

Social work degree apprenticeships

Frequently asked questions for learning providers



August 2019

1. What is an integrated degree apprenticeship in social work?

It is a job where the social work apprentice gains the knowledge, skills and behaviours to be a competent social worker. This is achieved through undertaking a degree in social work, whilst working. Integration refers to the absorption of the mandatory feature of all apprenticeships, the end-point test, into the structure of the degree.

2. What academic level is the integrated degree apprenticeship in social work?

The job of social worker is achievable with a level 6 degree.

3. How long does the programme last?

It is estimated that the programme will take typically 36 months. Depending on individual circumstances, it could take less or more time.

4. What are the entry criteria?

Apprenticeships are open to all so there are no formal entry criteria. Employers and learning providers must decide whether they think a candidate is suitable and capable of completing their apprenticeship.

5. What does a typical programme look like?

This is referred to in the [assessment plan](#). The end-point assessment phase occurs in the last six months. The tests also contribute to the last 60 credits of the degree and to the overall grade."

6. Can a university use an existing qualifying social work programme?

No. The introduction of the end-point test into the degree structure means there will have to be a redesign or adaptation of social work degrees. These will need to be approved by the current social worker regulator, the Health and Care Professions Council.

7. Who will validate, approve and quality-assure the programme?

The usual arrangements for degrees will apply to the social work integrated degrees. Additionally, all apprenticeships must have an external quality assurance body to oversee their delivery. Discussions are being undertaken between the Government and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (which currently provides this role for conventional degrees) so that the QAA can take on this task.

8. How will the practice learning requirements be met?

This will be for the learning provider and employer to agree between themselves at the beginning of the programme as part of the required apprenticeship agreement.

9. How will students be assessed?

This will be for the learning provider and employer to agree between themselves at the beginning of the programme as part of the required apprenticeship agreement.

10. What is an end-point assessment?

This is a specific requirement of all apprenticeships under the reformed system. An apprenticeship is designed to produce a fully competent worker in their chosen occupation. In order to ensure full competency, the requirement is for the apprentice to be independently assessed on their higher order knowledge, skills and behaviours to prove that they have fully absorbed all their required competencies. This is a key principle of the reforms and applies to apprenticeships at all levels.

11. Is the participant apprentice a “student” or an “employee”?

Both. An apprentice is an employee who undertakes learning activities on or off the job from day one of their contract but will also need to be registered as a student with their learning provider.