

Programme specification

(Notes on how to complete this template are provide in Annexe 2)

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	BA(Hons) Social Work
Teaching Institution	Ruskin College
Awarding Institution	The Open University
Date of latest OU validation	April 2013
Next revalidation	2017-18
Credit points for the award	120 credits at Level 4 120 credits at Level 5 120 credits at Level 6
UCAS Code	L500
Programme start date	September 2013
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	Social Work (2008)
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes	The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) The College of Social Work
Professional/statutory recognition	The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) The College of Social Work
Duration of the programme for each mode of study (P/T, FT,DL)	3 years full time (College based) 4 years part time (College based)
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Date of production/revision of this specification	June 2016

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 s/he 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 student module guide(s) and the student handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

2. Programme aims and objectives

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

2.1.1 The programme aims to provide mature, non-traditional students with professional training and education in social work. It aims to provide a teaching and learning environment and placement opportunities that enable students to develop their academic and professional potential and to demonstrate the critical knowledge, understanding, values and skills needed for professional social work.

2.1.2 The programme aims to meet the requirements of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), the Department of Health and Ruskin College for effective and competent social work practice. It aims to meet the academic requirements of the Centre for Inclusion and

Collaborative Partnerships (CICP), the QAA Benchmark Statement for Social Work (2008) and the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2008).

2.1.3 The BA (Hons) Social Work is the qualification for professional social workers. Ruskin College was approved by the former regulatory body, the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to offer the programme in this form validated by the Open University in May 2004. In 2009, the programme was validated for a further 5 years-to 2014. However, due to changes with regards to the GSCC being taken over by HCPC in August 2012, and in-line with the recommendations made by the Social Work Reform Board, the College and programme team have decided that it would be appropriate to bring the revalidation a year early – 2012-2013.

2.1.4 Ruskin has traditionally been concerned to encourage prospective social workers to consider issues of social justice, equality and diversity and the implications of these for social work practice.

2.1.5 In 1999 Ruskin College, in partnership with Unison and Suffolk Social Services, developed a part time employment-based route to the Diploma in Social Work. Ruskin, together with Unison, also had a partnership with a consortium of employers in South London to provide employment-based routes to the Diploma in Social Work. In 2002, Ruskin College, in partnership with Essex County Council, provided an employment-based BA Social Work programme. The most recent cohort completed in 2012. Essex County Council has decided not to continue with this programme due to the current economic climate.

2.1.6 The BA (Hons) in Social Work at Ruskin therefore builds on long experience of developing social work programmes which both meet the requirements of the relevant professional body, employers and the CICP. The experience of extending partnerships and undertaking new initiatives has ensured a continuing commitment to development and improvement.

2.1.7 The programme team has also established partnerships in the training of Practice Educators. This has been developed through a partnership between Ruskin College, Buckinghamshire New University, Oxford County Council and Buckinghamshire County Council under the auspices of the regional Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire Social Work Education Group. To date we have 39 social workers who are in the process of completing PEPs stage 1 and a cohort about to undertake PEPs stage 2. In addition we have a number of social workers who have completed the Practice Teaching Award and who regularly oversee social work student placements. We have run a number of re-fresher events for them and for Independent Practice Educators. We also now have a small pool of experienced Practice Educators who provide support and observation on the PEPS programme.

2.1.8 Embedded in our social work programmes is a strong commitment to the empowerment of individuals and communities and the contribution that social work can make to this through anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice, listening to and respecting the voices of the users of social work services and active implementation of the values of social work. We are committed to ensuring that social workers who successfully complete Ruskin programmes are reflective practitioners who will deliver high quality and effective services in a professional and compassionate way.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

2.2.1 The programme does not have any relationships with other programmes. As a full Honours degree, progression from or to either internally or externally is not specified or required.

2.2.2 However, the College's aim to provide non-traditional students with opportunities for study at honours degree level results in students receiving places at Ruskin with few or no prior

qualifications. Successful applicants for the BA (Hons) Social Work programme are encouraged to attend a selection of short courses offered by Ruskin in a summer school, each year.

2.2.3 The exact offer varies slightly from year to year due to staff availability and student numbers but examples of the courses that would be suggested to prospective social work students are: Introduction to Social Work and Study Skills.

2.3 BA (Honours) Social Work Overview of curriculum, assessments and credit ratings per module per year

MODULE	ASSESSMENT	TOTAL LEARNING HOURS	CREDITS
LEVEL FOUR			
Social policy	Essay	200	20
Sociology	Essay	200	20
Psychology	Essay	200	20
Principles and Practice of Social Work	Communication Skills	100	10
	Placement Observation Assignment	200	20
Law	Assignment x 2	200	20
Welfare Rights	Assignment	100	10
		1,200	120
LEVEL FIVE			
Placement 1	Portfolio	600	60
Principles and Practice of Social Work	Presentation and Essay Project	200	40
		200	
Research and Social Work	Assignment	200	20
		1,200	120
LEVEL SIX			
Placement 2	Portfolio	800	80
Dissertation	Dissertation	400	40
		1,200	120
		Total	1,200
			120

2.3.1 Upon successful completion of the above Level 4 modules, a student may exit with an award of **Certification of Higher in Applied Social Studies** (not HCPC accredited), comprising 120 credits at Level 4)

2.3.2 Upon successful completion of the above Level 4 and 5 modules, a student may exit with an award of **Diploma of Higher Education in Applied Social Studies** (not HCPC accredited), comprising 120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5)

2.3.4 Upon successful completion of the above Level 4, 5 and 6 modules, a student **will** complete with an award of **BA (Hons) Social Work** (HCPC accredited) (120 credits at Level 4, 120 credits at Level 5 and 120 credits at Level 6)

3. Programme outcomes

Intended learning outcomes are listed below.

3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>Level 4:</p> <p>A1 – a knowledge of the historical, socio-economic, political, legal and policy context of social work practice within England and Wales.</p> <p>A2 – an ability to present, evaluate and interpret social research and its application to understanding social work and the wider society</p> <p>A3 – an appreciation of the relevance of social science and social work perspectives in understanding individual and social development, behaviour and functioning</p>	<p>Formative and summative assessments; formal input; group work; debates; tutorials and case studies.</p>
<p>Level 5:</p> <p>A4 – an ability to apply underlying concepts and principles of social science and social work theory to social work practice and settings</p> <p>A5 – an understanding of the limitations of individual knowledge when working with complex personal and social situations</p>	<p>Summative assessments; formal input; group work; case studies; presentations and placement.</p>
<p>Level 6:</p> <p>A6 – an ability to apply the models, perspectives and theories learnt to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge to social work practice</p>	<p>Summative assessments; tutorials; workshops; group work; presentations and placement opportunities.</p>

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>Level 4: B1 – appreciate the importance of task and problem solving in relation to interpersonal, group and social relations B2 – an ability to present, evaluate and interpret models, concepts and theories and discuss them orally with their peer group</p>	<p>Formative and summative assessments; formal input; group work; debates; tutorials and case studies.</p>
<p>Level 5: B3 – the ability to reflect on their learning and to apply their understanding to social work practice B4 – the ability to draw on a range of established skills and techniques to undertake critical analysis of a range of interpersonal and social situations in order to propose positive solutions</p>	<p>Summative assessments; formal input; group work; case studies; presentations and practice learning opportunities.</p>
<p>Level 6: B5 – an ability to apply conceptual understanding that enables the student to solve problems using the ideas and techniques of social work theory in social work practice B6 – an ability to manage and direct their learning through independent study and making use of scholarly and academic reviews.</p>	<p>Summative assessments; tutorials; workshops; group work; presentations and practice learning opportunities.</p>

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>Level 4: C1 – demonstrate an ability to evaluate the appropriateness of different models, theories and perspectives of social work in a practice setting</p>	Summative assessment; formal input; group work; debates; tutorials; role-play and case studies.
<p>Level 5: C2 – demonstrate an ability to apply underlying concepts of social work theory in a relevant practice setting C3 – demonstrate an ability to operate in a multi-disciplinary setting and to engage with professional supervision</p>	Summative assessment; formal input; group work; debates; tutorials; role-play and case studies.
<p>Level 6: C4 – demonstrate an ability to apply a range of social work theories to complex individual and social situations through social work practice learning opportunities C5 – demonstrate an ability to consolidate their understanding and provide solutions to complex personal and social situations C6 – demonstrate an ability to work with and make effective use of professionals and supervisors to deliver effective services to a range of groups of users of social work services</p>	Summative assessment; formal and informal input; tutorials; presentations and workshops.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>Level 4:</p> <p>D1 – an ability to think logically and systematically in problem solving activities</p> <p>D2 – an appreciation of the contested nature of knowledge when working with individuals, groups and communities competing perspectives in understanding human behaviour</p> <p>D3 – an appreciation of power imbalances within society including processes that lead to marginalisation, social stigma, discrimination and social exclusion</p>	<p>Summative assessment; formal input; group work; debates; tutorials; role-play and case studies.</p>
<p>Level 5:</p> <p>D4 – demonstrate communication and inter-personal skills which enables the student to identify, challenge and counter discrimination</p> <p>D5 – appreciate relevant factors in the production of knowledge and the implications this has for service users and social work practice</p>	<p>Summative assessment; formal input; group work; debates; tutorials; role-play and case studies.</p>
<p>Level 6:</p> <p>D6 – the ability to relate research and theory in exercising initiative in social work practice</p> <p>D7 – the ability to engage with unpredictable and complex social situations with non-specialist audiences and develop solutions that offer viable alternatives</p>	<p>Summative assessment; formal and informal input; tutorials; presentations and workshops.</p>

4. Overview Diagrams and Assessment Schedules

BA(HONS) SOCIAL WORK AT RUSKIN COLLEGE, Full-time route: College-based

YEAR 1 (Sept - June)	YEAR 2 (Sept - June)	YEAR 3 (Sept - June)
Social Policy Sociology Psychology Principles and Practice of Social Work Law Welfare Rights Observation Placement (5 days)	Preparation for placement 70 day placement Principles and Practice of Social Work and Law Research and Social Work	Preparation for placement 100 day placement Dissertation seminars/workshops Dissertation
Assessment	Assessment	Assessment
One assessed essay per social science Law assignments Welfare Rights assignment Observation placement Assignment Assessment of communication skills	Placement portfolio Principles and Practice of Social Work and Law assignments: Assignment project/presentation Research assignment/presentation	Placement portfolio Dissertation

BA(HONS) SOCIAL WORK AT RUSKIN COLLEGE, Part-time route: College-based

YEAR 1 (Sept - June)	YEAR 2 (Sept - June)	YEAR 3 (Sept - June)	YEAR 4 (Sept - June)
Sociology Principles and Practice of Social Work Law Welfare Rights Observation Placement	Social Policy Psychology	Preparation for Placement 70 day placement Principles and Practice of Social Work and Law Research	Preparation for placement 100 day placement Dissertation seminars/workshops Dissertation
ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT
Sociology essay Observation placement assignment Law assignments Welfare Rights assignment Assessment of communication skills	Two social science assessed essays Research assignment/presentation	Placement portfolio Principles and Practice of Social Work and Law assignments: Assignment project/presentation	Placement portfolio Dissertation

5. Distinctive features of the programme structure

Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:

- **where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression**
- **any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules**
- **where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route**

5.1 During 5 levels and 6 of the programme, for a total of 200 days, student's learning is undertaken on placements. Students are expected to spend the 30 days in College as part of the Skills Development sessions across the years of study. The first placement is for 70 days and likely to be in a Voluntary sector. The second placement of 100 days is to be in a Statutory setting.

5.2 As part of the preparation for placement, students are required to identify their learning needs. It should be noted that whilst the availability of placements does not guarantee an exact match, determined efforts are made to ensure that appropriate learning opportunities are available. Each student is allocated a link Tutor from the course team and a Placement Agreement meeting is organised between the student, link tutor and the Practice Educator (Practice Supervisor if appropriate). At this meeting the student's learning needs are explored further and opportunities for meeting these are identified. A review meeting is held through the placement and additional meetings or contact may be arranged as needed.

5.3 During the placement students receive both day-to-day support and guidance and structured supervision from an experienced and qualified professional. Recall days held during the placement provide the opportunity for informal advice and guidance to students, on-tie practice supervisor and educators.

5.4 Practice Educators are made aware of the BA (Hons) Social Work programme through the PEPS stages 1 and 2. Tutors on the programme are involved in presenting the course structure and modules offered on the programme, and topics covered in the sessions. There is also discussion of the course on Recall Days, where Practice Educators and Practice Supervisors attend. The current cohort on the PEPS (formerly Enabling Learning and Mentoring Module) provided feedback on their experiences of the module. This has been very positive. They have also provided feedback on areas that students can be supported with whilst in College as part of the preparation for placement. Some of the key themes mentioned are communication and risk assessment. The programme team welcomes this feedback and will form part of the sessions to be covered in the 30 days.

Weighting of years:

1st Year (level 4): 0 2nd Year (level 5): $\frac{1}{3}$ 3rd Year (level 6): $\frac{2}{3}$

6. Support for students and their learning

6.1 Teaching on the programme is delivered in classes of normally no more than 40 students supported by tutorials with normally 3 or 4 students in a group. Additionally, every student at Ruskin is allocated a personal tutor from the course team monitoring the progress of students, providing advice and guidance and suggest other forms of support as appropriate.

6.2 The Learning Development centre offers support to students. Students on the BA (Hons) Social Work requiring support with general study skills are requested to seek support from the centre. Students requiring specialist assessments such as dyslexic assessments are referred to an external specialist in the area. Where a student is assessed as dyslexic, or as having another disability need, tutors are informed of the ways they can help support the student better (with the students consent).

6.3 The College Counsellor has an office on site. The confidential support offered encompasses short-term, focused individual work, as well as longer-term personal support. During their time at Ruskin, many students access the service to assist them to cope with the challenges of studying or of living in College, or with problems impinging from their outside or earlier lives. The College Counsellor meets students in their first term. The counselling service that the College provides has been taken up by older learners in the past and has provided an invaluable service in providing them with strategies for managing stress and coping with living communally.

6.4 The Academic Registrar at Ruskin offers advice to applicants and current students about financing their studies, meeting their accommodation and childcare needs, and coping with personal and social issues.

7. Criteria for admission

7.1 All candidates must be able to satisfy the general admissions requirements for Ruskin College. These are:

- Candidates must attend a 10 minute individual interview with the Admissions or other Tutor on the programme
- Candidates must attend an interview with two academic or academic-related staff members.
- Candidates must demonstrate commitment to the ethos and vocation of Ruskin College
- Candidates must have the ability to benefit from study at this level, fulfill the learning outcomes of the programme and achieve the standard required for the award. The ability to benefit focuses on the students being at the right stage in their lives to study successfully and ensuring that students are applying to the right programme (students who are on programmes which are not their interest area are far more likely to fail to achieve than motivated, prepared students). Ruskin is committed to the fact that achieving qualifications at this level can, and does, improve individual student's lives and the wellbeing of the communities which it serves.

College expectations for the admissions process are as follows:

- Students enquire about the programme or the College and receive information and are invited to our Higher Education Advice Days and/or Subject Taster Days
- Students' apply and are called for interview with two academic or academic-

related staff members (depending on availability); and/or as outlined in regards to individual programmes.

- Students are either offered a place or are given detailed guidance on how to develop and encouraged to reapply at a future point.
- Students accept the offered place and are called for a literacy assessment.
- Prospective students to participate in a group interview
- Students with declared disabilities are also given information and advice on applying for provision to support their needs.
- Students attend induction week which introduces Ruskin systems and people and in which students have their first tutorial.

BA Social Work admissions requirements from 2013

- On the BA Social Work programme, interviews are held with one academic Tutor and a member of the Voices of Experience (Service User Group) or a representative of the partner agencies such as Oxfordshire County Council.
- On the BA social work programme, prospective students are expected to have achieved Level 2 or Grade C at GCSE or equivalent in Maths and English, at the time of applying. In addition, they are expected to complete a literacy test focussing on writing, on the day of the interview.
- Non UK Applicants need to undertake the International English Language Testing Systems and achieve an average of Level 6.5 over the four components (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking)
- Candidates are expected to participate in a group activity as part of the interview process.

Additionally:

7.2 Ruskin College BA (Hons) social Work recognises that applicants wishing to study on the programme may have prior learning from other institutions. The Policy on Credit Transfer, Learning Outside Formal Teaching and Accreditation of Prior Learning provides information on the processes. The Policy is outlined in the Student handbook.

7.3 The quality of the student experience is captured in the College's feedback mechanisms. Students who identify specific or additional needs at the application or interview stage are encouraged to talk through support mechanisms, anxieties and barriers with interviewers and with their personal tutor, if accepted onto the programme.

8. Language of study

8.1 English

9. Information about assessment regulations

9.1 Assessment Regulations can be found in the Regulatory Framework.

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

10.1

- End of year meetings to compile the annual monitoring report
- Meeting/s with the external examiner at examination board
- Drawing up action points arising both from annual report, external examiners' report and discrete modules that are monitored at the Humanities and Social Sciences Board.
- Input of academic reviewer installed by the CICP, as appropriate
- Tutor attendance at best practice sessions and other CPD events organised internally
- Tutors' participation in external CPD especially conferences, writing of papers /books,

attendance at seminars, reviewing articles for journals etc.
 -Tutors bringing critical self-reflection gained from their work as external examiners in other institutions / experience of teaching in other institutions
 - Monitoring of above through annual staff development report drafted by the relevant management systems in place and discussed at AQSC with action points for implementation in following year

Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	Study module/unit	Programme outcomes									
		A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	C1	D1	D2	D3	
4	Social Policy	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
	Sociology	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
	Psychology		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
	Principals and Practice of Social Work (Including Observation Placement)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Law					✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Welfare Rights					✓		✓	✓		

Level	Study module/unit	Programme outcomes							
		A4	A5	B3	B4	C2	C3	D4	D5
5	70 day Placement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Principals and Practice of Social Work and Law	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
	Research and Social Work							✓	✓

Level	Study module/unit	Programme outcomes							
		A6	B5	B6	C4	C5	C6	D6	D7
6	100 day Placement	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Dissertation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Annexe 2: Notes on completing programme specification templates

- 1 - This programme specification should be aligned with the learning outcomes detailed in module specifications.
- 2 – The expectations regarding student achievement and attributes described by the learning outcome in section 3 must be appropriate to the level of the award within the **QAA frameworks for HE qualifications**:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/default.aspx>
- 3 – Learning outcomes must also reflect the detailed statements of graduate attributes set out in **QAA subject benchmark statements** that are relevant to the programme/award: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>
- 4 – In section 3, the learning and teaching methods deployed should enable the achievement of the full range of intended learning outcomes. Similarly, the choice of assessment methods in section 3 should enable students to demonstrate the achievement of related learning outcomes. Overall, assessment should cover the full range of learning outcomes.
- 5 - Where the programme contains validated **exit awards** (e.g. CertHE, DipHE, PGDip), learning outcomes must be clearly specified for each award.
- 6 - For programmes with distinctive study **routes or pathways** the specific rationale and learning outcomes for each route must be provided.
- 7 – Validated programmes delivered in **languages other than English** must have programme specifications both in English and the language of delivery.