

Social Work and Applied Social Studies

Undergraduate



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH



Welcome

The Department of Social and Policy Sciences is a leading centre for the study of sociology, social policy, international development and social work. Many of our staff are at the forefront of their discipline and are widely respected as empirical researchers, theorists, policy analysts and educators. We have a serious commitment to understanding local and global challenges. As the map of global power, poverty and wealth changes and as new environmental and transnational risks emerge, research to understand and solve social problems becomes ever more important.

Our research record is outstanding. For example, in 2011 we were awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for our work on poverty and vulnerable people. In the latest Research Excellence Framework - the UK's independent national assessment of research quality - an impressive 80% of the Department's publications were judged as world-leading or internationally excellent (3* or 4*), with even higher scores for our research impact and environment. This put us joint 6th for research in Social Work and Social Policy in the UK (REF 2014).

Our research strengths feed into our teaching. League tables show our Social Work and Applied Social Studies degree course is consistently among the best in the country; social work at Bath is ranked 2nd in the *Times* and *Sunday Times Good University Guide 2017*, 4th in *The Complete University Guide 2017*, and in the 2016 National Student Survey, overall student satisfaction was 95%.

Bath graduates have outstanding success in finding relevant employment or further training. This is a reflection of the confidence that comes from studying in a world class institution and of the social work practice skills and knowledge gained by students during their high quality practice learning placements integral to each of the three years of the BSc (Hons) Social Work and Applied Social Studies course.

We are keen to share our enthusiasm for our subject with you and enable you to develop the knowledge and skills to take your interest in the world around you into a rewarding, socially aware career.

We look forward to meeting you!

Dr Jeremy Dixon

Head of Social Work Group

Department of Social and Policy Sciences



What is Social Work?

'The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being' (International Federation of Social Workers, 2000).

Social work is an exceptionally interesting, challenging and rewarding profession to enter. It relies on your energy, enthusiasm, creativity and personal resilience. It also depends on your capacity to put knowledge to effective use. That knowledge can take many forms: research evidence drawn from the psychological and social sciences; knowledge of policy and legislation that provides the context for contemporary practice and; knowledge drawn from the experience of practitioners and service users.

In addition to developing a sound knowledge base you will acquire the necessary skills required to practise as an effective qualified social worker in a range of care settings. The development of skills such as engagement, communication and assessment is an important part of the training and includes meeting the Professional Capabilities Framework. You will learn how to undertake direct work with service users, assess needs, respond to crisis situations, advocate on behalf of individuals or communities and work with a range of professionals from many different disciplines.

We have designed the social work programme at Bath to enable you to understand, analyse, practise and evaluate the knowledge, skills and values of social work in its theoretical, organisational and professional contexts, in order to equip you for a career that is as challenging as it is rewarding. We expect a lot from our students, as we know how much is expected from the qualified social worker.

Social Work and Applied Social Studies at Bath

League tables show our Social Work and Applied Social Studies degree course is consistently among the best in the country; social work at Bath is ranked 2nd in the *Times* and *Sunday Times Good University Guide 2017*, 4th in *The Complete University Guide 2017*, and in the 2016 NSS, overall student satisfaction was 95%. Many of our staff are at the forefront of their discipline and are widely respected as empirical researchers, theorists, policy analysts and educators.

We are committed to developing practitioners who share our ambitions for the profession and who are prepared to take on the challenges of both training and practice. Our degree programme will provide you with the opportunity to build a sound knowledge base, drawn from the social and psychological sciences, to acquire the core skills and knowledge for practice and to develop your ability to translate the values of social work into your work with a wide range of service users, their communities, families and carers. Our philosophy is that we endeavour to meet the needs of the profession and hear the voice of users and carers in a rapidly changing professional context by delivering high quality academic education underpinned by social work values.

Why study Social Work and Applied Social Studies at Bath?

- Our three year, full-time programme leads to a BSc (Honours) degree which is recognised as a professional qualification that enables you to register and to practise as a social worker
- Our degree is designed to provide you with the knowledge, skills and professional values to equip you for a career in social work
- We are very committed to social work both as an academic discipline and as a form of professional practice. Service users, carers and social work practitioners also contribute to University-based teaching
- Our formal partnerships with international institutes provide students with the opportunity for overseas fieldwork visits and exchange programmes
- The Department places great emphasis on high quality teaching and prides itself on a personal approach to its students, who benefit from small group teaching and individual support
- We have an excellent reputation for cutting edge research and innovative teaching. We were ranked joint 6th in the country in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework.

Your degree structure

In each of the three years of the degree you take core, compulsory units which lay the foundations for understanding social work theory and practice. The units taught at the University are combined with placements, which are assessed periods in practice. Our academic year is divided into two semesters. You will take five units per semester; each normally comprising two to three hours per week classroom time. The units are assessed by a mix of coursework (for example essays, group reports, case study analysis, presentations and a portfolio of evidence from your placements) plus examinations.

In Year 1 the units you study chiefly relate to sociology, social policy and psychology, forming the foundation of knowledge required for social work practice. Other first year units introduce you to social work knowledge, skills and values whilst also providing opportunities to undertake some social work practice on placement (see overleaf). In addition, you will undertake a social work practice unit that prepares you for full-time placements in years 2 and 3.

Year 2 equips you with further knowledge and skills, both through learning on your first placement and through University-based teaching on such topics as discrimination and empowerment, mental health, social work with adults, child development, child protection processes and social work theories and methods.

In Year 3 there is the opportunity to develop more specialised knowledge and practice with teaching on social work with adults, children and families, and mental health social work, as the focus of your University-based and practice-based learning. The Critical reflection (dissertation), a major piece of academic work, draws together all of the learning from across the three years.

BSc (Hons) Social Work and Applied Social Studies degree course structure

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community needs assessment Introduction to social work Social problems and social policy Social work and the life course 1 Understanding society: Britain in global context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community needs assessment Classical sociological theory Readiness for direct practice Social policy, welfare and the state Social work and the life course 2
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical reflection on professional practice 1 Discrimination and empowerment: skills in practice Social work practice placement year 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health social work 1 Social work with adults 1 Social work with children and families 1 Theories and methods in social work
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health social work 2 Social work with adults 2 Social work with children and families 2 Working in a social care organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical reflection on professional practice 2 Social work practice case study Social work practice placement year 3

For the most up-to-date information and further details on the units available, please visit our website: go.bath.ac.uk/study

"Having a brother with Down's syndrome and a background in supporting adults with learning disabilities attracted me to studying Social Work and Applied Social Studies. I see a career underpinned by empathy, humanity and principles of social justice as meaningful and stimulating.

The course enabled me to develop my knowledge of social policy and psychosocial theory and informed my practice. Studying social work within a range of contexts provoked further enthusiasm for the subject, instilling faith in my abilities and a love of learning. Returning to study as a mature student was challenging, but I managed to find commonality with my peers and the pace of the course enabled me to move into a learning environment with minimal difficulty. The course requires emotionally-demanding reflection on your own life experiences, but the support from academic staff helped me develop resilience. I've become interested in mental health, working with asylum seekers and refugees, and fostering and adoption, but remain open-minded about my career path as I'm fascinated by so many areas of social work in both the statutory and voluntary sector. The course helps you learn so much and leads to a qualification which opens doors to many interesting opportunities."

Bethany-Rose Oakley

Student



"I chose to study Social Work at the University of Bath due to the degree's brilliant reputation and high quality teaching. The degree's unique social studies aspect has allowed me to gain insight into how sociology and social policy influence the lives of the clients we work alongside.

The degree culture is very close knit; as a cohort we had good quality discussions in lectures enhancing our learning, and being a small cohort I was known by name and supported 110% by staff who go above and beyond for students. The lecturers also arrange current practitioners and service users to be part of our learning which has proved engaging and emotive.

There is never a dull moment studying this degree and I am proud to say it enabled me to fulfil my passion of helping others be the best they can and create change for the better. I learned copious amounts and achieved my goal of becoming a social worker."

Sherri Thompson, student

International social work development

The social work programme at Bath is set in an international context and encourages its students to see social work as a global occupation. The programme has formal partnerships in place with the top social work departments in China (Sun Yat-sen University), the US (Ohio State University), South Korea (Yonsei University) and South Africa (Stellenbosch University). These provide students with the opportunity for overseas fieldwork visits and study tours.



Service user and carer participation

In keeping with the values of the social work profession, the programme is designed and delivered in partnership with service users and carers. Local service user and carer organisations play an important role in the students' training. Across the three years of the course service users and carers are meaningfully involved in designing and delivering thought-provoking lectures and training sessions. Student feedback has consistently highlighted the value of this involvement and the impact that the service user and carer input has had on their learning experience on the course.

"The importance of service users and carers on the social work degree course cannot be overstated. Meeting face to face with service users not only taught me a great deal about social work but also about myself. The honesty and unique insight that was brought by the individuals I encountered challenged my assumptions on many levels and had a lasting impact on my perception of others. Engaging with service users has made the program very real and very human for me and has been a truly valuable experience."

Kieran Smith

Student





"The social work programme at The University of Bath is fantastic. The Social Science base has given me an understanding of social and policy effects on the people we work with. Small class sizes enable teaching staff and students to get to know each other really well, leading to interesting class discussions and a sense that the people responsible for placements and teaching really understand me. The teaching towards a generic qualification is well-balanced and allows you to gain a range of skills and understanding of the variety of social work opportunities available when you qualify.

The fact that teaching staff have all practised, or are still practising, social work means that theory is always related to practice, helping to link everything together. Placement opportunities are varied and interesting, in a wide variety of settings and are matched to the learning needs you identify yourself, enabling you to grow and develop in the directions you want to go. I have enjoyed learning about myself and my own values in placements with adults with learning difficulties and with children who have witnessed or experienced domestic abuse. With support in placement from my tutor and practice educator I have been able to use my experiences to build on the professional values inherent in social work and to develop skills and experience which will be invaluable in professional practice.

I had the great fortune and privilege to visit one of the partner universities in China, which has allowed me to think about how social work is practiced in different cultures. The opportunities offered to Bath students to experience work with our partner universities, as well as with a range of service users and professional partners makes it a unique and brilliant course."

Nicola Mackenzie-Smaller

Graduate, Social Worker for Wiltshire Council

Practice learning opportunities (placements)

Central to the degree programme is the opportunity to apply your developing knowledge, skills and professional understanding to direct practice with service users. Hence, in addition to the University based learning, in the course of your training you undertake a total of 170 days assessed practice plus 30 skills days. The placement is an opportunity to use the theory you have learnt in a practical context, refine your skills further and enhance your employability.

There are practice learning opportunities in a range of organisations, such as user-led agencies, small or large voluntary groups, independent or private agencies, local authority social work teams and health trusts. You may be working with children and their families, older people, those with mental health problems, the learning disabled or people with alcohol/drug problems.

Throughout your placements, you will be supported by staff tutors, as well as designated practice educators in the agency where you are placed. Both university and agency staff will enable you to learn from your practice as well as assess your professional competence. At the end of each of your periods of professional practice you will produce a portfolio of your work which will form part of your assessment.

As you progress through the three levels of practice you will be involved in work of increasing complexity, requiring more sophisticated reflection and increased competence in conceptualising and applying theories, methods and knowledge drawn from the social and psychological sciences. By the end of the third year you will have demonstrated that you are competent to practise as a professional social worker.

The degree is delivered through an alliance where the University as the academic institution collaborates with local social work agencies including service user and carer organisations. The current allies include: Bath and North East Somerset Council, Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council, Bath People First, Off The Record Bath, Off The Record Bristol, Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust and The Carer's Centre.

"My placement was spent at the Swindon Carers Centre, working with adult carers of those who suffer substance abuse, having previously worked with the sufferers themselves. Carers are so wrapped up in their role, it was a great experience helping them to enhance their wellbeing and life outside caring. I loved my placement and acquired a range of skills relevant to my future career, particularly in assessments, the specific area I was keen to develop."

Bobbi Alison
Student

"The placements offered are amazing, representing a wide range of sectors. I am working as a Social Worker in supported housing for 16-18 year olds, helping them on their journey to independent living. I also work on the Duty and Assessment children and families' team, dealing with requests for services, deciding what the next steps should be on a case-by-case basis. Putting what we've learnt into practice, working directly with service users, is so rewarding. The course and placement have taught me so much about the current issues in social work but also about myself. The experience gained on placement is vital to our development as professionals."

Heidi Orford
Student



Careers and destinations

Bath graduates have outstanding success in finding relevant employment or further training. This is a reflection of the confidence that comes from studying in a world class institution and of the work related skills gained by students.

As a professionally qualified social worker you will work in a wide range of health or social care settings. Increasingly, employment opportunities arise in multidisciplinary settings where social workers work alongside healthcare professionals such as occupational therapists or community nurses.

Further information about careers in social work, as well as the professional standards all practitioners and students must follow, can be obtained from The British Association of Social Workers: www.basw.co.uk

"I genuinely feel very passionate about the University of Bath and the degree course – it encouraged success in terms of academia but fundamentally the value base that Bath instils has really shaped my career path and my passion for service user empowerment and strengths-led practice."

Tara Gretton

Graduate, Social Worker at 117 Project, Bath

"My placement opportunities at the University of Bath have been outstanding; they suited my individual learning aims and provided me with the experience to seek employment in my chosen area of social work. The quality and standard of teaching is recognised by employers, especially in relation to research, current critical debates and the grounding in sociology and social policy provides a significant context to social work in contemporary society."

"My final placement at Cafcass really helped prepare me for my role as a social worker in the child protection court team where I now work. My time at Bath provided me with the confidence and competence to practice at the standard expected of a newly qualified social worker and this is largely due to the encouragement and support by staff and peers on the programme. There are further opportunities to study at master's level and above and I would undoubtedly choose Bath as a place to study again in the future."

Zoe Ash

Graduate, Social Worker for BANES Council



Department staff and affiliates are involved in a diverse range of fields in social work. Here are details of a few staff members to show how our research and teaching interests overlap:

Dr Louise Brown

Louise is currently researching the development of models of child protection in an international context (working with NGOs, academics and local government in China on child protection), and ‘improving practice through social innovation’; a training programme for social entrepreneurs developing business ideas in health and social care.

Jo Davis

Jo plays a key role working with our partner agencies to develop new placement opportunities and implementing new quality assurance techniques for placements so students can be confident in the quality and standards of their placements.

Dr Jeremy Dixon

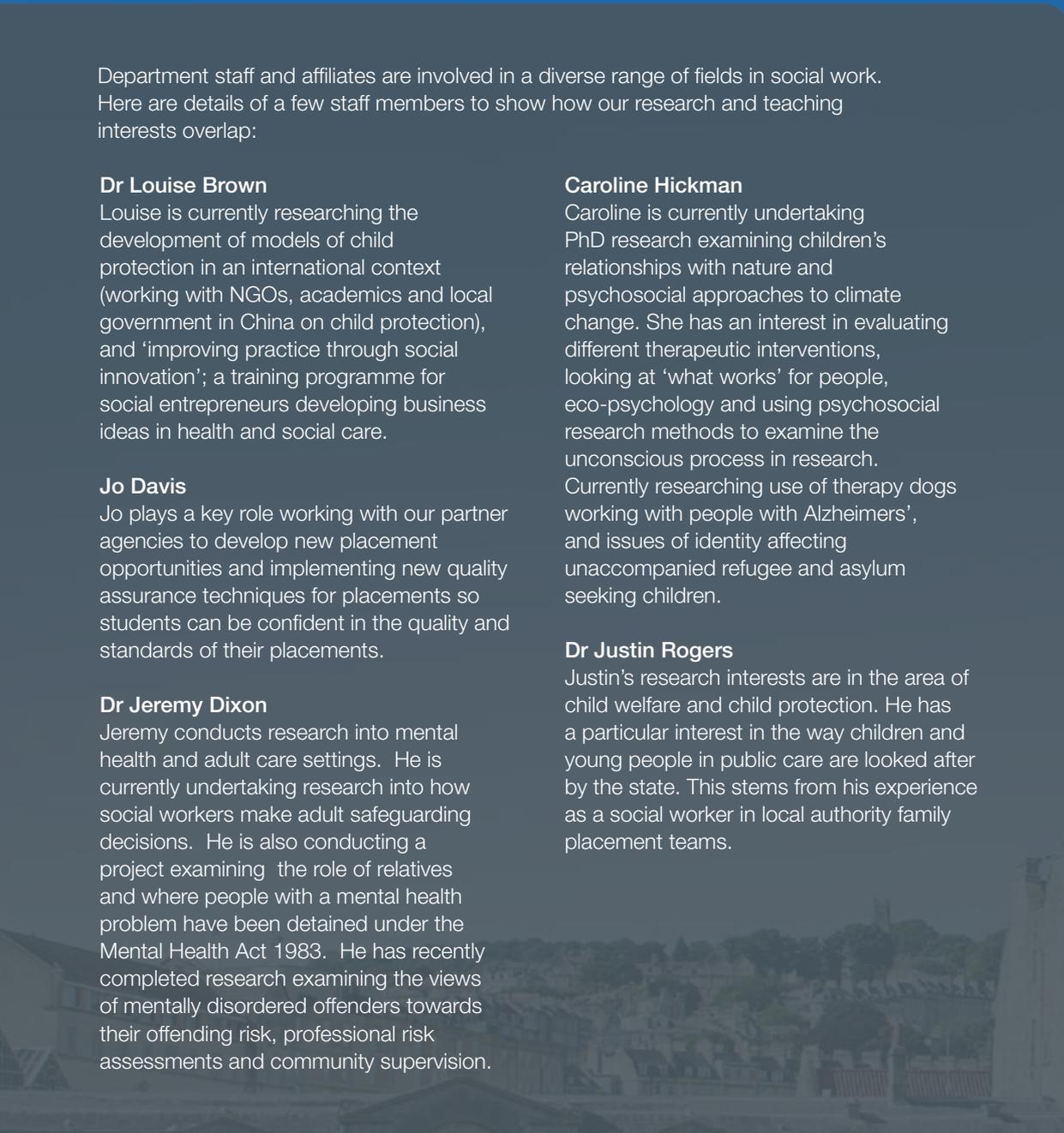
Jeremy conducts research into mental health and adult care settings. He is currently undertaking research into how social workers make adult safeguarding decisions. He is also conducting a project examining the role of relatives and where people with a mental health problem have been detained under the Mental Health Act 1983. He has recently completed research examining the views of mentally disordered offenders towards their offending risk, professional risk assessments and community supervision.

Caroline Hickman

Caroline is currently undertaking PhD research examining children’s relationships with nature and psychosocial approaches to climate change. She has an interest in evaluating different therapeutic interventions, looking at ‘what works’ for people, eco-psychology and using psychosocial research methods to examine the unconscious process in research. Currently researching use of therapy dogs working with people with Alzheimers’, and issues of identity affecting unaccompanied refugee and asylum seeking children.

Dr Justin Rogers

Justin’s research interests are in the area of child welfare and child protection. He has a particular interest in the way children and young people in public care are looked after by the state. This stems from his experience as a social worker in local authority family placement teams.



About Bath

Bath is a great place in which to be a student. The University occupies a purpose-built campus which is safe and friendly, with a vibrant international community, excellent student services, outstanding arts facilities and a first-class sports complex.

The campus is located about a mile from the World Heritage City of Bath - one of the most interesting, elegant and vibrant cities in the UK, home to several excellent museums and galleries, parks, numerous restaurants, cafés and pubs and a great range of shopping.

Frequent bus services link the campus, city and major student residential areas. Bath is not far from Bristol International Airport. By train, London is approximately 90 minutes and Bristol about fifteen minutes away. You are always connected to your work, your home and your social life when studying.

Contact us

@ admissions@bath.ac.uk

+44 (0)1225 383019

For more information about this degree, entry requirements, fees and admission, please visit our website:

go.bath.ac.uk/soc-work-applied

Key Facts

BSc (Hons) Social Work and Applied Social Studies
Three years L501

Assessment Methods

- Attendance
- Coursework
- Essay
- Placement
- Portfolio
- Seminar
- Written examination

Delivery methods

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Tutorials
- Practical sessions

Contact time with staff

In your first year, you should expect to spend 32% of your time in a lecture or seminar setting and 68% of the time in independent study.

Entry requirements

Typical offer: ABB-BBB

A personal statement is requested with your application and is critical in informing the Admissions Team that you have personal, volunteering and/or paid employment experience relevant to social work or social care and that you are capable of studying social work at degree level.

You should reflect on what you have learnt from these experiences and show us how you intend to apply this knowledge to your future study. You need to demonstrate you can express yourself fluently and articulately and are properly equipped to be successful on an academic course in higher education.



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