



Ulster University Admissions Information 2023-2024 for Applicants

How to Apply for BSc Hons Social Work at Ulster University (L500, L505, L506)

Applications are dealt with centrally by the Admissions Office at Ulster University and Queens University Belfast, rather than by individual University Faculties. All the information on your application is important and you should ensure that full details are given about qualifications completed or still to be completed. Applicants are advised that some experience in employment or voluntary work of a social work nature is beneficial but not essential.

Applicants who meet the initial selection criteria will be invited to participate in a 'virtual interview' on an online platform. The questions will assess their suitability for Social Work training. Interviews are a requirement of the professional body i.e. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (SCC), as set out in its 'Rules for Approval of Degree in Social Work courses'. The interview is organised on a regional basis enabling applicants to have a single interview for Northern Ireland Social Work programmes offered by Ulster University, South West College, Belfast Metropolitan College and Queens University Belfast.

Decisions on applicants who have been unsuccessful following interview will be made on an ongoing basis and notified to the applicant via UCAS. Offers are not made until all applicants who are eligible have been interviewed, normally late April/early May. This is a high demand degree programme and therefore not all applicants deemed suitable for Social Work training will receive an offer. Thresholds vary from year to year. Further details on the 'Application and Selection Process Timeline' are outlined in Appendix 1.

Deadline for Applications

All applications submitted by the normal closing date of 25th January (18:00 hours) are given equal consideration. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

A-levels

Offers are normally made on the basis of 3 A-levels i.e. BBB. The offer for repeat applicants is set in terms of 3 A-levels and is the same standard as for first time applicants. Grades may be held from the previous year.

Combination of A-level plus BTEC Level 3 Qualifications

Applicants offering two A-levels and one BTEC Subsidiary Diploma/National Extended Certificate (or equivalent qualification), or one A-level and a BTEC Diploma/National

Diploma (or equivalent qualification) will also be considered. Offers will be made in terms of performance in individual BTEC units rather than the overall BTEC grade(s) awarded. The normal GCSE profile will be expected.

Other Qualifications

Applicants offering other qualifications, such as Pearson BTEC Extended Diploma and Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, Irish Leaving Certificate, Access Course or a Foundation Degree will also be considered.

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma

The same GCSE profile is usually expected of those applicants taking a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma qualification. Offers are made on the basis of 'Successful completion of the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma with overall grades DDM (RQF) or overall grades DDD (QCF).

Irish Leaving Certificate

Offers are normally based on 5 Highers in the Irish Leaving Certificate i.e. grades H3, H3, H3, H3, H3. If not offered at Higher Level, English and Mathematics are required at Ordinary Level minimum grade 04.

Access Courses

Applications from those offering Access Diploma/Certificate in Foundation Studies courses are welcomed and each is considered individually on its merits. Access Courses are designed for adults who left formal education without the qualifications needed for entry to higher education, who did not progress beyond Level 3 qualifications, e.g. A-levels, and who are returning to study after a significant break (normally a minimum of two years). Where offers are made, these are based on completion of the full qualification, which is normally available on a one-year, full-time or two-years, part-time basis. For last year's entry, the standard set was completion of the Access Course with an average of 65% (Level 3 Units).

Applicants who have progressed beyond A-level (or equivalent Level 3 qualification)

Higher National Certificate (HNC)/Higher National Diploma (HND)

HNC (total of 120 credits) with an overall DISTINCTION to include 90 level 4 credits at Distinction. HND (total of 120 credits) for entry to Year 1 with overall MERIT to include 60 Level 5 credits at Distinction.

Foundation Degree

Applications from those offering a Foundation Degree are welcomed and each is considered individually on its merits. Successful completion of Foundation Degree with an overall mark of 55% in Level 5 modules.

Graduates

This course is open to graduates with a minimum of a Lower Second Class Honours degree. Applicants with a Third Class Honours degree will not be considered.

NB: ALL APPLICANTS

All applicants require GCSE Mathematics and English at minimum Grade C or equivalent. Essential Skills, Level 2 in Application of Number and Communication is acceptable in lieu of these requirements.

Applicants in Receipt of an Offer

Applicants who pass the suitability interview, are invited to an information evening, which is usually held in May following the UCAS notification of offers. The date of this event will be communicated in due course. This opportunity will allow you to visit Ulster University at the Magee Campus, to meet staff and to find out more about the degree programme and the facilities on offer. It also gives you a flavour of the academic and social life at Ulster University. Since March 2020 information events have been online. In advance of these events, applicants will be notified of the arrangements, for either online or in person events.

Deferred Entry

Due to the demand for places candidates applying for deferred entry are not usually considered.

NB: All applications submitted by the normal closing date of 25th January (18:00 hours) are given equal consideration. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

Transfers

Because of the intense competition for places to study Social Work and the nature of the course structure, transfers are not considered. However, candidates who commence another course of study may submit a fresh application via UCAS for consideration. All applicants must have the same entry requirements as those applying direct from A-level (or other acceptable qualification) and must have passed any exams taken at University.

Finally

If you cannot find the information you need here, please contact the Admissions Office at Magee Campus, giving full details of your qualifications and educational background.

admissionsmg@ulster.ac.uk

APPENDIX 1 BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK - APPLICATION TIMELINE

STAGE 1

Following receipt of your UCAS application the admissions team will assess your academic qualifications. If you meet/can meet the academic entry requirements for social work your application will progress to Stage 2.

STAGE 2

A Consent & Declaration email and pro forma will be sent to you. If you receive a Consent & Declaration letter and pro forma from both Ulster and Queens you must complete each pro forma (tick box) and return to the relevant institution, to the email/ address indicated.

STAGE 3

Interview

If you achieve the required academic entry criteria, you will receive an email inviting you to attend for an online interview. **Online interviews and interview scoring**, run from mid/late February right through to late April.

The interview is a two-stage process:

1. Stage One - Case Scenario

Prior to answering the 'virtual interview questions' you are asked to read a 'Case Scenario'.

2. Stage Two – Virtual Interview (5 questions)

One question from the online interview will focus on the Case Scenario. The remaining four questions will concentrate on your motivation to pursue a career in social work and your understanding of different aspects of social work practice. It is important that you draw upon any life or work experience, and you consider skills, knowledge, and values important to social work.

IMPORTANT: Prior to interview you will be provided with 'guidance to applicants' about the online platform to be used; and it is important you **understand the guidance** and **follow the instructions** carefully in preparation for the online interview and ensuring you complete the interview process as instructed.

NB: It is assumed that if an applicant submits their interview that they were fit to undertake this.

STAGE 4

Social Work Offers: Following completion of the interview process applicants who pass the 'suitability interview' are ranked by interview score. Offers are processed in April/May

however, not all applicants who are deemed suitable for 'social work training' will receive an offer at this stage. This is due to the government quota for social work at both Ulster (including South West College and Belfast Met) and Queen's. You should note that, if you have applied to both Queen's and Ulster, it is possible to receive an offer from one institution and not the other.

After the initial round of offers Ulster and Queen's will email/write to eligible applicants asking if they wish to be retained on a 'reserve list' if additional places become available. This may not be until August following receipt of all examination results. You should note that there is no guarantee that additional places will become available. Please note if you are unsuccessful at any of the above stages we will notify you as soon as possible, via UCAS, normally within 10 working days.

Criminal Records Checks and Occupational Health Screening Costs

1. This course is subject to Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (2003) legislation. Applicants with a firm offer require an Enhanced Access Northern Ireland Criminal Records check due to the nature of social work. This will cost approximately 33 GBP. This Criminal Records check happens in advance of becoming a student and may be repeated prior to two practice learning placements during the 3-year training cycle.
2. Occupational Health Screening is required in advance of becoming a student (those with firm offers). Costs associated with this currently are approximately 35 GBP for initial health screening with an additional approximately 50 GBP charge if vaccinations are required. A further Hepatitis B vaccination may be required if a student is allocated a placement in a clinical or hospital setting at an additional cost of approximately 90 GBP. **Please note this is 2022/23 prices that are subject to change in 2023/24.**

Registration with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Social work students in Northern Ireland are required to register with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NI_SCC). You will be asked to sign a declaration that you will comply with the NI_SCC Standards of Conduct for Social work students available at the following link <https://niscc.info/app/uploads/2020/09/standards-of-conduct-and-practice-for-social-work-students-2019.pdf>

As part of the registration process you will be asked to provide information so that NI_SCC can assess your suitability to train as a social worker. This is known as, 'Fitness to Practice'. The purpose of Fitness to Practice is not to punish potential registrants but to protect the public. Each case is considered separately and on its own merit further information can be accessed at the following link.

<https://niscc.info/fitness-to-practise/>

Further information on a career in social work can be found on [Interested in becoming a social worker? - NISCC](#)

Incentive Scheme, Department of Health

Social work students currently receive an incentive scheme. This is a bursary valued at 4000 GBP per year with an additional fund of 500 GBP to assist students with the cost of studying. This scheme remains under review. Please see full details, following the link below.

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/doh-degree-in-social-work.pdf>