Postgraduate Diploma and MA in Social Work

Information for student enquirers in Scotland

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Structure and content
The postgraduate programme will be in two stages:

Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work
*K832 Developing social work practice + K833 Advancing social work practice*

A Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work, which will be the qualifying award to apply for entry to the SSSC register as a social worker. 120 academic credits studied over 17 months, including two practice learning placements.

MA in Social Work
*KXX829 Transforming professional practice*

A Masters project/dissertation module, which will enable you to extend your skills in research and analysis. 60 academic credits studied over 9 months. This will involve a small-scale research project, which will normally be relevant to setting in which you are located and have the potential to benefit the development of practice within that area.

Completion of all three modules leads to the award of MA in Social Work.

Module content
Relevant teaching has been integrated into K832 *Developing social work practice* and K833 *Advancing social work practice* to provide a thematic approach to exploring law; digital and information literacy; values and ethics; safeguarding practices; theories and approaches in social work intervention; and research methods and evidence-based practice. There are study pathways in each of the practice-related modules, so that you can study relevant learning guides alongside your placement, to support your practice learning with particular service user groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>K832 Developing social work practice</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start date:</strong> late January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice-based learning:</strong> 80-day placement (normal attendance pattern 4 days per week for 20 weeks)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Foundations for social work practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication and interpersonal skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social divisions and diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Human growth and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social work practice with children and families OR Social work practice with adults (you will take both pathways, one on K832 and one on K833)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching, learning and assessment:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Supported by two OU tutors, a module tutor and a programme (practice) tutor</td>
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<td>• Residential weekend</td>
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<td>• Three face-to-face workshops</td>
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<td>• A range of online collaborative activities and discussion seminars</td>
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<td>• Online self-directed learning, accessible 24/7</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Two tutor-marked assignments and an end-of-module assignment related to practice learning</td>
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</table>
K833 Advancing social work practice

Start date: early October  End date: late May/early June  Credits: 60

Practice-based learning: 90-day placement (normal attendance pattern 4 days per week for 23 weeks)

Content:
- Research-based practice
- Social work practice with children and families OR Social work practice with adults (you will take both pathways, one on K832 and one on K833)
- Mental health
- Professional development

Teaching, learning and assessment:
- Supported by two OU tutors, a module tutor and a programme (practice) tutor
- Three face-to-face workshops
- A range of online collaborative activities and discussion seminars
- Online self-directed learning, accessible 24/7
- Two tutor-marked assignments and an end-of-module assignment related to practice learning

KXK829 Transforming professional practice

Start date: October  End date: June  Credits: 60

Practice-based learning: no

Content:
- A guided enquiry into advanced social care/social work practice leading to recommendations for improvement in a practice setting
- Includes an investigation of both evidence and experience and explores different means for dissemination of best practice

Teaching, learning and assessment:
- Project/dissertation
- Supported by an OU module tutor
- Online group tuition and individual contact
- Online self-directed learning, accessible 24/7
- Four tutor-marked assignments and an end-of-module assignment
Time to complete
The presentation pattern will allow students to complete the PG Dip within 18 months, and the MA within 30 months. The maximum time allowed is 5 years for the PG Dip and 9 years for the MA.

Year 1
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December

Results

K832
K833
KXXK829

Year 2
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December

Results

Year 3
January
February
March
April
May
June
July

Results
Entry requirements
All candidates must meet minimum entry requirements before applying for the postgraduate social work programme.

1. You must have a minimum of a 2:2 classification in a relevant health/societal/psychology or other cognate discipline such as:
   - Health and Social Care
   - Nursing
   - Occupational Therapy
   - Psychology
   - Sociology/Social Studies
   - Law/Legal studies
   - Teaching/Education
   together with a proven record of experience of engaging directly with Service Users in a professional setting. Candidates’ experience will be considered individually on application but we would normally expect a minimum of one year’s experience – either paid or voluntary – in a setting such as a local authority or a health or social care provider in the private, voluntary or independent sector.

2. In addition, you must:
   - Demonstrate your ability to understand and communicate in written and spoken English
   - Demonstrate that you have appropriate personal and intellectual qualities to train as a social worker
   - Be part of a selection process (see below)
   - Register as a student social worker with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), which includes a check under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme.
   - Provide evidence of Standard Grade Two in English and mathematics, or a recognised equivalent.
   - Be able to provide evidence of 30 days’ prior professional practice; this does not necessarily need to be undertaken before applying for a place, but must be completed by the end of December 2017 for the January 2018 start.

Selection process
There is a formal admissions process, requiring applicants to:

   - Complete an OU application form, which will include a personal statement, references, employer endorsement and a declaration of suitability for social work.
   - Take part in an interview process, which will include a written test.

For further information see ‘How to apply’ below.

Any offer of a place on the programme will be subject to Recognition of Prior Professional Practice (RPPP) equivalent to 30 days of practice-based learning; further information about this requirement will be provided with the application form.
How to apply
This course includes two compulsory periods of assessed practice learning, which must be undertaken in a suitable work environment. The work-based learning is delivered in collaboration with employers, who are responsible for ensuring that suitable placements are available. For this reason, we are unable to accept applications from individuals. To be eligible, you must already be working in a social care environment, and your application must be made through your employer.

These are the steps to making an application:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Who</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speak to your employer to find out whether they would be willing to support you to train as a social worker. If they are not currently supporting students on the OU programme and would like to find out more about what’s involved, they can contact the social work team directly by email or phone: <a href="mailto:scotland@open.ac.uk">scotland@open.ac.uk</a> or 0131 226 3851. We can arrange for a member of the OU social work team to meet with your employer, to explain and discuss the programme in more detail and to ensure that they are able to provide practice learning opportunities that meet the requirements for social work students.</td>
<td>At any time</td>
<td>Applicant and Employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If your employer agrees to support you, they complete and return a Provisional Booking Form, available from the Social Work Co-ordinator, Scotland (contact details as above). We will send your employer an application pack for you to complete:  • Application form  • Recognition of Prior Professional Practice (RPPP) requirements and proforma</td>
<td>No later than: 3 November 2017 for January 2018 start.</td>
<td>Employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should pass your completed application form to your employer, who needs to sign it to confirm their support before returning to OU by the due date.</td>
<td>Deadline by arrangement between your employer and the Social Work Co-ordinator, Scotland</td>
<td>Applicant and Employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will need to provide evidence that you meet the academic entry requirements (normally your examination/degree certificate(s)) – we need to see the originals and you will be asked to bring these with you if invited to interview.</td>
<td>In advance of the selection interview</td>
<td>Applicant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview process</td>
<td>September – December 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If successful in the interview process, you will be asked to submit your RPPP evidence</td>
<td>No later than: 15 December 2017</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>After RPPP, if your place is confirmed you will be sent a Student Registration Agreement to complete and pass to your employer. They will return it to the OU by the due date. Please ensure you allow sufficient time for your employer to process the form, particularly in view of public holidays at this time of year.</td>
<td>No later than: 4 January 2018</td>
<td>Applicant and Employer</td>
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Fees

The fee information provided here is valid for modules starting before 31 July 2018. Fees normally increase annually in line with inflation and the University’s strategic approach to fees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Fee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K832</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>£3,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>K833</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>£3,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>KXK829</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>£2,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Contact us

Go to:
http://www.open.ac.uk/postgraduate/qualifications/e85 for the PG Dip or
http://www.open.ac.uk/postgraduate/qualifications/f80 for the MA in Social Work

Phone: **0131 226 3851** to speak to a member of the social work team

Email: scotland@open.ac.uk