.

You study the following modules:
- Communication and Interpersonal Skills (SO307)
- Law, Rights and Justice (SO309)
- Learning to Learn (SOCWK01)
- Lifespan Development (SO308)
- Readiness for Direct Practice (SO409)
- Social Policy and Social Problems (SO310)
- Social Work Theories, Interventions and Skills (SO313)
- Sociological Perspectives for Social Workers (SO311)
- Values, Ethics and Diversity (SO314)
- What is Social Work? (SO312).

You also participate in 20 skills development days, mainly as part of the Readiness for Direct Practice module, which prepares you for your extended placements in Stages 2 and 3. You learn about professional behaviour and boundaries, risk and safeguarding, and the role of professional supervision. You develop skills in communication, observation and reflection.

Meeting practitioners, service users and carers in the classroom and in social work settings is an important part of Stage 1, as it gives you an insight into different perspectives and social work contexts. You also shadow a final-year student on their placement for a short period, alongside a practice educator.

You must complete the Readiness for Direct Practice module in order to successfully complete Stage 1.

Stage 2

In your second year, you focus on specific groups of service users. What are the issues that might bring families into contact with social workers – substance abuse, illness, caring responsibilities, disability? What impact does stigma have upon people with mental health problems? What are the principles and processes involved in child protection work? How do you plan strategies to protect vulnerable adults?

You study the following modules:
- Issues for Families (SO717)
- Making Sense of Mental Health (SO725)
- Practice Assignments 1 (SO723)
- Practice Placement 1 (SO720)
- Social Work with Adults (SO724)
- Social Work with Children and Families (SO716).

The 70-day practice placement (SO720) allows you to explore how the skills, knowledge and values you have learnt can be put into practice. You have individual support and supervision, and complete a portfolio recording your insights and experiences. Alongside your placement, you complete two written assignments (SO723). You also complete five skills development days.


Stage 3

In your third year, you develop and refine your knowledge, skills and understanding. How, as a social worker, do you assess risk and use your professional judgement? What skills do you need to work effectively across organisational boundaries – for example with education services, health workers and police? How do the research methods used to collect social data affect the way we think about the nature of social work? What are the most effective interventions to use in different family situations?

You study the following modules:

- Advanced Interventions (SO719)
- Critical and Reflective Practice (SO718)
- Practice Assignments 2 (SO722)
- Practice Placement 2 (SO721)
- Research for Social Work Practice (SO673)
- Social Work Practice in a Multi-Agency Context (SO672).

Your practice placement (SO721) is a 100-day placement and you have individual support and supervision. You complete a portfolio and two written assignments (SO722), plus five skills development days.

Teaching and assessment

We use a variety of teaching methods, including lectures, seminars, workshops, group work, experiential work and directed individual study. Assessment is by written assignments, in-class tests, presentations and video work. Placements are assessed in accordance with the Professional Capabilities Framework of the British Association for Social Work.

Further information

See www.kent.ac.uk/ug for details of all our programmes.
SUPERB STUDY SUPPORT

We’ll support you throughout your time at Kent, from helping you adjust to university study to discussing module choices and essay topics with you.

You are assigned an academic adviser each year, and they help you to get the most from your degree programme. They meet with you regularly to discuss general academic issues or specific assignments. They will assist you in developing academic skills and refer you to other sources of help if you need it.

Peer support
The best advice often comes from people who’ve been in your situation. On our Academic Peer Mentoring scheme, first-year students can request to be matched with second- or third-year students on a similar degree programme.

Peer mentors will help you settle in to university life and find your feet. They can help you to discuss ideas and improve your study skills as you progress through your first year.

Study skills advice
Successful students take control of their own learning. Kent’s Student Learning Advisory Service (SLAS) can help you to increase your competence and confidence and fulfil your potential. You can request a one-to-one appointment or attend workshops on a diverse range of topics, from making the most of lectures to writing well and avoiding plagiarism.

Student support and wellbeing
You might need extra help to get the most from university. If you have a medical condition, specific learning difficulty, mental health condition or disability, the Student Support and Wellbeing team is there to support you.

The team is committed to improving access to learning for all students at Kent and can assist with many things, including:

• arranging note-takers, signers and other support workers for you
• discussing exam access arrangements
• helping you with emotional, psychological or mental health issues
• applying for relevant funding to support you.

Find out more at: www.kent.ac.uk/studentsupport

“Peer mentoring is open to absolutely everyone. We’ve signed up to be peer mentors and we really do want to help, so take advantage of it.”

Evangeline Agyeman
Peer mentor
A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

What do you hope to do once you have your degree? As a graduate of our programme, you are qualified for a career in social work, but you also have many valuable transferable skills. Whatever your plans may be, we can help you to achieve success in the future.

Build your CV

Your degree studies help you to develop skills such as analysing information, thinking critically, expressing yourself clearly, solving problems, and working both independently and as part of a team. These transferable skills are widely valued by employers in all sectors.

At Kent, you have lots of other great opportunities to enhance your skills. For instance, you could:

• join a society or sports club (even better – get involved in running it)
• volunteer with a community
• work in a part-time job or take up a summer internship
• represent your fellow students as a student rep, or become a student ambassador
• learn a new language or skill with Study Plus.

Getting involved like this means that you can earn Employability Points, which you can exchange for employability rewards. The more points you earn, the more valuable the rewards. We work with local, national and international employers to offer internships, work experience and a range of other activities that prepare you for the world of work.

Experience work

You gain experience of social work during your course, with extended placements in your second and third years and many opportunities to spend time in social care settings.

Find a great job

Your degree can lead to a wide range of rewarding career paths, once you are registered with the Health and Care Professions Council. For instance, you might choose to work in a local authority or healthcare setting with children and families, older people, people with disabilities or those with mental health problems. Other opportunities are available with charities or private agencies such as fostering agencies.

The School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research supports you with employability events tailored to Social Work students, from exploring career options to presenting your skills and experience effectively to employers.

Visit our careers fair to talk to potential employers and use our award-winning Careers and Employability Service for advice on preparing your CV. Our track record speaks for itself: just six months after graduating in 2017, over 95% of Kent graduates who responded to a national survey were in work or further study (DLHE, 2017).
Faye Egalton studied Social Work and went on to become a practising social worker. Here’s what she told us about her studies and life after Kent.

I came to Kent because it 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.

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. 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 gained a great depth of knowledge, which has been invaluable in my practice. I adored the library and spent many hours/days there!

Our cohort of students was a wonderful and diverse group of people, from young students to mature students in their 50s/early 60s. 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.

Many students take advantage of the clubs and societies, and there are lots of these that you can get involved in. As a mature student, working and caring for three children, I wasn’t always able to take part, but I met some wonderful people, and the social life at Kent is great.

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 a team working with adolescents.

I thoroughly enjoy the direct work I do with children and young people. 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! The course made me aware of the macro factors that impact upon local services and 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 enhanced my professionalism and promoted ongoing joint work with partner agencies.

To a prospective student, 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.
Choosing a university is a big step, so it’s important to find out as much as you can before you make your decision. Come and visit us to see what we can offer you.

Open Days
Open Days are a great way to find out what life as a student at Kent is like. For instance, you can:

• learn more about the course you are interested in at a subject presentation
• ask questions – talk to the academic teams at the information stands
• experience our teaching at a taster lecture*

• find out about student finance and extracurricular activities such as Kent Sport.

Explore the campus at your own pace on the self-guided walking tour. You will be able to visit our student accommodation at Liberty Quays, chat to current students and discover the fascinating history of our Medway campus.

Open Days are held in the summer and autumn. Book your place at www.kent.ac.uk/opendays

Informal visits
If you can’t make it to an Open Day, you can still visit us. We run tours of the campus throughout the year. If you live outside Europe, we appreciate that you might find it difficult to attend our scheduled events, so we can arrange a personal campus tour for you and your family.

Let us know you’re coming
Scheduled tours and personal campus tours (for international students) need to be booked in advance – you can do this via www.kent.ac.uk/informal

Meet us in your country
Our staff regularly travel overseas to meet with students who are interested in coming to Kent. We also have strong links with agents in your home country who can offer guidance and information on studying at Kent. Go to www.kent.ac.uk/courses/international to find out more.

* Programme of events varies according to subject.
**Location**
Medway

**Award**
BA (Hons)

**Degree programmes**
Social Work (L508:K)

**Offer levels**
BBB at A level, IB Diploma 34 points or 15 points at Higher.
BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma with Distinction, Merit, Merit.

Access to Higher Education Diploma candidates are required to pass with at least 75% 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 are welcome to apply, but must 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 English Language and Mathematics at grade C/grade 4 or above.

**Additional requirements**
Candidates must demonstrate that they have gained sufficient experience to evidence their interest and suitability to study social work.

The first stage of the application process is an online written test. If successful at this stage, candidates are invited to an interview and observed group discussion, held at the University’s Medway campus.

Offers are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

**Scholarships and bursaries**
Please see www.kent.ac.uk/ugfunding for details of scholarships and bursaries.

**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