

**Q. What motivated you to pursue a career in social work?**

**A.** I have always been interested in health and social care and have had various roles within the sector, paid and voluntary. I have experience of being a young family carer for a parent with mental health concerns and that was when I first knew that I wanted to support people who may have lost the ability to be heard to find their voice again. I felt like I couldn't make a big enough impact and change whilst working as a support worker and made it my goal to progress my career.

**Q. How have you found the experience of being an apprentice social worker?**

**A.** Insightful, I have already learnt so much about social work and have discovered that my skills as support worker are transferable to the social work role. My first placement team were amazing and taught me valuable skills and values that I can take with me onto my next placement. But the first few months were challenging, having to adapt to a new role and new employer can be hard. I have had learn how to not put too much pressure on myself and to acknowledge that everything I do is a benefit to my learning and development.

**Q. Would you recommend an apprenticeship in social work to someone considering it?**

**A.** Yes, if you have the drive and determination to empower people and make a positive impact on their lives. I have always worked with people, and I feel that this is the best way to learn social work practice if you learn through doing things rather than just studying. If you have a background in delivering care the transferable skills will be valuable to you and others on your journey through the apprenticeship.



**Jodie Hinks**

**Apprentice  
Social Worker**

**Level 6,  
Social Worker  
(integrated  
degree)  
apprenticeship**

**Q. What motivated you to pursue a career in social work?**

**A.** I had previously worked as a Business Support Officer in Ipswich in CYPS and gained a lot of insight into what social workers did and I knew that I wanted to do it.

**Q. Did your previous experiences influence your decision to pursue social work? if so – how?**

**A.** Working in Early Help really helped my decision to pursue social work definitely, as you work closely with social workers and being able to see the difference they make to people's lives, is amazing.

**Q. How have you found the experience of being an apprentice social worker?**

**A.** I have loved it so far – Uni has been really interesting; my new team have been amazing, and Lisa from Workforce Development is always there to support us which has been so helpful.

**Q. Would you recommend an apprenticeship in social work to someone considering it?**

**A.** A million percent, it is so rewarding, and it is so exciting to be able to get to the next step in your career.



**Rachael Peters**

**Apprentice  
Social Worker**

**Level 6,  
Social Worker  
(integrated  
degree)  
apprenticeship**

**Q. What motivated you to pursue a career in social work?**

**A.** Since watching a film called 'No Child of Mine' in the 1990s, I have wanted to work with children in a children's home. My life took me in a different direction for many years. However, when I saw an advert for the job of IWP, I applied and have been so grateful that I did; social work is what I am meant to be doing.

**Q. How have you found the experience of being an apprentice social worker?**

**A.** I love it! Having the opportunity to study my passion and work to keep wages coming in has been amazing – frankly, I would not be doing the degree if I could not have earned wages simultaneously.

I get to work with three teams covering children and adults, and I shadow many others, giving me a 'world' view that you would not get in any other form of degree program or by having a 'normal' job in the council.

I am so lucky to have the time to explore everything and anything I want. The support from team managers and other team members has been exceptional – more than I expected.

Suffolk also supports learning with its CPD program, which you can book on to with the support of your manager.

**Q. Would you recommend an apprenticeship in social work to someone considering it?**

**A.** Without hesitation. This is a job, and you need to be prepared to work, but there is nothing to lose and everything to gain and no better way to get a huge amount of experience while qualifying.



**Ceri**

**Apprentice  
Social Worker**

**Level 6,  
Social Worker  
(integrated  
degree)  
apprenticeship**

**Q. What motivated you to pursue a career in social work?**

**A.** I wanted to gain a better understanding of the decision-making process of social workers and the factors that lead to the removal of a child, as well as the ways in which social workers can support families to stay together.

**Q. How have you found the experience of being an apprentice social worker?**

**A.** Working with various teams provides opportunities to learn about different social work assessments, enabling one to view things from multiple perspectives.

**Q. Would you recommend an apprenticeship in social work to someone considering it?**

**A.** Undoubtedly!



**Vicky Robinson**

**Apprentice  
Social Worker**

**Level 6,  
Social Worker  
(integrated  
degree)  
apprenticeship**

Hear what Vicky has to say throughout her [social work apprenticeship journey](#)

“Studying an apprenticeship while working can be a juggling act at times but with the study days and a supportive team it is achievable. Good time management helps and keeping University and study times clearly defined is the biggest tip I was given and would pass on. Regular catch-up meetings are really useful and give you plenty of opportunities to discuss any problems you may be experiencing.

As I have not worked in Social Care previously, through starting the apprenticeship, I have learnt so much that I can transfer into my job role. From the importance of understanding different cultures, how trauma at very young ages can affect children deeply, what the effects of trauma are through to how our own values and ethics can make the role difficult. Every week at the end of the University day we reflect on our learning and what we can take with us to practice. There is always so much to learn not just from the lecturers but from your fellow apprentices.

My biggest challenge was imposter syndrome and not believing in myself. I remind myself that I was chosen out of a huge number of candidates. I also feel much better about my abilities now I have received feedback on my assignments.

As a new member of Suffolk County Council, I had to learn so much about how the organisation works, computer systems, the different acronyms, who is who within Social Care and what role each department plays. I overcame this by asking questions as the teams are all so friendly and helpful no one makes you feel stupid for asking.”



**Helen**

**Apprentice  
Social Worker**

**Level 6,  
Social Worker  
(integrated  
degree)  
apprenticeship**