



University of Chester

Programme Specification
Social Policy Health & Housing BA (Hons) (Level 6 only)
2018 - 2019

1. Final Award

Bachelor of Arts (Level 6 only)

2. Programme Title

Social Policy Health & Housing

3. Internal Programme Title

Social Policy Health & Housing

4. Intermediate / Exit Awards

4a. Award

4b. Title

5. Awarding Institution / Body

University of Chester

6. Programme Delivered By

St Helens College

7. Location of Delivery

St Helens College

8. Framework

Undergraduate Modular Programme

9. Mode of Study

Full-time and Part-time

10. Forms of Study

Classroom / Laboratory,

11. Normal length of study

One year full time or 2 years part-time

12. Maximum length of study

3 Years

13. Frequency of intake / starting month

Annual - September

14. UCAS Code

L410

15. JACS Code

L400

16. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check Required?

Yes

17. Faculty & Department

17a. Faculty

Social Science

17b. Department

Social and Political Science

18. Subject Benchmarking Group

Relevant QAA subject benchmarking statements are those for Social Policy (February 2016); Health Studies (October 2016); and Housing Studies (October 2014).

19. Professional Recognition By (if applicable)

The Chartered Institute of Housing has agreed to fully validate the module SO6804 as credit towards CIH membership and also to consider work submitted for SO6801 and SO6802 where it covers a significant housing element. Students enrolled on the programme are entitled to student membership of the CIH. Membership status may be reviewed when relevant modules and the programme is completed.

20. Name of Module Assessment Board (MAB)

Social and Political Science

21. Date of Approval

Friday 1st June 2012

22. Educational Aims of the Programme

- To enable students to develop an analytical and critical understanding of social policy approaches and issues and the opportunity to apply that knowledge to produce operational effectiveness in the workplace.
- To create a developed understanding of the changing requirements of the welfare sector with particular reference to social and health services and social housing provision.
- To provide an educational foundation for a range of practice-based, administrative and management careers in social services, health care and the social housing sector.
- To encourage students to make connections between social policy issues across vocational areas and to compare their own experiences in the field of welfare provision with those of fellow practitioners in related areas.
- To develop evaluative skills and the ability to identify good practice across different fields, including the advantages of inter-agency working.
- To enable students to acquire intellectual, practical and transferable skills and to enable them to use the skills in the move from dependant to independent learning.
- To develop a range of skills, personal qualities and attitudes essential to enable students to engage in a successful career within social policy and welfare settings.
- To provide students from a wide variety of backgrounds with the opportunity to realise their potential.

23. Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

The programme provides students with knowledge and understanding of:

A1. Political, ideological and theoretical approaches to contemporary social and community issues (SO6802, SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

A2. The concept of community including a range of perspectives on community wellbeing and cohesion, community action, empowerment and regeneration (SO6804).

A3. Contemporary debates over issues of social disorder, conflict, anti-social behaviour, drug use and crime, and the impact these have on communities (SO6803, SO6804).

A4. The impact of recent policy developments on the funding, structure and delivery of welfare services, and their impact on staff and service users (SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

A5. The methods used by welfare providers to ensure effective inter-agency working (SO6801, SO6803, SO6804).

A6. The relationship between theory and practice, and policy-making and policy-implementation (SO6805).

Cognitive Skills

The programme develops cognitive and intellectual skills that will enable the student to:

B1. Identify and analyse problems, and implement positive strategies to meet organisational objectives and customer needs (SO6801).

B2. Interpret and evaluate information by engaging in rational informed debate and plan and implement problem-solving and management strategies (SO6801).

B3. Demonstrate and exercise independence of mind and thought in examining social policy issues in depth and from a variety of perspectives (SO6802).

B4. Critically appraise and analyse social policy practice using concepts drawn from relevant fields such as criminology, sociology, politics and ethics (SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

Practical and Professional Skills

The programme develops Practical and Professional Skills that will enable the student to:

C1. Undertake research so as to produce extended assignments, including a project and dissertation covering both theoretical and practical aspects of social policy (SO6801, SO6802).

C2. Gather and present information in clear and appropriate formats, demonstrating an awareness of the reliability of data used (SO6801, SO6802, SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

C3. Understand the legal requirements and obligations placed on welfare and healthcare providers and their staff, and ways in which changes in legislation impact upon the welfare agencies (SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

C4. Compare the responsibilities of different welfare and healthcare agencies and the ways in which their policies impact directly upon the public and upon the work of other agencies (SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

C5. Take personal and intellectual advantage of vocational learning by networking and developing employability skills (SO6801).

Communication Skills

The programme develops Communication and Transferable Skills that will enable the student to:

D1. Apply suitable techniques and strategies in a variety of situations in order to solve problems while working individually or as a member of a team, so as to manage time effectively and meet deadlines (SO6801, SO6802, SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

D2. Structure and communicate ideas effectively, in visual, written and oral form both as a team member and individually (SO6801, SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

D3. Compare the fundamental working practices of different public bodies in the fields of social welfare, health and housing and, where appropriate, transfer skills, techniques and best practice between areas (SO6801).

D4. Learn effectively for purposes of continuing professional development in both vocational and academic contexts ((SO6801, SO6802, SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).

By the end of Level 6 students should be able to:

- Appraise critically the political and social processes underpinning recent developments in British politics, social policy and welfare reform (SO6803, SO6804, SO6805).
- Be able to implement an independent piece of social policy research and present the findings in a coherent manner (SO6802).
- Understand and critically evaluate contemporary approaches to crime and punishment, rehabilitation and desistance in theory and practice (SO6803).
- Critically evaluate the contribution of criminal justice, housing and welfare agencies in areas such as social inclusion and exclusion, community cohesion and stability, and improvements in health and wellbeing (SO6801, SO6803, SO6804).
- Analyse competing approaches to community development and change and consider the impact of political, economic and cultural changes on different social groups (SO6804).
- Examine political and social policy issues and practice from a range of ethical perspectives (SO6805).
- Critically examine and apply a range of key concepts and theoretical approaches within social policy (SO6803, SO6804)

24. Programme Structure and Features; Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

24a. Programme Structure and Features (levels, modules, credits, awards)

The award is composed of 120 Level 6 credits. All modules carry 20 credits, with the exception of the Dissertation which is a 40 credit module. All modules are compulsory. It is expected that full-time students will complete the programme in one year. The programme provides students with an opportunity to analyse developments within contemporary social policy covering social services, health and community issues, and developments in the social housing sector. In particular, the BA(Hons) Top Up programme (building on the

knowledge and skills embedded at Levels 4 and 5) encourages the utilisation of theoretical and conceptual approaches to the study of community development, conflict and empowerment, criminology and criminal justice issues, the British political system and policy-making processes, and ethical issues relevant to health, social welfare and housing practice. Recognition of the need for multi-agency approaches and cooperative working is central to the programme at Level 6, as is awareness of obstacles that may prevent the development of effective partnerships.

Key aims of the programme include reinforcing students' underpinning knowledge, helping develop key skills, linking theory with an understanding of practical workplace issues, and providing a solid basis on which to make relevant comparisons. The programme also offers students with particular interests or employment experience the opportunity to explore issues related to the areas of health, housing and social welfare, to make connections between them, and to gain work experience in at least one of the areas.

The programme is structured so as to provide students with:

- In-depth coverage of contemporary social policy issues (including, where appropriate, historical underpinnings, changing institutional structures, political reforms and legislative changes, ideological perspectives and theoretical debates)
- Support in the development of independent learning skills, including research techniques, provided as part of the Dissertation module and through academic tutorials across the programme, and building on the skills developed at Level 4 and 5
- Opportunities for personal, academic and professional development through a structured work-based placement in an area of social welfare, health and housing to complement and build upon the academic and theoretical aspects of the programme, and to encourage students to identify links between theory and practice.

24b. Module Structure

Mod-Code	Level	Title	Credit	Single
SO6801	6	Work Placement	20	Comp
SO6802	6	Dissertation	40	Comp
SO6803	6	Social Policy & Criminal Justice	20	Comp
SO6804	6	Contemporary Community Issues	20	Comp
SO6805	6	Politics, Ethics & Democracy	20	Comp

24c. Credit Accumulation

The award is composed of 120 Level 6 credits. All modules carry 20 credits, with the exception of the Dissertation which is a 40 credit module. All modules are compulsory.

24d. Details of any derogation from University Regulations (if applicable)

N/a

25. Professional Body Requirements (if applicable)

The Chartered Institute of Housing has given partial validation to the programme. Students enrolled on the programme are eligible for student membership of the CIH, and their membership status may be reviewed on completion of recognised modules and of the programme.

26. Admission Requirements

The Programme Team will consider applications from students from other HE institutions for entry to the BA(Hons) Top Up programme) who will normally be expected to hold one of the following qualifications:

- A Foundation Degree in areas of social policy or the social sciences that have sufficient overlap with the FD in Social Policy, Health and Housing for the BA(Hons) programme to be deemed a suitable progression route;
- A Diploma in Higher Education in areas of social policy or the social sciences that have sufficient overlap with the FD in Social Policy, Health and Housing for the BA(Hons) programme to be deemed a suitable progression route;
- A HND in areas of social policy or the social sciences that have sufficient overlap with the FD in Social Policy, Health and Housing for the BA(Hons) programme to be deemed a suitable progression route.

Internal applicants who have successfully completed the FD programme will normally be entitled to automatic progression onto the BA(Hons) in Social Policy, Health & Housing. Students on placement will often require a Criminal Records Bureau check.

27. Subject Benchmark Statements

The three themes of social welfare, health and housing are intended to provide a subject focus to the programme, a focus for recruitment, and a focus for the range of placements agreed with employers. The programme builds on the knowledge and skills that students have developed at Level 4 and 5 and aims to ensure that students achieve the academic standards as laid out in the QAA subject benchmark statements relevant to Social Policy (February 2016), Health Studies (October 2016), and Housing Studies (October 2014). The BA(Hons) Top Up programme covers a coherent range of themes that are typical of social policy degrees found in British universities. The information here is adapted from the list provided in the QAA Subject Benchmark statement for Social Policy (2016: para. 2.5):

Social Policy Fields and Social Problems: Crime and Criminal Justice; Health and Social Care; Housing and Urban Regeneration; Income Maintenance and Social Security; Migration; Poverty, Inequality and Social Exclusion.

Social Groups, Difference and Inequalities: Children and Young People; Disability; Ethnicity; Gender; Older Age; Religion; Social Class; Sexuality.

Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks: Citizenship and Human Rights; Needs and Social Justice; Philosophies of Welfare; Political Economy of Welfare and Welfare Regimes; Political and Social Theory.

Dynamics of Social Change and Policymaking: Demography and Population Change and Globalisation; History and Development of Welfare Systems; Mass and Social Media; New Social Movements; Policy-Making Process; Politics and Public Opinion.

Organisation and Delivery of Welfare: Devolution and Local Governance; Management of Public Services; Service User Engagement and Advocacy.

Researching Social Problems and Policy Analysis: Social Research Methods; Policy Evaluation and Policy Analysis; Comparative Social Policy; Ethics of Policy Research.

Intended outcomes are informed by the subject specific, and generic transferable skills outlined in the benchmark statements for Social Policy (2016), Health Studies (2016) and Housing Studies (2014). Specifically, the subject specific benchmark statements for Social Policy (para. 5.7) indicate that typical graduates will be able to:

i) demonstrate in-depth knowledge, systematic understanding and critical awareness of key aspects of Social Policy, including for example, how welfare state institutions function across the UK, and an ability to distinguish different welfare systems operating in other parts of the world

ii) review, consolidate, analyse, apply and extend their knowledge and understanding across a wide range of Social Policy issues as well as engaging critically with different theories, concepts, perspectives and methods presented in teaching and relevant literature.

Modules SO6801 and SO6802 enable students to develop relevant transferable skills. For example, SO6801 develops employability skills such as interpersonal and team-working skills, as well as negotiation, written and oral communication skills, and skills of self-evaluation. SO6802 develops skills associated with independent learning, information gathering and social research, as well as communication skills, self-management and critical reflection.

Modules SO6803 and SO6804 enable students to explore multi-agency approaches to social issues, and the analysis of concepts such as community, multiculturalism and citizenship. Module SO6805 enables students to explore aspects of political theory; policy making, implementation and evaluation; and ethical issues relating to social policy and professional practice.

28. Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

The programme utilises a variety of learning and teaching methods which provide opportunities for students to enhance their learning skills and personal development during their degree programme. These teaching and learning methods also take account of equal opportunities and inclusive practice, and be adapted to meet the particular needs of students.

LECTURES - will be used to provide an introduction to the main themes, debates and interpretations of their subject, conveying basic information and signposting issues to be considered. Relatively small class sizes allow lectures to be informal and interactive, whilst providing a common foundation of learning for all students. Lectures will encourage students' skills in listening, questioning, note-taking, reflection and their appreciation of how information is presented.

SEMINARS - will provide opportunities for more student-centred and interactive learning. These will often be organised around themes and designated readings. This will enable students to deepen their knowledge of a particular subject and develop their ability to critically examine alternative perspectives.

WORKSHOPS - these are intended to provide experience in collaborative and creative problem solving. Workshops will also aim to develop key skills in information retrieval and presentation, communication skills and team/group work skills.

TUTORIALS - will provide the opportunity for individual or small groups of students to meet with individual tutors. The aim is to provide a context whereby students' personal development and progress can be assessed (formative feedback); students can be encouraged to develop learning skills; students can be assisted to make informed and realistic choices within their degree course and support can be offered for individual or group project work, work-related placements and dissertation supervision.

Assessment is conducted in line with University of Chester regulations, and feedback will be consistent with University practice. The course team is committed to providing students with thorough, constructive and timely feedback, and internal moderation documentation used as part of the process of standardization in assessment encourages identification of good practice in this area.

On the programme, students are assessed through a variety of methods appropriate to the learning outcomes of each module. Non-mark-bearing formative assessments will also be used as appropriate in order to facilitate students' progress and offer informal feedback. Assessed summative coursework may include seen and unseen examinations, essays and reports, critical reviews, data response exercises, projects, portfolios and presentations. Coursework briefs and feedback sheets are used to accompany assignments, as appropriate. Assessment strategies are adopted in line with recommendations of the QAA Benchmark Statement for Social Policy & Administration (para. 4.3). Modules involving student placements or primary research will conform to the University's appropriate ethical approval policy and students will be given guidance on assessments to ensure that any ethical issues are appropriately addressed. Where necessary, advice will be obtained from the University link tutor on such matters.

All coursework must be submitted by the deadline identified in the coursework brief. Late submissions that are not covered by personal mitigating circumstances formally submitted and supported, or by agreed extensions, will be subject to penalty. Referrals and deferrals are dealt with at the appropriate Assessment Board in accordance with the University's assessment regulations. Coursework is assessed and subject to moderation in order to measure achievement against the Learning Outcomes of the module; to give students timely feedback so as to assist academic progress; to identify students' strengths and weaknesses; and to ensure parity of standards with other comparable degrees.

29. Careers and Employability

Students who graduate with the BA(Hons) Degree in Social Policy, Health & Housing will have knowledge and understanding of Social Policy with particular reference to social welfare and social care, housing and healthcare issues. Capacities for imaginative, rigorous and critical thinking will be developed through the degree. Skills and knowledge specific to particular career routes within housing, health and social welfare, embedded within a broader understanding of the contemporary social and political context, will be fostered in partnership with employer stakeholders and placement providers. The development of complementary skills applicable beyond the degree, including IT skills, research and problem solving, communication, and working as part of a team, will also be a significant element of the degree programme.

Graduates will find the programme a useful grounding for entry to a range of careers within the welfare and public sectors including the third sector. Students already working in these areas may wish to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the programme to enhance their knowledge and skills and improve their career prospects within their existing, or in new, areas of responsibility. The BA(Hons) top-up programme may provide a satisfactory basis for further postgraduate study in related specialisms.

30. Equality

St Helens College and the University of Chester are committed to the active promotion of equality of opportunity both as employers and as educational institutions. For this purpose both institutions have Equal Opportunities Policies and appropriate codes of practice. The purpose of these policies and codes of practice is to ensure that students on the Social Policy, Health & Housing programme(s) have equality of opportunity and are treated solely on the basis of their aptitude, ability and potential to pursue their course of study.

It is the intention of the University, in partnership with St Helens College, to ensure that no student will be disadvantaged or discriminated against on the grounds of: sex or age; marital or parental status; sexual orientation; racial group (race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins); creed (religious, political or personal beliefs or principles); membership or non-membership of a trade union, or socio-economic background. It also aims to ensure that disabled people, or those with special needs, do not suffer unfair discrimination and are enabled to achieve their full potential.

31. Additional Information

The programme team has developed extensive partnership links with organisations in the social welfare, health and housing sectors. Many of these have supported the programme with offers of placements, or have provided

representatives to talk to students and staff about the work they undertake. Significant stakeholder partners include: Helena Partnerships, Arena Housing, Riverside Housing, Plus Dane, Liverpool Mutual Homes, Halton Health Improvement Team, Ravenhead Foyer, Your Housing, the Brick Project (Wigan), St Helens YMCA, St Helens MBC, Warrington Borough Council, Halton Housing Trust, Brathay Trust, Wigan MBC (Dementia Care Services), St Helens CAB, Wigan CAB, Knowsley Housing Trust, South Liverpool Housing, the British Red Cross, the Children's Society, Shelter, Lansbury Bridge School St Helens, Great Places Housing Group, Bolton at Home, Merseyside Polonia, Willowbrook Hospice, Local Solutions Knowsley, St Helens Priority Families, the Birch (Skelmersdale), St Helens Young Carers, Apex Charitable Trust and the Hope Centre (St Helens).

Work Based Learning offers students a minimum of 60 hours placement with an organisation (such as one of those referred to above) during Level 6 of the programme. In the process students have the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills and abilities appropriate to any work setting. They may use the experience to explore career opportunities and work roles appropriate to their existing career development aspirations; or they may seek experience in employment areas previously unfamiliar to them. Students are free to arrange their own placement (and are encouraged to do so as part of the developmental process), or may undertake one arranged on their behalf by one of the team's designated Placement Supervisors. Whilst all efforts are made to match students to placements which align closely with their academic interests and /or prospective career, this is not always feasible. The number of placements available is also sometimes restricted, particularly in specialist areas. As a consequence, it may be necessary for some students to complete placements in organisations or roles outside their preferred specialism.

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