To become a Social Worker you need an approved social work qualification. A BA undergraduate degree or a postgraduate masters degree will enable you to register as a social worker.

What type of roles could I undertake as a qualified social worker?

Social workers aim to support people to develop the skills and resilience to improve their own lives. Social workers protect children and adults with support needs from harm. From helping keep a family under pressure together to supporting someone with mental health problems, social work is a varied, demanding, often emotional and very rewarding career.

Social workers are employed by a wide range of organisations, including Local Authorities, hospitals, voluntary and independent organisations, academic institutions involved in social work training, and recruitment agencies.

Most social work roles are divided into two main specialisms – those who work in adults’ social care, and those who work in children’s social care. Whilst you are undergoing your social work training, you will have the opportunity to experience both fields of social work practice and will most likely make a decision about which you would prefer to specialise in by the end of your second year – though some students wait until their third year to make their final choice.

‘Social work is a unique profession rich with meaning, action, and the power to make a difference’ (CSWM: 2019)

Our [NYCC] Vision

To promote and develop excellence in social work practice by working collaboratively across our partnership, with universities and with wider stakeholders. We aim to develop Social Workers who are able to meet the complex challenges of frontline practice whilst supporting children, adults, their families and communities to achieve positive outcomes.

The Teaching Partnership that NYCC is part of aims to provide social work students, with comprehensive practice experience in statutory social work that prepares and supports their transition to frontline practitioner.

Why choose social work?

Watch the films Here to hear why some Social Workers chose the profession and to hear their experiences of Social Work.
Social Work Apprenticeship Route

Within NYCC we have an excellent history of delivering/providing successful apprenticeships and many of our apprentices have been very successful and progressed into permanent jobs at higher levels. Four Social Work Degree Apprentices (CYPS) began their three year programme in February 2020. This is being run as a pilot/first cohort. We will provide more information as to if/when we are running further cohorts.

- The apprentice will achieve a degree in 'Social Work' whilst gaining 'on-the-job' experience to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviour required to be a competent social worker.
- The training will typically take 36 months and a minimum of 20% of the apprentices paid working hours will be spent on off-the-job training.
- To apply you will need GCSEs in English and mathematics at grade C or above.

If successful, Apprentices will leave the course with a degree and professional social worker status. The apprenticeship can be found [here](#). Visit [Skills for Care - Social work apprenticeship](#) for updates, and find out more about [apprenticeships](#).

Step Up to Social (SUSW) Work Route

NYCC have trained 23 SUSW students (with a 80% retention rate) to date. Cohort 6 commenced in January 2020. This is a 14-month Government funded programme that sponsors a fixed number of individuals each year to undertake social work training – this is a course for students who want to be Social Workers in Children’s Services.

Eligibility criteria

Applicants must have one of the following in any discipline (or an approved overseas equivalent):

- A minimum 2:1 level 6 degree qualification, for example, a degree with honours or a graduate certificate;
- A minimum 2:2 honours degree plus a higher degree (level 7 or above), for example, a Master’s degree or a Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

Applicants must also:

- Have GCSEs in English and mathematics at grade C or above and a minimum of 6 months experience of voluntary or paid work with children, young people or families.

The Step Up to Social Work programme accepts applications every two years. If we confirm another cohort of the programme, the next application round would open in early 2021, for training to start in 2022. Please find further information [here](#).

University Route

You would be trained as a generic social worker and could opt to work in either children’s social care or in adults social care. The entry requirements and admissions processes for each university may vary slightly, so it is worth looking at university websites before you apply.

The two universities within the Partnership that NYCC are part of, are the University of Huddersfield and the University of York.

- [York University - Social Work](#)
- [University of Huddersfield - Social Work](#)

The Cost?

**The Apprenticeship Route**

Your fees will be paid by NYCC. For the current pilot cohort you will receive your current salary.

**Step Up to Social Work**

Your fees will be paid by DfE. You will receive a bursary of at least £19,000 per year. Please note the bursary varies for each cohort.

**University Route**

You will pay your own fees which vary. For instance Huddersfield University in 2019/20 (full-time tuition fee) is £6,500 for the first year. You will have the option of a Student Loan.
The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) has four level descriptors for pre-qualifying levels of social work: entry level (below) readiness for direct practice, end of first placement and end of last placement. Please find more details here.

**PROFESSIONALISM** - Identify and behave as a professional social worker, committed to professional development

**VALUES AND ETHICS** - Apply social work ethical principles and values to guide professional practices

**DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY** - Recognise diversity and apply anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive principles in practice

**RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC WELLBEING** - Advance human rights and promote social justice and economic wellbeing

**KNOWLEDGE** – Develop and apply relevant knowledge from social work practice and research, social sciences, law, other professional and relevant fields, and from the experience of people who use services

**CRITICAL REFLECTION AND ANALYSIS** - Apply critical reflection and analysis to inform and provide a rationale for professional decision-making

**SKILLS AND INTERVENTIONS** - Use judgement, knowledge and authority to intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support, prevent harm and enable progress

**CONTEXTS AND ORGANISATIONS** - Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing organisational contexts, and the social and policy environments that shape practice. Operate effectively within and contribute to the development of organisations and services, including multi-agency and inter-professional settings.

**PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP** – Promote the profession and good social work practice. Take responsibility for the professional learning and development of others. Develop personal influence and be part of the collective leadership and impact of the profession.
How long will it take me to qualify?

This depends on the particular route you are taking – but generally speaking a conventional BA degree course would take you 3 years to complete. The Masters [MA] route would take two years, and would be available to those with an existing degree in another subject. York and Huddersfield University both offer a four year Social Work course with an integrated Masters (an advanced alternative to a standard three-year BA Social Work degree).

The Step Up to Social Work scheme is run by the Department for Education and takes 14 months to complete.

The Social Work apprenticeship route would also generally take 36 months.

All social work training routes will require that you undertake work-based placements, to enable you to put your knowledge and skills into practice – so whichever route you choose, you will need to be able to participate in placements (within a social work setting).

What about travel costs and expenses?

Generally speaking, we would expect student social workers to be able to drive, and to have access to a car for the duration of their placements (however, medical or disability factors and ‘access to work’ would be taken into consideration). At NYCC we aim to offer our students support and guidance at all times.

Social Work Students on placement in NYCC will receive 0.42p per mile (First and Final Placements). Please note Step Up to Social Work students do not receive mileage (but do receive a bursary). Students are required to have ‘Business Use’ on their car insurance.

When/where will I be on placement?

Students are required to complete a ‘Placement Request Form’ and the process of identifying an appropriate placement commences. Travel ‘time’ for students is taken into consideration when placements are allocated.

All Social Work Programmes use a model of 170 days on Learning Placement which includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70 days</td>
<td>First Placement;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 days</td>
<td>Final Placement;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Days</td>
<td>Skills Days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The placement criteria will include Social Work Students having a different practice experience in their first and last placements with the student undertaking statutory interventions.

Each student must have experience:

- In at least two practice settings;
- Statutory social work tasks involving legal interventions;
- Of providing services to at least two service user groups (for example child care and mental health).

Placements times can differ depending on which Programme you are on. Most placements will start in
Questions and Answers

February 2020

Are students registered with Social Work England?
No, students are not registered with Social Work England until they qualify as Social Workers.

Are NYCC in a Teaching Partnership?
Yes, the Teaching Partnership consists of four local authorities and two universities. These are Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council (Lead Partner), City of York Council, Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council, North Yorkshire County Council, University of Huddersfield and the University of York.

What hours are social work students expected to work?
Each placement has a specific number of days that need to be completed within the agency. Students are expected to work the same hours as other workers within the agency and this may vary between different organisations. The usual range of hours worked per week varies between 35 and 40 hours.

Are social work students insured?
The Authority’s Public Liability Insurance covers students whilst they are on their learning placement. Social work students who use their own car in the course of their work on placement are responsible for ensuring that they have ‘business use’ insurance cover.

Am I guaranteed a job at the end of the programme?
No, it is not possible to guarantee you a job but NYCC will let you know when vacancies arise within the last three months of your Social Work course.

Are there any other options to complete a Social Work Degree?
There is the Think Ahead programme (mental health social workers) and Frontline that you could explore further or the Open University Degree. Please note NYCC do not sponsor the above routes.

Are students DBS checked?
All students are asked by the university to complete an Enhanced Disclosure form for the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). These are processed by the university for all placements. If the check reveals any previous convictions the university will inform NYCC and we will discuss this with the University.

I have heard of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) does this apply to Social Work Students?
Yes, the PCF is a framework for the nine levels of social work in England. As a student you will need to reach the pre-qualifying levels of social work: entry level, readiness for direct practice, end of first placement and end of last placement/completion. Find out more here.

How can I prepare for a Social Work course?
- You could research the social work course/University by looking at the website and attend an open day.
- Get as much practical experience as you can.
- Review relevant legislation and policies.
- Update yourself on current news and issues.
- Research websites, such as Community Care, CSWM, One Stop Social Work, BASW and Research in Practice.

Questions you could consider:
- Why do you want to be a social worker?
- What do you think are the qualities of a good social worker?
- How do your talents and skills match the qualities needed?
- Do you have an initial understanding of difference and diversity within society?
- Can you think of a stressful or demanding situation - what did you learn?
- Have you contributed to effective team working?
- Do you recognise the impact your own values and attitudes can have on relationships with others?

Contact us

Please note, the information is correct at the time of writing (February 2020) and will be updated on a regular basis.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact a member of the team.

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