

Declaration of suitability for Social Work

Name:

(Please print your full name here)

Address:.....

(Please print)

.....

Contact number (home and mobile):

.....

Email:.....

I. Introduction

The Social Work England (SWE) standards require that students who are being admitted to the social work programme have undertaken:

- a) enhanced checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) [*Formerly known as Criminal Records Bureau*]; and
- b) a health check, usually by means of a self-declaration, but with an additional statement from a GP or consultant where deemed necessary.

In addition to these statutory requirements, universities may seek other relevant information to help them make a well-informed judgement about an applicant's suitability to enter social work training.

This programme wishes to preserve entry to a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds and does not wish to automatically exclude students who have a criminal or disciplinary record, or have previously experienced poor health, or have had contact with social service departments. We recognise that in many instances there is no simple criterion of suitability and thus each case will be assessed individually using our professional judgment.

You will be informed if your declaration is deemed to require further consideration. In the event that this results in your offer being withdrawn, you will be informed of the general reason (subject to any restrictions on passing on confidential information contained within the Data Protection Act 1998).

The arrangements for subsequent (post-offer) DBS, vetting and barring checks will be discussed during the selection day and in explained subsequently to those offered a place on our programmes. Please read and complete the following sections carefully. If you are unsure how to proceed or have any queries, contact the Admissions Tutor David Hambling who will advise you. The information that you provide will be treated as confidential within the organisational boundaries of the BSc Social Work programme but may be shared with the SWE, or other relevant bodies, for the purpose of deciding suitability for registration.

If you are not offered a place on the programme (offers are always conditional upon satisfactory health and DBS/suitability checks and may also have academic conditions), your declaration will be destroyed. If you take up a place elsewhere, your form will be destroyed. Otherwise, your form will be kept securely by the University, after it has been reviewed, and placed on your student file if you enrol here. Please note that after the interview day, you may be contacted by the admission Tutor for further information if you have disclosed anything in sections 2 and 3 of this document.

All information will be stored and used in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, which also provides the statutory right of access to personal information.

Please note, if you refuse to provide additional relevant information or otherwise assist in this process, the offer of a place on the programme may be withdrawn. Failure to disclose relevant information which is subsequently discovered could lead to a suitability investigation and your exclusion from training.

While the university is making a prospective judgement as to your suitability to train as a social worker on its programme, Social Work England ultimately makes the decision as to whether you are suitable for entry on the professional register upon successful completion of the course. Further information on the SWE processes for considering these issues is available on their website:

<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/1693/uk-applicant-guidance-20122019.pdf>

The university decision-making processes are informed and guided by the SWE documentation and requirements. Applicants concerned about issues of assessment relating to health or character issues should consult the **SWE UK Applicant Guidance**, with particular reference to convictions, cautions and penalty notices, pages 14 -16, safeguarding vulnerable groups, page 17, health conditions, pages 18 and 19, and fitness to practice history, page 20. Other relevant SWE documents include *Professional Standards* and *Standards of Education and Training*. <https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/professional-standards/>

2. Criminal convictions and cautions/warnings

Social work is exempted from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and information about previous convictions, cautions, warnings or ongoing police matters must be provided. A conviction does not automatically debar a student and the programme will seek further information about the circumstances to make an informed and considered judgement about a candidate's suitability in such instances and in some cases we may refer the case to the University's Fitness to Practise panel for review prior to deciding whether an offer can be made. You can make further representations in writing, giving details of the offence/experience under review, and you may be invited to discuss your application directly with the Admissions Tutor or the Programme Director. All offences must be disclosed, regardless of the time since the offence.

There are details of the time limits that apply and exceptions to this at: **SWE UK Applicant Guidance**

<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/1693/uk-applicant-guidance-20122019.pdf>

We will usually follow SWE guidance on these matters. However, if you are in any doubt at all as to whether something should be disclosed or not, you are advised to disclose rather than withhold information in a way that later becomes problematic. You are welcome to contact the admissions tutor for guidance on this matter.

Bearing the above guidance in mind, please tick yes or no for each question

	YES	NO
Have you ever been convicted of any offence by any court?		
Have you ever been cautioned?		
Have you ever been reprimanded?		
Have you ever been bound over?		
Have you ever received a final warning?		
Do you have any prosecutions pending?		
Have you ever been disqualified from working with children by an order under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000) or other provision?		

If you have answered 'YES' to any of these questions, please give full details (date, court, offence, sentence, outcome, charge, etc.) and continue overleaf if necessary.

3. Disciplinary record, unprofessional conduct, and barring lists

Social service agencies and members of the public who receive services are entitled to expect the highest standards of reliability and integrity from social workers and it is imperative that the qualifying award is held only by those whose personal and professional conduct merits this trust. The BSc Social Work programme requires that you make a declaration in this regard. Please answer the following questions carefully. If you answer 'YES' to any of the questions, you may be contacted by the Admissions Tutor who will seek further information about your circumstances and may make other relevant inquiries to colleges and former employers to enable an informed decision to be made about your application. At this stage, you can make further representations in writing and you may be invited to discuss your application directly with the Admissions Tutor or the Programme Director.

Please tick yes or no for each question

	YES	NO
Are you currently the subject of any disciplinary investigation?		
Have you ever had a disciplinary finding against you?		
Have you ever had your employment terminated for unprofessional behaviour or misconduct?		
Have you ever been suspended or disqualified from any professional training programme?		
Have you ever been suspended or deregistered for professional misconduct by any other professional register/body?		
Have you ever been listed upon the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) register, the Protection of Children Act list (POCA), or Section 142 of the Education Act (2000), (formerly List 99)?		
Have you previously enrolled upon a social work training programme?		

If you have answered 'YES' to any of these questions, please give full details in the box below (outcome, date, employer, course, college, reason for non-completion, etc.) and continue overleaf if necessary.

4. Personal health and circumstances

Social work is a demanding and sometimes stressful occupation and successful completion of the BSc Social Work programme requires full participation at university and upon practice learning placements. Furthermore, the practice of social work is often undertaken with people who are vulnerable, at risk, or whose capacity to manage their own affairs is temporarily or permanently impaired. Accordingly, the programme seeks to ensure that all students are capable of enduring the stresses and strains of training and do not present any threat to the safety of service users, or to themselves.

Please note that you are not required to make a declaration about health problems that do not impinge upon your capacity to study or practice, or that in the normal course of your social work duties, would not present a risk to self or others. Please also note that in the event of health problems arising during the course, the programme will, within its rules and regulations, respond sympathetically and try to ensure that a student is able to complete in due course. However, chronic poor physical or mental health may make it difficult or impossible for you to complete the course and may also place clients at risk.

We also need to know whether you have had children in your personal care placed upon a child protection register/ subject to a child protection plan or placed in care, or have lived in a household where children have been registered or placed in care. These circumstances do not automatically debar you from entry to the programme, but we need to make an informed judgement about what risks, if any, they may pose for you and for other people. This information may also have a bearing upon the range of practice placements available to you.

If you answer 'YES' to any of the questions, you will be contacted by the Admissions Tutor who will seek further information about your circumstances, and may make other inquiries to enable an informed decision to be made about your application. At this stage, you can make further representations in writing, and you may be invited to discuss your application directly with the Admissions Tutor or the Programme Director.

a. Please tick yes or no for each question

	YES	NO
Do you have any physical or mental health condition (or associated treatment) that may impact upon your ability to safely and effectively perform any part of the work of a social worker or social work student?		
Do you have any physical or mental health condition that in the normal course of your social work duties might present a direct risk to other people, or which might affect your judgement or performance in a way that poses risk to self or others?		
Has any child or children in your care, or within the household in which you live or have previously lived, been subject to an investigation under the safeguarding children procedures process?		
Has any child or children in your care, or the household in which you now or previously have lived, been placed upon a social service child protection register/been made subject to a child protection plan or been looked after/placed in care?		
Have you had any involvement in an adult protection/safeguarding case as an adult carer?		

If you have answered 'YES' to any of these questions, please give full details in the box below and continue overleaf if necessary.

Disqualification by Association

All students are required to provide relevant information about a person who lives in the same household as them, who may have influence over the employee working with children and who may therefore pose a risk to children i.e. "by association".

You are therefore required to declare whether anyone living in your household is disqualified from working with children under the Childcare Act 2006.

This covers the following offences:

- offences against a child
- against an adult (e.g. rape, murder indecent assault, actual bodily harm)

Has anyone living in your household been barred from working with children by the DBS?	YES/NO
Has anyone living in your household been disqualified from working with children under the childcare Act 2006?	YES/NO

The definition of household is those living under the same address; however this mainly concerns those who the student has a personal relationship with that may cause them to be influenced. In a family household, this would be considered to be all individuals. If however a student is living in a shared house they would not be expected to ask all housemates about their convictions.

Students living in a shared household

To the best of your knowledge, is anyone living at your address subject to the above?	YES/NO
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If you have answered **YES** to any of the above, please provide further information below (you may provide an additional information sheet if necessary):

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b. To be completed by all applicants: confirmation of commitment to manage own health and refrain from work when needed

Although we wish to minimize intrusive additional checks in respect of health unless essential, we must be guided by the professional standards and expectations. Whether you have disclosed a current or previous health condition above or not, please complete the following declaration by ticking and signing where indicated:

I confirm that I understand the importance of taking responsibility for managing any health condition that I currently have or that may develop during my training;

I understand that this includes, but is not limited to, taking responsibility for seeking appropriate medical or other professional guidance as required;

I also undertake to refrain from work/placement when unwell, if not doing so may pose a risk to others or to myself or when not doing so may adversely affect my performance.

Signed

Date

5. Disability

Disability need not be a barrier to training and qualification and in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act (2010) the University will endeavour to make 'reasonable adjustments' where you have informed us of a disability through the standard admissions or student support processes. **Please note** that for the purposes of this declaration you *do not need to make any statement about your disability unless this relates to a health condition covered in the previous section*. The University believes that you should have a choice about when, and whether, you wish to declare a disability, although we hope to provide an a context in which disclosure is seen as a positive and enabling act.

If you do wish to discuss what adjustments might be required, you may do this informally after interview, or may wait until after the results of your interview have been communicated to you.

Please note that any disclosure of a disability on this form will not trigger referral to student support services, nor serve to initiate the processes of agreeing reasonable adjustments as the purpose of this form is to assess suitability for entry to the programmes. You are encouraged to self-disclose any disability needs to the relevant university service prior to admission or as soon as possible after admission to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be explored and implemented where needed.

6. Your declaration

Please tick next to each statement and sign below

I understand that the information that I have provided will be checked against my Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service disclosures and that my signature affirms that this is a full and accurate declaration. In the case of Employment/Sponsored Route students, a duty of care may oblige the University to divulge disclosures to the sponsoring agency, and information will be shared between the University and the employer, if this is deemed necessary, within the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. You must provide a copy of your enhanced DBS to the University prior to admission.

I understand that if I refuse to provide additional relevant information or otherwise assist in this suitability process that the provisional offer of a place on the programme may be withdrawn.

I also understand that failure to disclose relevant information is regarded as a serious matter and that if it is discovered after I have been accepted upon the programme, it could result in a suitability investigation which may lead to exclusion from training.

I undertake to inform the programme team (after enrolment) or the Admissions Tutor (prior to enrolment) about any relevant changes in my circumstances that may affect any assessment of my suitability.

I agree that the information that I give may be used to assess my suitability for social work training and that, subject to the principles outlined in the Data Protection Act (1998) and other relevant legislation or statutory guidance, it may be shared with Social Work England and other relevant bodies if required.

Signature: _____

Date: _____