

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

Faculty of Biology,
Medicine and Health



POST-
GRADUATE
**SOCIAL
WORK**

HELPING PEOPLE TO OVERCOME
LIFE'S CHALLENGES.



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SOCIAL WORK



At Manchester

If you're considering undertaking a postgraduate course in social work, you'll find the perfect environment at The University of Manchester.

The Manchester master's in social work draws upon our world-leading research and our strong links to regional employers, helping you become a highly effective social worker through a combination of high-quality teaching and excellent practice placements.

WHY MANCHESTER?

Flexible learning

Most of your teaching in Year 1 takes place in person in lectures, workshops and seminars. Your face-to-face learning is also supported by high quality asynchronous online learning delivered by a member of academic staff. These online materials are accessible at any time. This allows you some flexibility to complete the learning before your in-person seminar. You can find out more about this on our [teaching and learning page](#). We also have face-to-face teaching for seminars, workshops and skills days, which all underpin your learning and ensure you get to know other students and staff well.

Learning informed by practice

By choosing Manchester, you can be confident that you are studying a truly innovative course, focused on preparing you for practice and motivating you to further your career development. Our course is ever evolving, informed by the latest research, and incorporating input from service users and practising social workers. We also encourage students to take an active involvement in shaping the course and to work in partnership with the teaching team.

Innovative teaching

Benefit from innovative and effective teaching and learning methods, including the use of simulation suites to improve your practice skills.

Supportive staff

You will learn in small cohorts with a supportive and inclusive teaching ethos. Supporting you to become the best social worker you can be is one of our highest priorities.

Partnerships

Our membership of the Greater Manchester Social Work Academy, a Greater Manchester-wide Teaching Partnership, ensures close links between local authority and health employers and universities across Greater Manchester. The partnership aims to ensure excellence in social work education during your studies, and also when you move into qualified practice.

THE FACTS

Top city

Manchester has been voted the top city to live in the UK.

The Economist's Global Liveability Index, 2025

Research excellence

93% of our research activity was judged to be 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'. For you, this means the chance to learn in an environment where academic enquiry seeks to truly change the world.

2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF)

1st

The University of Manchester is 1st in the UK and 2nd globally for social and environmental impact.

THE University Impact Rankings 2025

1st

We are the most targeted university by the UK's top 100 recruiters.

The Graduate Market 2026

25 Nobel Prize winners

Join a community of global innovators and pioneers whose achievements have helped shape the modern world – a university where 25 Nobel Prize winners have worked or studied.

A GLOBAL COURSE

For you, this means the opportunity to learn from students with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. Our course content will address the international context of social work, providing you with the knowledge and skills to really make a difference, regardless of your location.

We have welcomed students onto the course from India, China, Hong Kong, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Namibia, Nigeria, USA, Canada, Ireland (Republic), Malaysia, Oman, Afghanistan.



WHAT IS IT LIKE STUDYING SOCIAL WORK AT MANCHESTER?



EMILY BATY

"MA Social Work at Manchester is a comprehensive course that is both challenging and engaging. It has opened my eyes to the range of opportunities available within social work. The tutors are incredibly supportive and do their best to make sure you get the most out of both academic work and placements."

"Academic workshops helped my writing style, critical thinking, and referencing, which improved my grades. I formed supportive friendships within my course, which proved invaluable. One aspect that truly sets this program apart is the emphasis in practice placements. They provided theoretical knowledge but also hands-on experience and training in real-world settings. They also broadened my skill set and prepared me for the challenges of professional social work."



ANJALI CHRISTOPHER

International student



KATHERINE ALMOND

"Simulation exercises are great for giving students a first real go at taking on the role and practical duties of a social worker in a safe environment, where they are overseen by the teaching staff who can give you guidance and constructive feedback. This definitely helped me on placement when meeting real service users, as I had already had the semi-authentic experience in the simulation rooms."



READ MORE SOCIAL WORK BLOGS WRITTEN BY OUR STUDENTS AND ALUMNI →

"The social work course at Manchester is comprehensive and designed to enhance the student's ability to appraise complex and difficult social situations. It taught me to critically draw on research, evidence-based practices, social work theories, social policies, reflections on the quality of my assessments and the methods of interventions.

"As an international student, a key highlight was the value the university places on diversity and inclusion irrespective of student background. I found the small class size ideal for peer-to-peer interactions and my learning development. I was intrigued by the wealth of experiences of the academics and the massive support and availability to support students when needed. The University of Manchester is a great place to learn, network, develop, achieve and explore endless opportunities. I'm so proud to have studied here."

AUGUSTUS AMPORFRO

Social Work MA graduate



A DAY IN THE LIFE

My placement with Trafford Council Early Help



8am

The start time is very flexible depending on what is planned for that day. Today I'm in a bit early as I have a court letter to send by midday. The letter is about previous involvement from the Family Support (IFS) team with a child and their family. The IFS and the Early Help teams work closely together so I'm able to gain a broad experience.

I have a daily check-in with my supervisor, and we discuss my appointments for the day, my upcoming experience day with Youth Justice and if there are any other opportunities I'd like. I've been able to spend the day with First Response and the Fostering Team so far to understand their roles.

9am



9.30am

I work on the court letter with support and feedback from my supervisor.

I join a Section 47 meeting where all the professionals involved in a family discuss if there is enough risk for an initial assessment by a social worker. It was interesting to see all the teams working together to plan the best route for the family.

10.15am

12 noon

Time for my visit. On this occasion I had a catch-up with the mum and dad. They had recently asked for support getting a skip, which was a massive step and demonstrated a big improvement in our relationship with the family. The dad commented that the impact on his mental health of having a clean garden for the kids to play in was amazing.

The parents receive a copy of their Early Help Assessment in preparation for an upcoming Family Support Meeting. Then I wrote and uploaded notes of the visit on LiquidLogic.



13.00pm

I get back to my flat for lunch; we can take our lunch at any time that fits in our day.

I undertake online training in Safeguarding Children in Response to Obesity where neglect is an issue. This training covered thresholds for support, the support services available, and their referral routes. Many professionals shared their expertise, such as nurses and teachers. Seeing their point of view gave me a more holistic overview of the process.

1.34pm



4pm

I quickly typed up some of today's learning experiences on PARE, our online placement portfolio, then I signed off for the day.



 **READ THE FULL BLOG... MY MA SOCIAL WORK PLACEMENT WITH TRAFFORD COUNCIL EARLY HELP – BIOLOGY, MEDICINE AND HEALTH STUDENT BLOG →**

HOW WILL I LEARN?

FACE-TO-FACE AND ONLINE LEARNING

The majority of lectures, seminars and workshops take place face-to-face on campus. Your learning is also backed up by high quality supplementary online learning resources prepared by staff that are accessible at any time and offer you additional flexibility in when you study.



SKILLS TRAINING

You will undertake 30 days of skills training during the course. In your first year you will work on your Assessed Readiness for Direct Practice before you go out on your first placement. Other skills days across the two years will focus on developing specific aspects of your practice.

PLACEMENTS

You will undertake two practice placements on your studies, which are sourced by the University on behalf of students. These include a 70-day placement in Year 1 and a 100-day placement in Year 2.



[DISCOVER MORE ABOUT PLACEMENTS AND SKILLS TRAINING](#) →

DISSERTATION

Here at Manchester, you will be supported in your dissertation studies by group workshops and also one-to-one supervision by an academic expert, who will assist you in planning, carrying out and writing up your project.

[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DISSERTATIONS](#) →



A SNAPSHOT OF RECENT RESEARCH

Our social work team actively contributes to research that supports developments in social work practice. Follow the links below to find out more. Research funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) School for Social Care Research includes:



MUSIC IN MIND

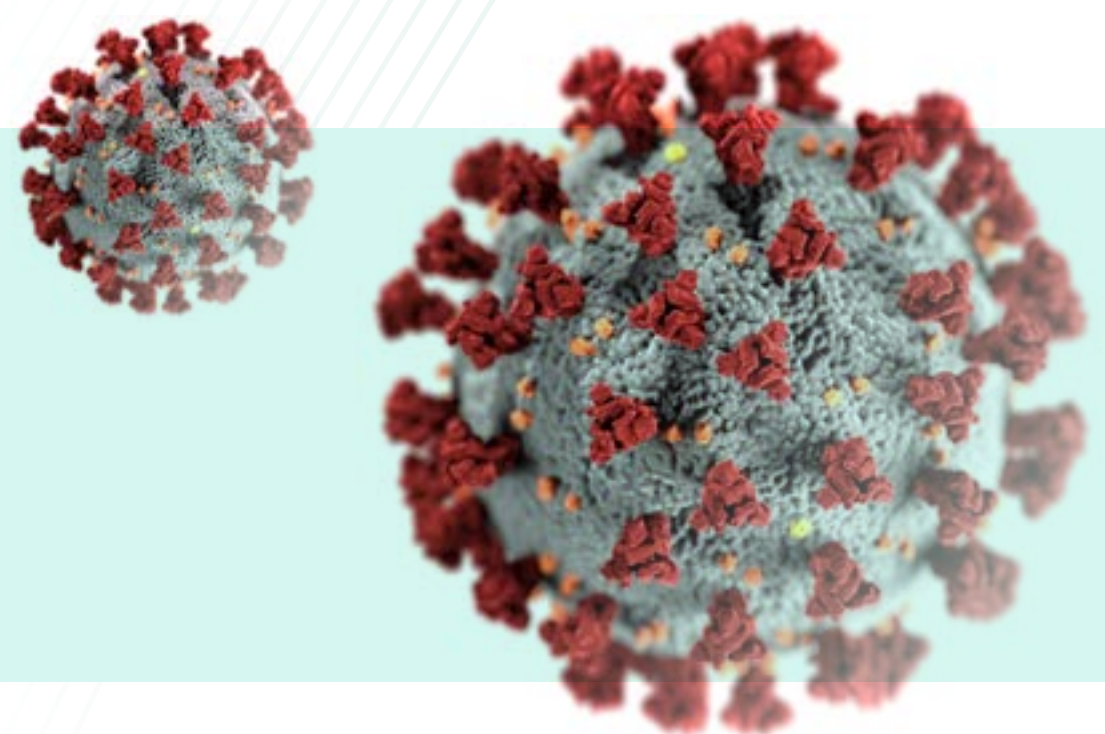
This study looks at the wellbeing effects of music on carers of people with dementia.

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

SECURE

This study is about the impact of COVID-19 on adult social care and social work services in England.

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



BECOMING AGILE

This research examines organisational and individual change in public sector work.

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

The team is also keen to explore and contribute to current developments in learning and teaching about social work education. Recently the Head of Social Work has co-authored a textbook, *Studying for your Master's Degree in Social Work (Critical Study Skills)*.



A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

As a Manchester graduate, your skills will set you apart and prepare you for a rewarding future in social work.

Qualified social workers have opportunities to work in a wide variety of settings, including child and family social work, adults, mental health, criminal justice, hospitals and palliative care, alongside a wide range of roles in the voluntary sector. These could include working to support people experiencing substance misuse or domestic abuse, and community development or advocacy work.

Here is a small taste of what our alumni have progressed into:

- > Social worker roles
- > Head of Support for Families at Home-Start UK
- > CEO at Derian House Childrens Hospice
- > Social Care Regulatory Inspector Ofsted
- > Chief Operating Officer at Tristone Healthcare
- > Managing Director, Bolton Cares Group
- > Supervising Social Worker at By the Bridge with Cambian
- > Senior Social Worker at Bolton Council
- > Research Associate at The University of Manchester
- > Operational Manager at Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
- > Intensive Family Support Worker at Trafford Council
- > Lecturer and Senior Lecturer in Social Work



WHAT CAME NEXT? A GRADUATE STORY

Josh began his career as a Social Worker for Trafford Council in a children's locality team before moving into research and teaching.

The Social Work MA prepared me for professional life as a children's safeguarding social worker. Entering the course, I didn't have a clue what field of social work I was interested in. Through placements and course content, I gradually developed a passion for children's social work.

Upon completing the course, I got a job as a social worker in the team where I had completed my placement. The professional links I developed as a result have been invaluable in carrying out my PhD research, which I recently completed. I also completed an MRes in Health and Social Care Research at Manchester, which provided core research skills training.

My research investigated how social work practice has continued to evolve post-pandemic, and how this influences the way social workers make sense of uncertain situations. I have presented findings at social work conferences, including the Joint Social Work Education and Research Conference in Glasgow and London, and the European Conference for Social Work Research in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Since completing my PhD, I have worked on a project researching digital exclusion of people living with long term conditions. I have also recently been appointed as a part-time lecturer on the MA Social Work programme at The University of Manchester.

[READ MORE ABOUT JOSH'S STORY](#) →

SOCIAL WORK AT MANCHESTER

VISIT OUR COURSE PAGE AND DISCOVER MORE ABOUT OUR MA IN SOCIAL WORK →

COURSE DATES FOR 2026

- Start date: Monday 21 September 2026 (Welcome Week)
- Teaching during Semester 1 is on Mondays (skills teaching), Tuesday and Wednesday.

We anticipate teaching will take place between 10am and 3.30pm on these days.



CONTACT US

+44 (0)161 529 4563

pgtaught.socialwork@manchester.ac.uk

[www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/
study/social-work](http://www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/study/social-work)

Connect with us:



DISCLAIMER

This brochure was updated in March 2026. It has therefore been produced in advance of course starting dates. As such, for a number of reasons, course information, including, for example, details of course content, unit availability and/or published term dates, may be amended either prior to or after you apply for a place on a course.

All information relating to tuition fees and funding is correct at the time of publication. However, this may change for a number of reasons, including if there is a change to government policy.