

BA Social Work: Starting University Session

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Aims of this session

To understand the expectations of University-level study
(independent learner, attendance, assessment types)

Identify your learning style

Get to know each other and the campus a bit better

To learn about the support that is available for you

A brief note about research!



What does it mean for you to be studying a degree at university?

- Please share your hopes and worries about studying a degree at university with the person next to you
- We will then share some of these with the whole group

Starting University

- The transition from secondary school to University is a period of multiple uncertainties and changes.
- Developing new approaches to learning is part of this transition (e.g. ways of reading, note-taking, finding sources.)
- ‘It is just a matter of time until all the pieces of the puzzle fall into the right place. You have to just keep looking for the right pieces.’ (participant in Gravett and Winstone, 2019).
- One of the main sources of support in this transition are social networks (Thompson, Pawson and Evans, 2021).

Independent Learning

Independent Learning - Your studies - University of Kent

What is independent learning?

- Demonstrate initiative and the ability to manage themselves and their work.

As a student, this means learning how to:

- set your own goals.
- identify your own resources.
- take responsibility for attending all aspects of your studies and catching-up.
- monitor and manage your time and progress honestly and effectively.
- produce assignments that meet the assessment criteria on time.

Developing Independence

- You are not alone in this! Seek support from your lecturers, Academic Advisor, module conveners.
- Also, build connections with your peers.
- Follow the guidance and pre-session readings and tasks set by the lecturer.
- Develop a time management system.
- Use the University's services- Skills for Academic Success ([SAS](#))



SOCIAL WORK ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- Attendance is closely associated with positive engagement and higher achievement for students. For Social Work courses, attendance is also linked to requirements set by the professional regulator, [Social Work England \(SWE\)](#).
- High attendance can help you to optimise your personal learning and academic achievements, contribute to and benefit from group learning experiences and to help you to meet the relevant [Professional Capabilities Framework Domains](#), as well as work towards [SWE Professional Standards](#). Conduct required from qualified social workers is still expected from you as student social workers; attendance is part of meeting course requirements, exhibiting professional integrity and responsibility.
- Social Work courses at the University of Kent have several obligations and responsibilities to monitor your attendance and provide reports to the University of Kent, the Student Loans Company, and the UK Government Home Office (if you require a visa to study in the UK). Please see the University of Kent [Student Attendance and Engagement Policy](#)

What does this mean?

- Attendance is expected for all learning activities throughout your course, meaning 100% attendance. Your course contains parts related to **practice education** and parts that relate to **academic learning**.

Practice education learning attendance requirements:

The following are compulsory, requiring 100% attendance:

- the **30 Skills Days** (usually included in the Social Work Contexts modules, but also in parts of other modules). These requirements will be made clear to you in relevant module guides, Moodle information and other documentation.
- the **170 days** of practice placement,
- the **placement Recall Days**.
- Even though 100% attendance is required for all parts of your course, we recognise that at times this might not be possible for structured academic learning (defined by [SWE Standard 4.7](#) as classroom learning, group based learning, and blended or distance learning, but not time spent on practice placements).
- As such, all academic modules on the course require a minimum threshold of 80% attendance. Other markers of poor engagement (including lateness and poor participation) will also be considered.

Support available to you

Teaching team: Director of Studies/Course Lead/ Academic Advisor/ module conveners/ lecturers/ seminar leaders

Professional Services:

- The LSSJ [**Engagement Support Team**](#) can offer confidential guidance, advice, and pastoral support for students. They can also signpost to university/external departments to make sure students get the support they need. They offer drop-ins, online and face-to-face appointments and can be contacted by email at lsjsupport@kent.ac.uk or by telephone on 01634 888853.
- Students can obtain academic skills development from the **Skills for Academic Success (SAS):** [**Skills for Academic Success - Your studies - University of Kent**](#) They can help students with referencing, approaching and structuring assignments, time management and much more.
- Students who require reasonable adjustments to their studies, in relation to a disability, specific learning difficulty or existing mental health condition can apply for an Inclusive Learning Plan (ILP) including adjusted exam arrangements. This is coordinated by **Student Support & Wellbeing** and their contact details can be found here: [**Contact Us - Student Support and Wellbeing - University of Kent**](#). Adjustments may include some flexibility around deadlines, specialised software, priority access to reading lists among others.
- To get an ILP, as well as access to many other Student Support & Wellbeing services, students will need to register with them which they can do online here: [**How to register - Student Support and Wellbeing - University of Kent**](#)

Get Involved! Become a Student Ambassador

Current Vacancies

Student Ambassador Applications

Applications are now open and will close on 7 October 2025.

Any current student at the University of Kent can apply!

In order to complement our existing cohort of ambassadors and ensure a fair representation across the scheme, we particularly welcome applications from the following:

- Male students
- Students based in Medway
- KBS Postgraduate students
- Early career PhD students studying a STEM subject
- Students studying another language
- Students with care experience*
- Students from the School of Economics, Politics and International Relations
- Students from the School of Humanities
- Students from the School of Social Sciences
- Sports & Exercise Science students
- Maths/statistics students
- Digital Design students
- Media students

Student Ambassador Workshops

If you would like to find out more about what it means to be a Student Ambassador at the University of Kent, we have two workshops available.

 [Book your place 1 October 11:30-12:30 \(Canterbury\)](#)

 [Book your place 2 October 14:30-15:30 \(Online\)](#)



Learning Styles

<https://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/>

There are many different ways of categorizing learning styles, but Neil Fleming's VARK model is one of the most popular. Fleming introduced an inventory in 1987 that was designed to help students and others learn more about their individual learning preferences.

According to the VARK model, learners are identified by whether they have a preference for:

- Visual learning (pictures, movies, diagrams)
- Auditory learning (music, discussion, lectures)
- Reading and writing (making lists, reading textbooks, taking notes)
- Kinesthetic learning (movement, experiments, hands-on activities)

VISUAL

Learn by seeing

- Charts & Graphs
- Infographics
- Outlines
- Visual Aids
- Slide Deck PPTs

READ / WRITE

Learn by reading/writing

- Books
- Dictionaries
- Note-taking
- Assessments
- Case Studies

AUDITORY

Learn by hearing

- Podcasts
- Verbal instructions
- Discussions
- Recordings

KINESTHETIC

Learn by doing

- Role playing
- Scenario training
- Hands-on



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Or scan the QR code





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Join at: vevox.app

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Question slide

What is your learning style?

Visual



0%

Auditory



0%

Kinesthetic



0%

Read/Write



0%

What is your learning style?

Visual



0%

Auditory



0%

Kinesthetic



0%

Read/Write



0%

Campus Orientation Quiz

- What classification number do the social work books have in the library?
- How accessible would you find the campus if you were a wheelchair-user?
- How much is a hot chocolate in the Pilkington café?
- Why is the Deep End in the Hub called the Deep End?
- Please find out 2 facts about the history of the campus. Clue: you should find this on some banners in the library!
- Where might you sit if you wanted a quiet space on campus?



A short word about research!

References

- Gravett, K., and N. E. Winstone. 2019. “Storying Students’ Becomings into and through Higher Education.” *Studies in Higher Education* 1–12. doi:10.1080/03075079.2019.1695112.
- Thompson, M. Pawson, C. & Evans, B. (2021) Navigating entry into higher education: the transition to independent learning and living, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 45:10, 1398-1410, DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2021.1933400