

Open University Social Work Degree Sponsorship

Guidance for Managers and staff

Mailing List

If you would like to be kept up to date about Sponsorship opportunities, [please complete this form by clicking on this link](#) or scanning the QR Code on this page.

Social Work Sponsored Study with Open University



Foreword

Sponsored study is a fantastic opportunity to progress into a formal qualification within Falkirk and this is open to all staff who work in Social Services who meet the eligibility criteria.

The balance of working, studying and personal life can be difficult to manage at times. We would encourage you to link in with colleagues who are completing the course, but also speak with your family, friends and colleagues to reflect on whether you can meet the requirements of this commitment.

Quotes from Sponsored Colleagues

“I didn't do very well at school - I wasn't in the right place - I thought I'd given up on studying but doing this alongside my work makes things a bit clearer. Having experience working in social work helps.”

“Having the opportunity to earn a wage while studying has been massive. I had wanted to do my degree before but wasn't able to do this due to the costs”

“It's a fantastic opportunity - without this I wouldn't have been able to go to University”

“None of the folk in my family have gone to University - to have that experience and confidence is massive”

“100% benefitted my career & makes me reflect on my practice”

“I'm now always thinking about legislation and how it affects individuals and the communities I work with”

“I no longer make assumptions about people. I feel that I am transitioning from Social Work Assistant to Social Worker”

“Doing this degree makes me question more. I'm a much more curious person”

“Makes me value the lives that people have led and the journey that has taken them here”

Social Work Degree Options

BA Hons. Social Work

- 4 years study
- 2 placements
- Evening & Weekend Learning

PG Dip. Social Work

- 17 months study
- 2 placements
- Evening & Weekend Learning

Students are afforded 2 study days per module. Any additional study time needs to be agreed with line manager and reviewed in Supervision.

Falkirk will pay your **salary**, your **fees**, and will arrange for Placements within the Council.

Eligibility

Must have had a Good Conversations completed and approval from Team Manager to submit application.

Must have a permanent contract with Falkirk Council.

Must have a minimum of 2 years' service in Falkirk Council.

Will commit to remain in the employment of Falkirk Council for the duration of the course and for 2 years post-qualifying.

Does not have a nationally recognised professional qualification:

- Nursing
- Teaching
- Community Education
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Etc.

Pathways

New Study

If you have not built up credits for previous studies you will be funded from day one of the course.

Previous Study

Any employee who has completed previous study should consider Credit Transfer/Migration. This would permit you to begin at the right level of study and ensures funding can be used sensibly.

Credit Transfers can come from things like HNCs, SVQs or previously beginning degree.

There is a 10-year limit to accounting for previous study so it is important to apply for this as soon as possible.

Applications

Viv and I will hold an information day with the Open University and invite all interested parties to attend this. Please consider this as the earliest stage for you transitioning in your career to the Social Work profession and plan accordingly as we will need to request an application pack be completed, which includes the following:

- [Good Conversations](#)
- Open University Application Form
- Declaration of Suitability
- Two References
- Equal Opportunities

We would then need to pose an academic essay question about Social Work Practice and invite you to an Interview.

Successful applicants will also complete:

- [Falkirk Council Application for Further Study](#)
- [Sponsorship Agreement](#)

The Process

This roadmap should provide a basic overview of the process:

1. Application Packs shared and returned to Dean & Viv
2. Credit Transfer application submitted to the Open University before interviews
3. Shortlisting takes place for Interviews
4. Interviews take place and scoring matrix used for this
5. Offers made to suitable candidates
6. Detailed feedback provided to colleagues
7. Studies begin in October

There are circumstances where additional funding may become available and we may reach out to candidates later in the summer.

Funding

Falkirk Council will pay the whole of the funding for this qualification. Viv and I need to be sensible about how we use this funding and will need applicants to apply for Credit Transfer/Migration and Part Time Fee Grants where applicable.

If any other funding streams become available we will discuss this with each person as needed.

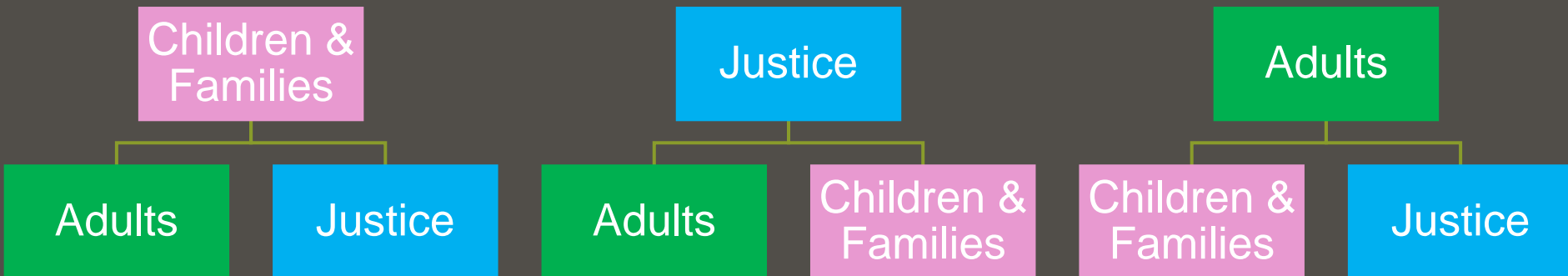
As part of your agreement with Falkirk Council you would need to complete a [Sponsorship Agreement](#) which includes a plan for repayment if you do not complete your studies.

Placements

All students should get practice experience in different social work services to bolster their learning and development.

Students are unable to complete their placements in their place of typical work so will be supported to engage complete placements in other services.

See below where your placements would be depending on which service you work for:



Completing Degree

It is important for Team Managers to plan for their colleagues completing their Social Work Degrees.

When a colleague completes their degree, it is intended that they would move into a Social Work post upon completion. Team Managers should speak with their line manager about ringfencing posts and ensuring HR processes are completed to permit this.

All Social Workers who complete their degree will begin on their Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) Supported Year and further information can be found on both the [SSSCs website](#) and our [Practitioner's Pages](#).

Please get in touch with Viv and Dean if you want to discuss further.

Supports

Dean and Viv hold the Students Hub every 6 weeks on a Friday in Camelon Social Work Office. You will be invited to this to meet colleagues, network with peers, share in learning and support each other through this process.

Dean and Viv will meet with you throughout your studies to check in regarding academic processes and provide appropriate guidance.

You should speak with your Team Manager at the earliest point and discuss with your colleagues if you are successful for this opportunity. Colleagues can be a wonderful support.

2 study days per module are allocated for Students and you should discuss with your line manager if you need additional study time.

Links

Credit Transfer & Credit Migration: [Credit transfer | Open University](#)

[Practitioner's Pages](#)

[Practice Learning](#)

[Good Conversations](#)

If there are any other questions about Social Work Degree Sponsorship please get in touch via socialservices.training@falkirk.gov.uk.