

MSc in Social Work Research



What will I study?

This programme creates links between social work research and practice in a range of settings. You will be taught the necessary skills to undertake research into social work and social care as practice-based professionals or as postgraduate research students.

This degree helps you acquire tools to maximise your work in addressing real issues of concern with policy makers, managers, practitioners and service users in social work and care.

The programme offers a combination of academic rigour, up-to-date practice content and relevant and transferable research skills development. Core units will draw on theories and research methods from across the social sciences - including economics, law and philosophy - providing you with a strong foundation to then carry out your own research.

Optional units build on our particular research expertise and will focus on the skills you will require as a social work researcher engaged with a range of multi-disciplinary colleagues. For example, you may choose to study community development programmes in the context of poverty, interventions to tackle domestic violence, or programmes for young offenders. Other optional units focus on the wellbeing of particular groups: children with disabilities, people with severe and long-term mental illness, or asylum seekers and migrants.

Programme structure

The programme is delivered through a combination of intensive block teaching and weekly delivery so as to be most accessible to postgraduate students, busy policy professionals and practitioners. The delivery of units on the programme is designed to allow students to accumulate credits flexibly and organise the patterns of attendance to suit their own needs and circumstances.

The MSc consists of four core units and two optional units, along with a dissertation of 10,000 to 15,000 words.

This programme does not include practical training in social work and does not lead to a professional qualification in social work. If you would like to study for a qualification in social work practice, please ask about the Social Work MSc.

Why choose Bristol?

The School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol is one of the leading centres for Social Work Research in the UK.

The programme is uniquely placed within the multi-centred School for Policy Studies and offers elective courses in areas of the School's particular research expertise, including child and family welfare, gender and violence, health and social care, poverty and social exclusion, and practice-oriented evaluation.

The MSc Social Work Research shares close ties with the MSc Policy Research and MSc Disability Studies offering a range of mandatory and optional course units within a challenging research and learning environment.

The programme is recognised by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as a research training programme for the South West Doctoral Training Partnership SWDTP Pathway in Social Work.

Careers in Social Work Research

The programme emphasises the development of social work and social research and analysis methods, as well as substantive knowledge. Graduates from our MSc Social Work Research can go on to careers as social work and care researchers or analysts, or research commissioners/managers in public or private agencies, both in the UK and internationally.

Potential employers include local or central government departments, voluntary or charitable organisations, national or international non-governmental organisations, or global institutions such as the United Nations.

Further Information

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