

Social Work Apprentice Programme

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Answers:

Human Resources

Do I need to give up my current job to be a social work apprentice?

Yes. You will be applying for the job of a social work apprentice and, if successful, you will need to give up your current job to become social work apprentice.

Is the post full time?

Yes, the post will be full time for three years. This means working throughout the year, excluding your personal holiday allowance.

Am I guaranteed a social worker job at the end of the programme?

There is a clear intention to employ anyone who successfully completes the programme, but you will not automatically be slotted into a post. Instead, you will be able to apply for any vacant social worker posts you would like to do, and you will then be interviewed for that post.

Are there any restrictions to where you go once you are qualified?

There are no restrictions once you are registered, it is hoped that the newly qualified social worker will remain with the sponsoring directorate and begin their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) within Suffolk County Council

Do you get a choice with regards to the team you go in to i.e., child protection?

We cannot guarantee that you will have a work rotation with a team of your choice. The Supporting Statement includes a space where you can let us know any areas of the county of Suffolk you would not be able to undertake a placement in either due to logistics or potential conflicts of interest.

Will my current contract of employment change?

Yes, you will be transferred to a Suffolk County Council fixed term employment contract.

Is the annual leave entitlement the same as in my previous role?

Yes, this will remain unchanged for existing Suffolk County Council staff. If you are an external candidate your annual leave entitlement will follow our standard amount for new Suffolk County Council employees. This is currently 25 days, excluding bank holidays.

Do you know if our holiday allowance transfers with us? Or do we start from scratch in the new post?

Any balance of untaken annual leave will transfer across with you to your new post if you are an existing SCC employee.

Will staff who currently have flexible working be able to continue doing so?

No, the demands and format of the programme means that you will need to be working a standard 5 day week work pattern throughout the year.

If I decide to leave the programme can I go back to my old job?

No, you won't be able to go back to your old job as this post will have been filled by another person. If you do decide to leave the programme you will effectively be resigning from your current post of social work apprentice. You would be encouraged to apply for other vacancies within Suffolk County Council, but we cannot guarantee continued employment.

Will I be expected to pay anything back if I leave SCC after completing my apprenticeship?

Currently, apprentices are not required to pay back any costs if they leave the organisation during or after the programme.

Application Process

What will the selection process look like?

The key elements of the selection process:

- Submission of an application form including a set of screening questions and supporting statement
- Initial shortlisting and if successful, invitation for Suffolk County Council job interview jointly with the University for the job of social work apprentice. A short essay to complete and share before the interview.
- Young Persons Panel Interview
- Notification and offer of post for successful applicants.
- Manager reference and pre work checks.

Salary & Expenses

As I'm an apprentice, and studying, will I still have to pay council tax?

Even though you are an apprentice, you will still have to pay council tax as you are earning over the government apprentice threshold of £195 per week. For more information go to

<https://www.gov.uk/council-tax/who-has-to-pay>

Will the social work apprentice salary be automatically matched to my current salary?

The social work apprentice job includes is Grade 4 (£28,598 - £33,699 per annum). Your apprentice salary will be based on the experience you bring with you (or current pay on Grade 4 if already in SCC).

Is it right that I won't have to pay any student course fees?

Yes, the course fees are all fully funded through Suffolk County Council's apprenticeship levy fund. This is money that is ringfenced to pay specifically for apprenticeship training within the organisation.

Study Information

Is the degree the same as the one social work students do?

Yes, as part of your apprenticeship you will gain the level 6 BA (honours) degree in social work. For more information, look at the [end-point assessment plan for Social worker statutory integrated degree apprenticeship](#)

Will I have to attend university regularly?

Yes, you will be expected to attend on a regular basis throughout the academic year and this will form part of your 20% off the job training requirement. University of Suffolk will confirm which days learners are expected to attend prior to the start of each academic year.

Do we get a student card?

Yes, the university will issue you with a student identification card.

What happens if I fail a module?

You are required to successfully complete each year in order to progress on programme, including the completion of all the year specific academic and practice placement modules. If you fail a module you will have the opportunity to submit once again.

Will we meet the University of Suffolk tutors that will be teaching the course?

You will meet all lecturers and tutors during your induction at the university.

Qualifications

Do I need my English certificate?

Yes, you cannot join the programme unless you can show your certificates as proof of completion. You will be asked for these as part of the application process.

What happens if I cannot find my qualification certificates?

If you do not have a copy of your certificates, you can order replacements [online](#).

I hold a degree; can I still apply?

Apprenticeship funding rules state that anyone undertaking an apprenticeship needs to be studying at a higher level or acquiring substantive new skills and knowledge. Applicants with a degree or higher degree in another discipline area will fall into the latter category, therefore needing to acquire substantive new skills and knowledge and so will be able to apply. If you are not sure you can email WFDApplianceProgramme@suffolk.gov.uk for clarification.

Research/ General Information

Where can I find information about the apprenticeship standard in social work?

[Skills England](#) provide details of all national apprenticeships. You can also read specific information about the [level 6 apprentice social work standard](#).

I've heard people mention KSS lots, what does this mean?

KSS are the [Knowledge and Skills Statements](#). The KSS have been developed by the Chief Social Workers to set out what is expected of qualified social workers in specific practice settings and roles

What does PCF stand for?

PCF stands for [Professional Capabilities Framework](#). It is a framework for the nine levels of social work in England. It enables you to identify which level you are, define your professional capabilities and develop your career.

What if you don't drive?

A clean driving licence is a standard requirement for qualified social workers employed at Suffolk County Council.

How do we access the other routes into social work?

To find out more about other routes into social work go to the [Routes into Social Work](#) brochure