Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

	Basic Course Information	
1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	Social Sciences / City
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	MA/PGDip/PGCert Advanced Social Work Practice PGDip/PGCert Experienced Social Work Practice
4.	Normal Duration:	1 to 5 years part time.
5.	UCAS Code:	N/A

6.	**Overview and general educational aims of the course**

This course has been developed by the University in consultation with regional employers, to build on and update NTU's existing and successful provision of CPD Social Work education. It offers you, as a registered social worker, an integrated academic and professional qualification. In successfully completing the full postgraduate award you will achieve an MA in Advanced Social Work Practice but there are a number of interim awards available should you choose to take them including a PG Certificate or PG Diploma in Experienced SW Practice; a PG Certificate or PG Diploma in Advanced SW Practice or a PG Certificate in SW Practice Education. All of the modules are also available as stand-alone CPD modules to support your practice at the relevant time in your career.

The award is designed to meet the requirements of The College of Social Work's (TCSW) Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards of Proficiency (SOPs). The core mission of the course is to support your learning to achieve a postgraduate qualification at TCSW Experienced and Advanced Social Worker levels, which will enable you to continue registration with the HCPC as a qualified practitioner who has demonstrated commitment to and involvement in Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The course is run by Nottingham Trent University in regular consultation with social work employer agencies. Nottingham Trent University (NTU) aims to be a leading professional university, delivering education and research that shape lives and society (NTU Strategic Plan 2010-2015), and this course is just part of the University's Professional Postgraduate portfolio supporting regional development and employability.

The course seeks:

1. to enable you to meet all of the academic, practice and value requirements of the College of Social Work's Professional Capabilities Framework (TCSW PCF) and the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Proficiency (HCPC SoPs)

2. to enhance your social work practice through up-to-date research-informed, evidenced-based teaching and learning;
3. to contribute to regional Social Work Services development through the promotion of interagency and inter-professional education, learning and practice.

The aims are to:
1. Meet the relevant academic standards associated with Social Work at postgraduate level
2. Think critically about your practice within the HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics; national and international codes of professional ethics and the principles of diversity, equality and social inclusion in a wide range of situations including those associated with inter-agency and inter-professional work
3. Consolidate and consistently demonstrate in direct work with service users and their carers, the full range of social work capability across all the units of the Professional Capabilities Framework at Experienced and Advanced Social Worker levels
4. Draw on knowledge and understanding of service users' and carers' issues to actively contribute to strategies and practice which promote service users' and carers' rights and participation in line with the goals of choice, independence and empowerment
5. Use reflection and critical analysis to continuously develop your practice, within inter-agency and inter-professional work, drawing on theories, models and up to date research
6. Extend your initial competence to develop in-depth competence in the context of practice to agreed national specialist standards, drawing on knowledge and experience of settings and service systems which impact on the lives of service users
7. Work effectively in a context of risk, uncertainty, conflict and contradiction
8. Take responsibility for the effective use of supervision to identify and explore issues, develop and implement plans and improve your own practice
9. Effectively manage your own work and demonstrate a capacity to plan for, and respond to change in organisational, inter-organisational and team contexts
10. Develop and implement effective ways of working in networks across organisational, sectoral and professional boundaries, demonstrating an awareness of the relationship between Social Work and other roles, and an ability to overcome barriers to multi disciplinary communication and promoting inter professional working within the context of integrated services.

11. Take a leading professional role in strategic and innovatory practice developments within the profession

12. Be able to design and utilise research and/or service evaluation methodologies in understanding and developing practice in order to meet service users needs more effectively.

As educators we recognise that you all, as students, have individual and different learning styles and learning needs, and this has informed the way in which we have designed the curriculum, how we teach, the learning opportunities you have on the course, and the way we assess your learning. We also recognise that as professionals undergoing CPD education on a part-time basis, you have many competing demands on your time, and this has informed how we have structured the modules, the flexible pathways that you can take to complete the course, and the Student Support arrangements available to you. There is also a strong focus on helping you to develop your practice as well as on academic achievement, and a feature of the course relevant to this is the requirement that you explore and reflect on your practice in many of the modules, as part of the assessment process.

7.	**Course outcomes MA Advanced Social Work Practice** Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.
	Knowledge and understanding By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical understanding of working in partnership with service users and their families and how systemic approaches can be used to understand the person-in-the-environment configuration

2. Understand and critically evaluate theoretical models of assessment in respect of service users with highly complex needs relating to social work service provision.

3. Demonstrate a critical appreciation of the coordination of services in a multi-agency context

4. Critically evaluate and review the identification, evaluation and management of risk and need to safeguard service users

5. Critically evaluate and appraise the effects of mental health problems, drug and alcohol abuse, disability and domestic violence on children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families

6. Understand and promote service user's wellbeing

7. Critically analyse and appraise knowledge of and understand legal and statutory

frameworks

8. Critically evaluate and discuss the relative merits of contrasting theories, explanations, research, policies and procedures to achieve change in diverse family situations

Skills, qualities and attributes
By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Meet the requirements of the professional regulator by taking responsibility for your conduct, practice and learning

2. Retrieve, synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources

3. Consistently reflect social work values and ethics in your practice

4. Present professional views in formal contexts

5. Promote change in families and respond to the full range of changes in a family life cycle

6. Facilitate the learning and development of others

7. Contribute to contemporary research and educational practice

8. Model exemplary practice and provide leadership and professional wisdom to colleagues and other professionals through mentoring and coaching and by constructively challenging practice

9. Lead, motivate and manage teams in order to provide service excellence to social work service users

The course outcomes reflect the requirements of The College of Social Work's Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) at an Advanced Social Worker level:

1. Professionalism: Model and demonstrate professionalism, ensure professional social work standards are maintained throughout your area of responsibility.

2. Values and Ethics: Model and promote confident and critical application of professional ethics to decision-making, using a legal and human rights framework, and support others to do so.

3. Diversity: Promote positive approaches to diversity and identity in your area of responsibility, providing guidance and challenge as required. Contribute to and implement policy development and decision-making.

4. Rights, Justice and Economic Wellbeing: Model best practice, provide or seek out expert professional social work/legal advice, applying human and civil rights in complex situations where there are competing issues. Contribute to policy and practice developments to support service improvement.

5. Knowledge: Use knowledge to hypothesise and make complex judgments in

uncertain and ambiguous situations, supporting and challenging others to do the same. Enable and challenge others to develop their knowledge base and make knowledge informed judgments. Have an in-depth knowledge of adult learning and its application to practice.

6. Critical reflection and Analysis - Routinely provide professional social work opinion, based on clear rationale and advanced professional knowledge. Support and empower others to develop the confidence and skills to provide professional opinion.

7. Intervention and Skills: Promote a culture, which supports empathetic compassionate relationships with other professionals, people who use services, and those who care for them. Be able to gather, analyse and review complex and/or contradictory information quickly and effectively, using it to reach informed professional decisions. Support and encourage professional decision-making in others. Identify when more strategic/expert advice or decision-making is needed. Maintain and provide expertise in specialist assessment and intervention, acting as a resource to others within the organisation, supporting social workers to develop.

8. Contexts and organisations: Provide professional leadership and facilitate collaboration within a multi-agency context as appropriate. Contribute to and provide professional leadership of organisational change and development, including the identification of gaps in service. Influence organisational development, pro-actively using feedback from your areas of responsibility.

9. Professional Leadership: Understand concepts of holistic assessment of professional capability, and be able to apply to appraisal processes/performance reviews of social workers within your area of responsibility.

10. Teaching and Learning Methods

The Teaching and Learning strategy is based upon the following principles:

1) Knowledge Transfer: As practitioners, your knowledge base and academic skills will be developed through high quality, coherent, research – informed teaching;

2) Values Analysis: Complex ethical issues are best explored through small group workshop activities and on - line reflective scenarios;

3) Practice Skills Review: Practice competence is best reviewed, evaluated and developed through practice observation and analysis in the workplace

In the majority of modules your teaching and learning is introduced via lectures, supported by small group discussions, presentations and practical exercises. Lectures

will develop your subject knowledge and understanding. You will have the opportunity for small group student – led discussions and presentations to consider particular issues facing the profession and practice development.

Throughout the course, each module will encourage you to explore specific themes, based upon experiences in practice. In this way you will be able to integrate learning across the "theory and practice" divide and to emphasise the importance of the practice component.

You will be encouraged to develop skills in independent learning and critical reflection, and the course is structured to help you to become an autonomous learner, demonstrating your learning through the evidence of your knowledge base and practice competence which you provide through your assessment across the course.

Where appropriate, your learning on the course will be enhanced by the contributions of external professional staff with specialist expertise in social work practice.

During the course you will be able to make full use of the Nottingham Trent University Online Workspace (NOW), which provides you with 24 hour internet access to course details, module information and resources, email, discussion groups and news. E-learning activities are built into each module to support classroom and practice learning and to develop your skills in research and critical thinking.

11. Assessment Methods

To support you in completing the course, we offer you a broad range of assessment methods, informed by the nature of the task to be assessed, all designed to ensure that you can demonstrate the range of learning outcomes:

- Research and Policy Review
- Case study analysis:
- Practice setting analysis
- Seminar group presentation
- Observations of practice - observations may be carried out by mentors, managers or peers depending on the level and context of the module

As well as formal (graded) assessments you will undertake formative (developmental, ungraded) assessments throughout when academic staff will provide you with informal feedback on your progress and development.

12. Course structure and curriculum

This 'framework' Masters Degree is designed to meet your learning at a time and pace that makes sense to your professional development and is entirely made up of single modules that you opt to study in order to support your CPD needs from the following:

1. "Consolidating Social Work Practice" – 30 credits or "Consolidating the ASYE" – 30 credits
2. "Child Development for Social Work Practice" – 30 credits
3. "Evidence Informed Professional Practice" – 30 credits
4. "Contemporary Approaches to Children & Families Social Work Practice" – 30 credits
5. "Youth Justice" – 30 Credits
6. "Promoting Good Outcomes for Looked After Children" – 30 credits
7. Best Interests Assessor – 30 credits
8. Safeguarding Adults at Risk - 30 credits
9. Social Work in Forensic Mental Health – 30 credits
10. "Leading and Managing Social Work Services" – 30 credits
11. "Leadership & Management in Practice (Action Learning Approach) " – 30 credits
12. "Practice Educator 1" – 30 credits
13. "Practice Educator 2" – 30 credits
14. "Research Methods" – 30 credits
15. "Research Dissertation" – 30 credits or "Service Evaluation" – 30 credits

Additional modules added in February 2015 are:

16. Best Interests Assessor – 30 credits
17. Safeguarding Adults at Risk - 30 credits
18. Social Work in Forensic Mental Health – 30 credits

A Postgraduate Certificate "Experienced Social Work Practice" requires 60 credits from modules 1 to 9

A Postgraduate Diploma "Experienced Social Work Practice" requires 120 credits from modules 1 to 9.

A Postgraduate Certificate "Advanced Social Work Practice" requires 60 credits from the above but must include at least 30 credits from modules 10 to 15.

A Postgraduate Diploma "Advanced Social Work Practice" requires 120 credits from the above but must include at least 60 credits from modules 10 to 15.

An MA "Advanced Social Work Practice" requires 180 credits from above but must include modules 14 and 15.

A Postgraduate Certificate in Social Work Practice Education requires 60 credits which must comprise modules 12 and 13.

Further optional modules may be added to meet the changing needs of the social work professional.

Each 30 credit module requires you to dedicate 300 hours to learning activity which could be made up from:

- 5 full days taught input in the University;
- 1 day of structured, on – line, interactive e-learning via NOW (Nottingham Trent University Online Workspace);
- plus self-directed study and assignment preparation. Some employers may choose to support their students learning through dedicated study days and facilitated study groups in order to meet the learning outcomes of specific modules but NTU academic staff will ensure that students who don't have access to such support will not be disadvantaged by the provision of tutorial support and on-line discussion fora.

13.	**Admission to the course**

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the `Applying' tab on the course information web page.

14.	**Support for Learning**

The course team will run an induction day in late September and late January to support candidates starting at different entry points which will include:

- an introduction to learning resources such as IT, the use of the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment - NOW) and the Library;
- an awareness of student support services, including learning support, and counselling services. Please note that dedicated services for students with any specific learning needs – such as a disability, sensory impairment or any other learning support needs - will be arranged prior to admission to the course through the Course Leader and Course Administration Team. The course has well-established links to central University Student Support Services via the Learning Support Co-ordinator who has responsibility for liaison. Such a system ensures that you receive the range of services offered within the University, and that all aspects of the course, whether university or practice based, are made aware of your needs and circumstances. You are asked to advise the course team of any specific learning or disability needs on your application form so that appropriate steps can be taken to ensure that your needs can be met.

The module leader for the module you are undertaking will also act as **Personal Tutor**, whose role is to:

- ensure that you understand the academic requirements of the course
- act as an important point of contact for you in the event of any difficulties
- support you and facilitate your learning

The library and other learning resources are continually updated to ensure they are fit for purpose. The University offers extensive facilities including state of the art electronic databases and journal collections. Many of these are available to you both on campus and via an internet-linked computer anywhere in the world 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The University prides itself on having a modern network of computer resource rooms, supplying the latest versions of popular and specialist software. All induction materials will be available on-line for each module.

15.	**Graduate destinations / employability**

There are a wide range of opportunities for career development for social workers with an award in Experienced or Advanced Social Work Practice. Social Services Departments, The College of Social Work and the Health and Care Professions Council will regard attainment of these awards as an indicator of a commitment to career enhancement and evidence of practitioner responsibility for Continuing Professional Development. Many of our Continuing Professional Development/Post Qualifying graduates have gone on to senior practice and management roles.

Although you are on an employment–based mode of study, you may want to use the University's Careers Advice service, which is available to all students, offering individual consultation and advice.

16.	**Course standards and quality**

The requirements for this award are based on The College of Social Work's Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF), the Health and Care Professions Council's Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, Proficiency and CPD, and, for the Practice Educator modules, the requirements of the Practice Educator Professional Standards for Social Work (TCSW, 2012)

In order to achieve these requirements and aims, and to meet the University's requirements for Quality Assurance in accordance with the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Framework:

- The requirements of the HCPC and TCSW have been incorporated into the

course's learning outcomes

- A Course Committee meets 3 times per year to monitor standards and take student feedback;

- Module assessment marking is moderated to assure consistency and fairness

- All reports on Direct Observations Of Practice are evaluated by the academic team and sampled by representatives from partner agencies who are themselves HCPC registered social work practitioners

- External examiners have been appointed who submit an Annual Report on the standards and quality of the course to the University's Centre for Academic Standards and Quality, and who view a sample of students' written work in each module. At least one external examiner will be a HCPC registered social worker.

17.	**Assessment regulations** This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in its [Academic Standards and Quality Handbook](#)). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

The course conforms to the University Common Assessment Regulations for postgraduate taught courses in all respects other than the requirement to pass all elements of the assessment. More details are provided in the course handbook.

Additional Information Collaborative partner(s):	
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	**QAA Master's Degree Characteristics (2010)** http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/masters-degree-characteristics.aspx The College of Social Work's Professional Capabilities Framework **http://www.tcsw.org.uk/pcf.aspx**
Course recognised by:	**Nottingham Trent University has been endorsed by The College of Social Work as a provider of CPD for qualified social workers. The BIA module will be subject to a further endorsement event on the 2nd September 2015**
Date implemented:	
Any additional information:	

April 2014