



Approach Social Work

Year one handbook 2026

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About this handbook

This handbook and all its sections are designed to give participants information about year one Approach Social Work. It covers the structure of year one, when and what you need to do, where to seek support and should be used as a reference guide.

Please note the information in this handbook is provided in good faith but may be subject to change; please contact your practice tutor in the first instance with any queries. The contents of this handbook will also be made available on Moodle, Lancaster University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Approach Social Work

Approach Social Work is an innovative, three-year social work programme designed to equip you with the skills to bring about change with and for children and families. In year one you will be working towards a *Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work* worth 120 credits, awarded by Lancaster University, and you will be registered as a student with Lancaster University.

Year one

During your first year, you will work within a practice hub based in a local authority and you will be supported by a Consultant Social Worker (CSW) and Practice Tutor (PT). Having successfully passed year one, you will be qualified as a social worker and are required to apply to register with Social Work England (SWE), England's current social work regulator.

Year two

In year two, Newly Qualified Practice Development and Support Period, you will begin your Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) as an employee of the local authority. In year two you will not be a registered student of Lancaster University. Your qualification is generic in that it allows you eventually to work within a children's or adult setting (see [section 4.10](#) for further information on genericism), but the Approach Social Work programme requires you to remain in child-focused employment (in a Frontline-partnered local authority) for all three years. Alongside completing your ASYE you will attend six professional development training sessions on the Approach Social Work programme as well as receiving mentoring.

Year three

Finally, in year three, Master's and Practice Support Period, you'll register again as a student with Lancaster University to complete the final 60 credit dissertation module. This enables you to complete a full master's degree: the MA in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families. The MA will again be awarded by Lancaster University and the 120 credits gained for your PGDiploma will be counted towards it. In year three, you will also benefit from coaching.

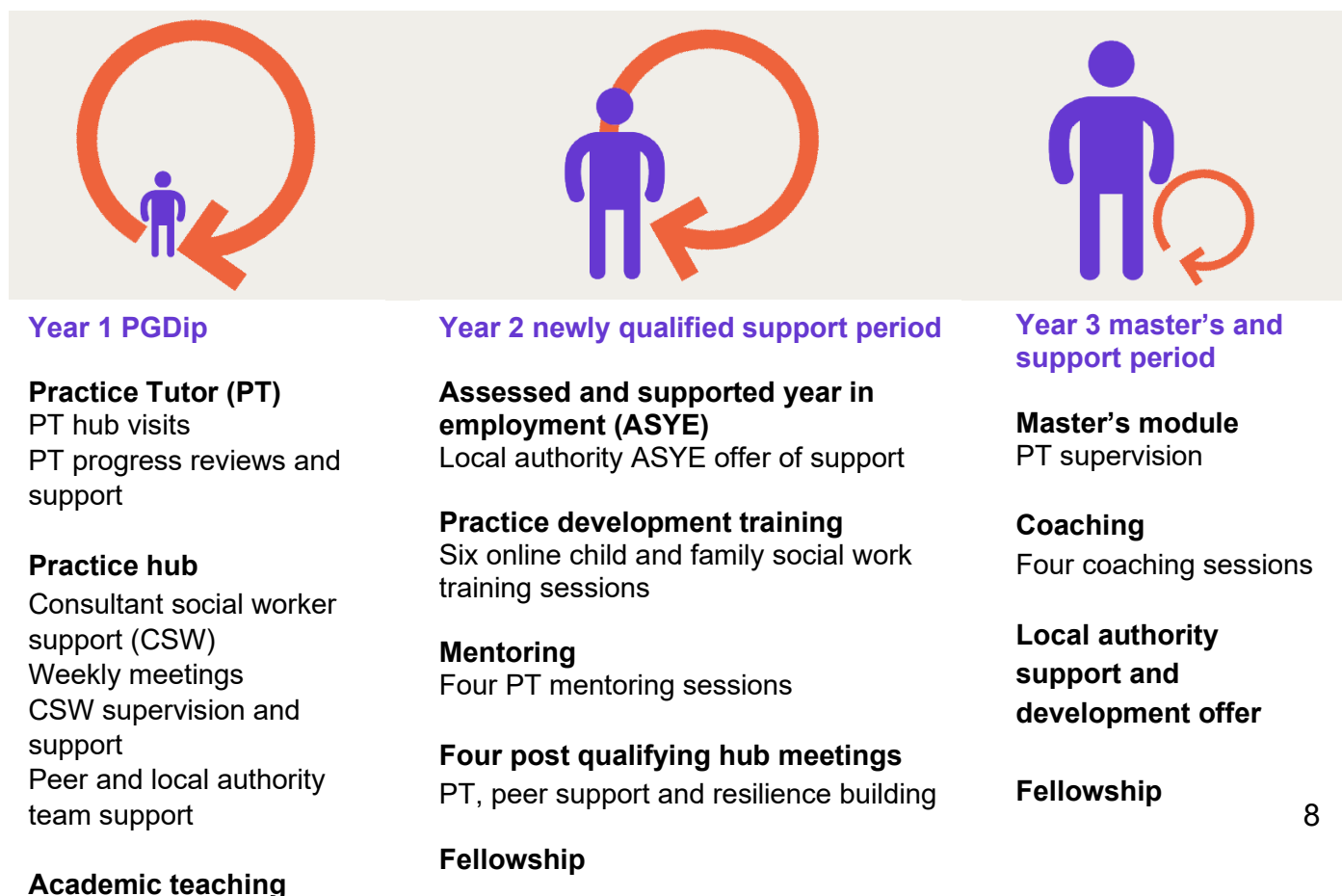
Frontline is responsible for designing and delivering the academic content, whilst Lancaster University is the awarding body for the qualification. As a participant on Approach Social Work you are a registered student of Lancaster University in years one and three and are afforded the same rights as all registered students of the university during these years of the programme.

1. The Approach Social Work Practice Model

We believe that aspiring social workers learn best through practice-based experience. We therefore emphasise the importance of teaching a curriculum that integrates both academic learning and application in practice. This allows participants to develop and consolidate their learning effectively.

Approach provides a streamlined route for a social work qualification, with a focus on children and families. The emphasis on systemic social work practice and the use of evidence-informed approaches, specifically motivational interviewing and being trauma informed, will equip participants with skills to improve relationships, support behavioural change, reduce risk to children and vulnerable adults, and enhance parenting.

Our Integrated Secure Base Model (ISMB) of support, based on ideas of the ‘team as a secure base’ (Biggard et al., 2017, 2016; Cook et al., 2020) will help you succeed on the programme, by offering wraparound support and security, designed to be a ‘secure base’ as you progress through the three-year programme. The support level is tailored to participants’ programme stage and experience level, promoting resilient and confident practitioners. It provides support, encouragement, and assistance with organising thoughts around promotion of skill development and wellbeing at a level commensurate with your progress over the course of the years.



1.1. Leadership development through Approach Social Work

On the programme, leadership is understood in a broad sense and is not restricted to positions of authority: instead, it denotes a way of behaving and of effecting change.

We see the social work role as a leadership role in itself; social work practitioners work collaboratively with families and other professionals to jointly set out a vision with people and work with purpose towards positive change. They are often operating in a context where they have limited formal authority and yet they need to change behaviour, sometimes with people who might not even recognise a problem, and often with numerous agencies with competing priorities. We describe the ability to do this as leadership. It is about collaboratively developing realistic plans that make a difference to people, developing the motivation and commitment of others to help realise those plans, being resilient in the face of adversity, and demonstrating strong values and vision. It also requires recognition that most of the problems social workers engage with are not amenable to simple answers. They are complex problems that interrelate in ways that can make them seem intractable.

1.2. Regulatory commitments

Approach Social Work is a professional programme that complies with the following regulations and standards:

- The [Professional Capabilities Framework](#) (BASW 2018)
- The Quality Assurance Agency's [Subject Benchmark Statement Social Work](#) (QAA 2019)
- The [Professional Standards](#) (SWE)
- The [Education and Training Standards](#) (SWE 2021)

You will also be expected to adhere to local authority policies including safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection, whistleblowing, etc.

1.3. The Participant Charter

Our participant charter is the foundation on which the programme community sits. It sets out expectations that are anchored to social work values and behaviours outlined by the regulator, Social Work England, and linked to the Professional Capabilities Framework. It is not a legally binding contract, but we expect you to live out its principles throughout your Approach Social Work journey, as we believe that it will help foster an outstanding experience for all participants.

It is underpinned by four key principles:

- We treat one another with dignity and respect.
- We work together to create social change for children who do not have a safe or stable home, by developing excellent social work practice and leadership.
- We are open and inclusive to difference; to people, to ideas, to places and methods.
- We will inspire and enable our own learning and that of others.

As participants of an inclusive and welcoming community, we expect you to commit to:

- Taking an [anti-racist approach](#), valuing diversity and challenging discrimination.
- Acting ethically and transparently, making use of fair and open means to deal with concerns and grievances and learning from them.
- Taking responsibility for your own learning by being an active participant, engaging positively with lectures and hub meetings, attending meetings with your practice tutor and ensuring you spend sufficient time undertaking private study.
- Being a reliable and committed participant, turning up on time for children and families and for teaching days and practice seminars, and handing work in on the deadlines specified.
- Adopting a scholarly approach to your work and upholding academic integrity.
- Engaging in feedback processes to help improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Reflecting on feedback before making a judgement of its value or worth.
- Communicating with each other in ways that are clear, accurate, timely and relevant.
- Accepting your responsibilities to each other at all times and working together to ensure everyone can live and study free from discrimination and harassment. This includes time spent on placement, at teaching days, and on social media.
- Upholding the [Professional Standards](#) as set out by Social Work England and the [Professional Capabilities Framework](#) as set out by the British Association of Social Work (BASW).
- Taking responsibility for managing your health and wellbeing and asking for support and help when needed.
- Taking responsibility for completing learning and reflection during the programme to develop the skills and characteristics of an impactful fellow.

If conduct falls short of the above principles, participants may be referred to the [appropriate programme policy](#)

1.4. Frontline's commitment to racial diversity and inclusion

All of Frontline's work is underpinned by our continued commitment to racial diversity, and to inclusivity more broadly. Frontline is a charity striving to bring about social change for children and families through excellent social work practice, leadership and innovation. We are focused on ensuring that we are a genuinely anti-racist and anti-oppressive organisation, both internally, across all our programmes and in our Fellowship. We strive to be pro-active in our efforts to challenge racism and structural inequalities in our society. We seek to ensure that people of the global majority and other minority backgrounds do not continue to face extra challenges and are better supported, heard, and represented. We know that being a diverse and inclusive organisation is central to achieving our vision of a society where no child's life chances are limited by their social or family circumstances.

We are working to grow the proportion of participants on Approach Social Work of the global majority. We want to encourage, influence, and inspire our partners, suppliers and all those we work with to be actively anti-racist, and to support and empower our employees, participants, fellows and other stakeholders from global majority backgrounds. At Frontline we have learnt a great deal from our diversity and inclusion journey so far. One of the key learnings being the importance of humility and persistence, and the need to continue to take steps each day to make progress. We are dedicated to continuing our learning, our progress and to making change. Please follow the link to read more about [Frontline's diversity and inclusion statement](#).

1.5. The Frontline team

The programme team comprises a Programme Management Team, Curriculum Team and two regional Delivery teams (North and South). Please [see Annex 2](#) for more information on key staff, teams, and roles.

2. Course Overview

2.1. Aims and learning outcomes

2.1.1 Educational aims

The programme aims to provide a variety of teaching, learning and assessment experiences, which allow participants to demonstrate and develop your understanding of social work theory and practice:

Subject specific: Knowledge, understanding and skills

The programme enables students to gain a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work. On successful completion of year 1, participants will be eligible to apply for registration with Social Work England. The Postgraduate Diploma is designed to meet Social Work England's Professional Standards, which define what a social worker should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their social work training.

The Approach Social Work curriculum is informed by the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF), published by the British Association of Social Work (2018) and mapped to Social Work England's professional standards, and therefore equips participants with the requisite knowledge, theory, skills and values needed for effective social work with children and families.

Approach Social Work aims to equip participants with advanced knowledge and skills in three evidence-based approaches to practice: systemic social work practice, motivational interviewing, and parenting interventions (based on Social Learning Theory, attachment, trauma-informed approaches and mentalisation) in addition to other pertinent theories and methods. In year 1, participants will be provided with the opportunity to work with at least two service user groups, where they will be required to demonstrate increasingly advanced application of their social work knowledge and skills, in accordance with the BASW's PCF (2018).

Approach Social Work aims to develop reflective practitioners, who are able to demonstrate a deep and systematic value and ethical base underpinning all social work practice and academic activities. Approach Social Work participants will be required to undertake critical analyses of the various societal, personal and professional contexts that influence them and the children and families that they work with and clearly evidence this within academic assignments, family assessment and reports. They are also required to demonstrate sound ethical values, be anti-

racist, anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory in their approach and be child focused in their practice.

General: Knowledge, understanding and skills

In general, the Postgraduate Diploma aims to provide an intensive and stimulating learning environment, which enables participants to become reflexive and resilient practitioners who are well equipped to make a significant positive contribution to the agencies, children and families with whom they work.

Approach Social Work enables participants to critically engage with theory and practice and form analytical perspectives on the factors that influence social work and related fields. The programme enables participants to make evidence-informed decisions, which incorporate practice and academic knowledge and skills and are ethically sound. Students will be required to examine and clearly articulate their own relationship with power and privilege and will be equipped to identify and challenge discrimination and oppression in the workplace.

Leadership development forms an integral part of the Postgraduate Diploma. It provides participants with the opportunity to identify their own leadership style and develop a comprehensive understanding of the Frontline leadership capabilities (resilience and self-reflexivity, professional authority, holding to account, inspiring others, learning and development and analysis and decision making) and how these relate to their practice. The Frontline leadership capabilities are aligned to the BASW PCF's leadership domain, and teaching focuses initially on self-leadership. This is developed through collaboration with their immediate network, including their practice hub, to leading change with children and families and working effectively with other professionals within the local authority and multi-agency working.

The Postgraduate Diploma aims to enable the development of key transferable skills, in particular research mindedness, written and verbal presentation of knowledge and argument, working with and enabling the development of others, critical reflection and management of own learning. Participants will be equipped to adhere to continuous professional development standards and the development of the profession.

2.1.2. Learning outcomes

On successful completion of year one of the programme, participants will be able to do the following:

Subject Specific: Knowledge, understanding and skills

- Demonstrate knowledge of the social, political, theoretical, and legal frameworks that inform social work practice and critically analyse their application in practice.
- Systematically apply and integrate principles of social justice, equality, anti-racist, anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory social work values, and ethics in practice and critically evaluate their application within the wider profession.
- Demonstrate scholarship, creativity, and originality in the application of knowledge, together with an understanding of how research should best inform social work practice.
- Demonstrate a high level of knowledge and skill in the use of systemic theory and practice as an evidence-informed relational approach to social work and critically reflect on and evaluate practice, recognising the importance of adapting their approach to the complexities of social work.
- Demonstrate a high level of knowledge and skill in the use of motivational interviewing theory and practice as an evidence-informed strength-based approach and critically reflect on and evaluate practice, recognising the importance of adapting their approach to the complexities of social work.
- Demonstrate a high level of knowledge and skill in the use of theory and practice of trauma-informed parenting interventions and critically reflect on and evaluate practice, recognising the importance of adapting their approach to the complexities of social work.
- Undertake complex assessments that involve identifying, analysing and drawing conclusions from appropriate sources and demonstrate critical reflection on this process.
- Critically appraise the evidence base for the approach to practice taught by Approach Social Work in reducing risk to children and families, demonstrating a consideration of the various and intersectional personal and structural forces that effect practice.
- Work autonomously to reduce risk, demonstrating a high level of skill in constructing formulations of risk and adapting evidence-based interventions appropriate for the unique context of each family, resisting final or technical solutions which fail to grasp the complexity and uncertainty inherent in child and family social work.

General: Knowledge, understanding and skills

- Critically reflect on their own learning and practice both individually and alongside colleagues.
- Systemically evaluate and synthesise complex information from a range of sources, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data and communicate conclusions clearly to a range of audiences.
- Demonstrate originality in tackling and solving complex problems and work effectively with others in the planning and implementation of work.
- Seek out relevant, current knowledge from a wide range of sources and disciplines.
- Critically appraise and apply theory and findings from research to practice.

You will be assessed against these learning outcomes throughout the year.

2.2. Year one structure

The first year consists of six modules making up the 120 credits of the Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work:

- FLSW921 Readiness for Practice [10 credits]
- FLSW922 Principles of relational social work practice [30 credits]
- FLSW923 The legal context of social work practice [30 credits]
- FLSW924 Advanced relational social work practice [30 credits]
- FLSW925 Practice learning experience one [10 credits]
- FLSW926 Practice learning experience two [10 credits]

The first year will begin with the five-week Readiness for Practice (RfP) stage, which includes a three-day residential. You will start placement in September and will be in placement until Friday 27 August 2027.

In order to pass the PG Diploma and qualify as a social worker, you must spend a minimum of 200 days learning in practice, which must include 30 days in a contrasting learning experience; attendance at up to 30 Skills Days can also be counted towards the minimum of 200 days.

The remaining days will be in your primary placement, based in a practice hub within in a local authority children and families service setting. During the year, you will attend 20 compulsory teaching days and eight practice seminars.

Period	Length	Assessment & Offer	Relevant documents
Before RfP (May)	2 days	Shadowing – Opportunity to speak to your CSW, finding out about social work practice – Understanding of the local authority and its context – Begin collating information for the Readiness for Practice assessment	– Participant shadowing guidance – Readiness for Practice Guidance
Jul – Aug	25 days	Readiness for Practice Stage – Introduction to Approach Social Work and University processes – Integration of theory and practice	– Programme handbook

Period	Length	Assessment & Offer	Relevant documents
		– Emphasis on practice skills – Formal assessment of 'Readiness for Practice' (which must be passed to begin placement) – Includes 19 'Skills Days' - attendance counts towards your minimum 200 days in placement	– Readiness for Practice guidance – Module handbooks
Aug – Sep	16 days	Break – 3 weeks between finishing the Readiness for Practice stage and starting in your local authority	N/A
Sep – onward	12 months until Aug 2027	Working within the practice hub in children & families team – Based within a hub of normally five participants headed up by a CSW – Learning through doing – Guidance, assessment, and reflective supervision from your CSW – Teaching, assessment, and support from practice tutors – Statutory cases held by your CSW, jointly worked by the hub – You must spend a minimum of 200 days in practice learning, including your primary placement, your CLE and up to 30 Skills Days (across Readiness for Practice and Teaching Days).	– Programme handbook – Module handbooks
Sep - June	30 days	Contrasting Learning Experience (30 days total) – Contrasting experience with a focus on issues affecting adults i.e. physical and learning disabilities, mental health, domestic violence and/or substance misuse (including older adults and end of life)	– Programme handbook – Module handbooks
Sep - June	20 Days	Teaching days – Typically held in regional locations or online – Practice skills development days – Building on knowledge of theory – Consolidation of learning	– Programme handbook – Teaching day information on Moodle

Period	Length	Assessment & Offer	Relevant documents
		Includes 11 'Skills Days' - attendance counts towards your minimum 200 days in placement	– Module handbooks

2.3. Readiness for Practice Stage

The Readiness for Practice (RfP) stage is the period of intensive learning before starting placement in the practice setting within the local authority.

In this stage of learning you will:

- complete module FLSW921 *Readiness for practice* (including submitting assessment FLSW921.1, which must be passed before starting placement)
- commence modules FLSW922 *Principles for relational social work practice* and FLSW923 *The legal context of social work practice*.

This compulsory five-week (25 day) period is delivered mainly online, mostly lectures or workshops delivered live on Zoom, with some fully asynchronous days where you will be able to complete your learning independently through e-learning and other self-directed activities. The RfP stage also includes a three-day in-person residential at the University of Warwick in week two, and two in-person days delivered regionally. During this stage, you will also be completing your first assessment as part of [Module FLSW921 \(see section 4.2\)](#).

You will be taught by accomplished academics, experienced children's social workers, and people with lived experience of social work (Experts by Experience), to receive a grounding in the knowledge and skills needed to train in social work. Preparatory materials will be available to you prior to starting the RfP stage. 19 days of the RfP stage are 'Skills Days', attendance of which count towards your minimum 200 days in placement.

See table below for RfP teaching day schedule:

2.3.1 Readiness for Practice delivery dates and formats

Date	Teaching day and topic	Mode of delivery	Skills day?
Mon 13 Jul	Day 1 – Introduction to the programme; the start of your social work journey	Online	No
Tue 14 Jul	Day 2 – An introduction to social work	Online	No

Date	Teaching day and topic	Mode of delivery	Skills day?
Wed 15 Jul	Day 3 – A systemic relational based approach to social work practice	Online	Yes
Thu 16 Jul	Day 4 – Child and family law	Online	Yes
Fri 17 Jul	Day 5 – Social justice and the law	Online	Yes
Mon 20 Jul	Day 6 – Introduction to safeguarding and systemic practice	Online (asynchronous)	No
Tue 21 Jul	Day 7 – Intersecting ‘race’, ‘difference’ and ‘marginalisation’	In-person (residential)	Yes
Wed 22 Jul	Day 8 – Genograms and hypothesising	In-person (residential)	Yes
Thu 23 Jul	Day 9 – An introduction to motivational interviewing	In-person (residential)	Yes
Fri 24 Jul	Day 10 – Social work with adults/ Adult law	Online (asynchronous)	No
Mon 27 Jul	Day 11 – An introduction to attachment and trauma	Online (asynchronous)	No
Tue 28 Jul	Day 12 – Poverty and Neglect	Online	Yes
Wed 29 Jul	Day 13 – Domestic abuse / Disabilities	Online	Yes
Thu 30 Jul	Day 14 – Substance misuse/ Motivational Interviewing /	Online	Yes
Fri 31 Jul	Day 15 – Child development and observation	Online (asynchronous)	Yes
Mon 03 Aug	Day 16 – Multi-agency working with children and families	Online	Yes
Tue 04 Aug	Day 17 – Adolescents/ Cared for children	Online	Yes
Wed 05 Aug	Day 18 – Contextual safeguarding	Online	Yes
Thu 06 Aug	Day 19 – Direct work with children and young people	In-person (regional)	Yes
Fri 07 Aug	Day 20 – Mentalisation / working with men	Online	Yes
Mon 10 Aug	Day 21 – Familial sexual abuse	Online	Yes
Tue 11 Aug	Day 22 – Understanding organisational trauma and social worker wellbeing	Online (asynchronous)	Yes

Date	Teaching day and topic	Mode of delivery	Skills day?
Wed 12 Aug	Day 23 – Domestic abuse through an intersectional lens	Online	Yes
Thu 13 Aug	Day 24 – Developing systemic skills, personal genograms, and working within your hub	In-person (regional)	Yes
Fri 14 Aug	Day 25 – Applying your learning	Online	No

2.4. Involvement of Experts by Experience

The involvement of people who have lived experience of social work (known as ‘experts by experience’) is integral to the programme and therefore these individuals contribute to the admissions, design, and delivery of the course. Their involvement in the Readiness for Practice stage helps you learn about the reality and currency of practice, assisting you in making concrete links between theory and practice.

Our aim is to challenge the division of people into the categories of ‘service user’ and ‘professional’ and enable participants to understand that these labels frequently fluctuate and overlap.

2.5. Teaching days

Following on from the Readiness for Practice stage, there will be 20 compulsory teaching days interspersed throughout the practice learning period. You will have time away from your local authority to attend these.

The teaching will be delivered through a variety of interactive learning methods and will address learning outcomes for the different modules on the programme.

Modules FLSW922 *Principles of relational social work practice*, FLSW923 *The legal context of social work*, and FLSW924 *Advanced relational social work practice* are taught through the 20 teaching days. Some of the teaching days are categorised as ‘Skills Days’, attendance at which will count towards your 200 days in practice learning.

Teaching days are delivered both online and in-person, typically on a Tuesday.

Where teaching days are online, these are delivered to the whole cohort; where they are in-person, they will be delivered in each of our key regions: London, Midlands, North West, North East and South West. Dates will be the same across all regions. Where a planned date or

delivery-mode changes, we will always communicate this to you via an announcement on Moodle.

See table below for year one teaching day schedule:

2.5.1. Teaching day delivery dates and format

Date	Teaching day and topic	Mode of delivery	Skills day?
15 Sep 2026	Day 1 - Practical application of curiosity: the systemic use of questions / applying child development knowledge and theory to assess risk	Online	Yes
22 Sep 2026	Day 2 - Questions and their role in the social work cycle of assessment: Introduction to ASPIRE framework	Online	Yes
29 Sep 2026	Day 3 - Learning from child safeguarding practice reviews	In-person	No
13 Oct 2026	Day 4 - Systemic ideas and concepts helpful in the assessment stage of the ASPIRE framework	Online	Yes
20 Oct 2026	Day 5 - Understanding the Legislation for Mental Health in Adult Practice	Online	No
03 Nov 2026	Day 6 - Cultivating change talk in motivational interviewing (technical skills)	In-person	Yes
10 Nov 2026	Day 7 - Practical application of the law in children and adults' social work	Online	Yes
24 Nov 2026	Day 8 - Motivational interviewing and use of authority in child and family social work	In-person	Yes
08 Dec 2026	Day 9 - FLSW923 (1) Assessment (Social Work Law, Policy & Practice online exam) and Building Wellbeing	Online	No
15 Dec 2026	Day 10 - Contemporary Issues in Social Work – extra familial approaches	In-person	Yes
12 Jan 2027	Day 11 - The modern context of social work with young people	Online	Yes
26 Jan 2027	Day 12 - Systemic Interventions: Narrative theory and practice	In-person	Yes
09 Feb 2027	Day 13 - Care Planning and Permanency for Care Experienced Children	Online	Yes
23 Feb 2027	Day 14 - Trauma Informed Parenting Interventions – trust, voice, and collaboration	In-person	Yes
16 Mar 2027	Day 15 - Systemic interventions: Structural and Solution Focused Brief Practice approaches	Online	No
06 Apr 2027	Day 16 - Working with disabled children and adults	In-person	No

Date	Teaching day and topic	Mode of delivery	Skills day?
20 Apr 2027	Day 17 - Trauma Informed Parenting – using different lens	In-person	No
04 May 2027	Day 18 - Bringing it all Together: Parenting Interventions and Systemically Informed Social Work	Online	No
18 May 2027	Day 19 - Trauma-informed social work organisations	In-person	No
01 Jun 2027	Day 20 - Organisational context and Leadership	In-person	No

2.5.2. In-person teaching day venues

Please find below the venue information for each respective region. You will be notified by Frontline before the start of the programme of which venue you should attend depending on your Local Authority. All regional in-person days will be held in the same venues unless otherwise specified, including the regional days during the Readiness for Practice Stage.

Region	Venue name and website	Venue address
London and South East	Abbey Centre	34 Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BU
	Lift	45 White Lion Street London N1 9PW
Midlands	The Studio	7 Cannon St Birmingham B2 5EP
North East	Priory Street Centre	15 Priory Street York YO1 6ET
North West	Friends Meeting House	6 Mount St Manchester M2 5NS
	Mechanics Conference Centre (Tuesday 29th September ONLY)	103 Princess St Manchester M1 6DD
South West	Watershed	1 Canons Road Harbourside Bristol

Region	Venue name and website	Venue address
		BS1 5TX

2.5.3. Start and finish times

Start and finish times will vary between online and in-person days. Always refer to Moodle for accurate start times but a typical teaching day is between 9.00am – 4.30pm. Some days will have earlier or later starts but we will always endeavour to end on time. Please check Moodle regularly for any scheduling changes and ensure you arrive on time, as we will start teaching promptly.

2.5.4. Teaching day materials and recordings

Teaching day materials are available on Moodle two weeks prior to a teaching day.

Please note we do not always record lectures featuring Experts by Experience and those decisions are made in collaboration with our speakers and on a case-by-case basis.

Where a lecture is recorded, these are added to a playlist in Panopto on Moodle which can be accessed 72 hours after the teaching day. Due to the frequency of teaching days, AI generated captioning is used across all lecture recordings.

Where you have not been able to attend a teaching day, you will be expected to catch up on learning retrospectively through the recorded lecture and other learning materials on Moodle ([see section 2.6.3](#)).

2.5.5. End of year session

Separate to teaching days, we will offer an additional session towards the end of the year on Celebrating success and preparing for year two Approach Social Work. This session will take place online on Wednesday 11 August 2027 12:00-2:00pm.

While this is an optional session, we strongly recommend that you attend as we will share useful information about your next steps after year one.

Details of this event will be added to Moodle closer to the date.

The sessions will be an opportunity to:

- Celebrate your first year of Approach Social Work

- Hear from Social Work England (SWE) and understand the SWE registration process
- Learn what to expect for year two as a Newly Qualified Social Worker
- Hear about our mentoring offer
- Learn more about the transition into the Fellowship

2.6. Attendance

We track participant attendance and engagement so that we can provide early intervention and support to those not meeting the expected threshold.

For further information on expectations surrounding attendance of taught elements and the practice learning setting, and how Frontline manages non-attendance, please refer to our [attendance and engagement policy](#).

You are expected to be present in placement from 7 September 2026 to 27 August 2027 except for days when your absence is authorised due to:

- Exceptional circumstances, such as sick leave
- 25 days of holiday, dates to be agreed by your CSW
- 5 days of study leave, dates to be agreed by your CSW.

Authorised absences for the reasons listed above are not counted towards the minimum 200 days which you must complete in placement in order to qualify as a social worker.

You are also authorised to be absent from placement on Teaching Days, and up to 30 of the teaching days have been categorised as ‘Skills Days’. Skills Days can be counted towards your minimum 200 placement days, provided that your attendance is for the full day and has been correctly registered and appropriately evidenced in your Practice Learning Portfolios for modules FLSW925 Practice Learning Portfolio One and FLSW926 Practice Learning Two.

2.6.1. Monitoring attendance at teaching days

As a condition of its approval by England’s social work regulator, Social Work England (SWE), all Approach Social Work participants must meet a minimum of 80% attendance for all teaching days during year one. Absences should be limited to circumstances that are exceptional and meet the expectations set out in [Frontline’s attendance and engagement policy](#).

For online teaching days, we will monitor participants’ attendance via Zoom reports. We can identify participants through the details they use to log into Zoom (full name and Lancaster University email address).

For in-person teaching days and fully asynchronous days (days with no live content), participants will be asked to register their attendance via a QR code that will be provided and signposted to them. To ensure full attendance of in-person teaching days, Frontline may alter when the QR code is shared with participants during the day. For asynchronous days, QR codes will become available once the e-learning for that day have been completed. It is the responsibility of the participant to make sure they log their attendance for these days.

To register your attendance, you will need to have a QR reader on your device. All android phones and devices running iOS 11 or later will have 'built-in' QR code readers in the phone camera. Open your camera app from your device's home screen, control centre, or lock screen. Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the camera's view. Your device should recognise the QR code and provide a drop-down notification that will allow you to open an associated link, which you should then select. You will be taken to an attendance form where you will submit your first and last name, along with your unique Lancaster University Student ID, and your attendance will automatically be updated on your student attendance record.

Where you do not have a QR code reader built into your device, you should download a free QR code reader app onto your phone, which will enable you to complete the attendance form as above.

2.6.2. Notifying us of an intended absence

All intended absences should be reported ahead of the day where practicable.

You can reach Frontline teams via the [contact us page](#) should you need to request an absence. Once you have been allocated a practice tutor, you will also need to notify them of your intended absence.

Where applicable, you may be asked to provide evidence alongside your absence request.

Should you be unwell on the day and not able to attend a planned teaching day, please contact Frontline at the addresses above by 9.00am on the morning of the teaching day so that your workshop lead is aware.

2.6.3. Catching up on missed learning

If you are absent from a teaching day (including Readiness for Practice and Teaching Days), you must catch up on missed learning. You should do this via the resources available on Moodle, and through watching any video recordings of the missed day that are available.

In instances where you are noted as having missed a teaching day, you will receive an automated email communication regarding your absence with a hyperlink to an absence form.

To confirm that you have caught up, you will need to fill in and submit the absence form to us. As part of this submission, you will be required to reflect on the missed learning via a series of open-ended questions. Once submitted, you will receive receipt of your submission.

Absence forms are checked ahead of progress reviews, and there are labelled areas for you to upload them in the relevant portfolio submission areas on Moodle. Missing or incomplete forms will mean that your attendance status for that day will remain as 'absent', irrespective of the reason for your absence. Correctly completed forms will allow your status to be updated from 'absent' to 'caught up', which will update your overall attendance percentage. Please note that where a teaching day is classified as a Skills Day, even where you catch up on the missed content, we cannot allow this to consequently be counted towards your minimum 200 days in placement: for a Skills Day to count towards your placement days, you must be in attendance of the whole teaching day as it is taking place.

2.7. Online engagement and camera usage

Both for you and the Approach Social Work teaching team, it is important to be able to see each other's faces when learning. When teaching, non-verbal cues such as smiles, frowns, head nods, or even looks of confusion help us to evaluate teaching in real time and adjust accordingly to improve learning. For participants, it is also important that you can see one another on screen to help build trust and rapport with your workshop group. You will therefore be expected to have a set-up that allows you to be seen on camera and contribute verbally by unmuting yourself during workshops. Participants must have their cameras on for all workshops, unless instructed not to do so. Zoom has options to add an artificial background or blur if you wish. We appreciate that there are always a range of reasons why someone may have their camera off in workshops, so if there is a reason why you are not able to have your camera on, please email your regional inbox (northregion@thefrontline.org.uk or southregion@thefrontline.org.uk) and copy in your practice tutor ideally before the workshop commences. During the workshop if you find you need to turn off your camera for a period of time, you should direct message the workshop facilitator to notify them.

For whole cohort lectures you will be interacting via methods like the Zoom chat and polls, and other methods but you are not required to have your camera on or contribute verbally in these sessions unless you wish to or prompted to.

3. Assessment

3.1. Assessment overview

Over the course of the year, you will be holistically assessed through a series of academic and practice-based elements, from more conventional academic writing through to reflective assessments on current practice and observation of your practice by your CSW. Each assessment focuses on the application of learning to practice and the integration of learning from across the curriculum.

All assessments are judged against the Lancaster University marking criteria, which is based on the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) level descriptors for postgraduate degrees. As a postgraduate level student, you will be expected to be competent in cognitive skills as follows:

- **Knowledge and understanding:** participants should be able to demonstrate a depth of knowledge and a systematic understanding of social work research and practice, and be critically aware of and deal with complexity, gaps, and contradictions in the current knowledge base with confidence.
- **Analysis:** participants should be able to autonomously analyse new and/or abstract data and situations using a wide range of techniques appropriate to social work and to their own research or advanced scholarship.
- **Synthesis and creativity:** participants should be able to autonomously synthesise information and ideas and propose new hypotheses, create original responses to problems that expand or redefine existing knowledge or develop new approaches to changing situations.
- **Evaluation:** participants should be able to independently evaluate current research, advanced scholarship and associated methodologies and appropriately justify the work of self and others.

You will undertake six modules in year one as part of the PGDiploma, and one further module in year three to complete the Masters.

All are at Master's Level (level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications).

Each module has its own module handbook containing learning outcomes and detailed information about the assessment(s) of that module and these are published on Moodle.

Modules	Credits	Year one academic overview
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FLSW921 Readiness for Practice	10	Assessments: FLSW921.1 Readiness for Practice (100%)	
FLSW922 Principles for Relational Social Work Practice	30	Assessments: FLSW922.1 Holistic Child Assessment essay (60%) FLSW922.2 Practical - Use of Motivational Interviewing (40%)	
FLSW923 The Legal Context of Social Work Practice	30	Assessments: FLSW923.1 Online open book exam – Social work law, policy, and practice (20%) FLSW923.2 Coursework – Critical case study (80%)	
FLSW924 Advanced Relational Social Work Practice	30	Assessments: FLSW924.1 Case study – Evidence-based interventions (100%)	
FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One	10	Assessments: FLSW925.1 Practice Learning Portfolio One (100%)	Minimum of 200 placement days, including 30 CLE and up to 30 Skills Days
FLSW926 Practice Learning Experience Two	10	Assessments: FLSW926.1 Practice Learning Portfolio Two (100%)	

Assessment titles are available from the start of each stage of the programme, with the exception of assessments 923.1 and 923.2 ([see annex 4 for more details](#)). You will receive support from your practice tutor with regards to assessments and, where applicable, from your CSW to ensure there are opportunities in the practice setting to carry out the practice-focused elements of the assessments. Formative assessment opportunities will be available for each assessment element providing you with formative feedback on aspects of assessment.

All assessment elements must be passed in each module. A module cannot be passed with a failed assessment element, even if the aggregated (weighted average) mark is above 50%. Condonation of failed modules is not permitted on the programme.

3.2. Assessment marking criteria

At Lancaster University, the pass mark for taught postgraduate degrees, including the PG Diploma and the MA, is 50%. There are three award classifications: distinction, merit, and pass. Practice learning portfolios are assessed against the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) on a pass/fail basis, but all academic summative assessments will be marked against the Lancaster University approved marking matrix in [annex 3](#).

Please note that for some assessments an enhanced version of the marking criteria is used. In such cases, this will be shared with you via the module handbooks and assessment briefings.

3.3. Calibration and moderation

Marking is carried out anonymously where possible, by Practice Tutors (employed by Frontline), consultant social workers and other practice educators, or approved external markers. Markers receive training, and for a majority of assessments they participate in calibration exercises where a sample of work is marked collaboratively, to ensure a shared understanding of the standards expected. Marks are then moderated to quality assure the grades and feedback, and to ensure that work is at the appropriate academic level.

Methods of moderation vary between assessments, but follow regulations agreed with Lancaster University. Moderation reports are shared with our External Examiners and the Lancaster University Director of Studies for the programme. As required by Lancaster University, and as is typical for the higher education sector, a sample of assessments is shared with our External Examiners for moderation.

External examiners provide an independent check that the submitted work is at the required academic level and that marking and feedback meets statutory and regulatory standards. Further moderation is carried out by the Lancaster University Director of Studies, or their nominee.

3.4. Marks and feedback

Following most assessments (exceptions are 923.2, the online open book exam in Social Work Law, Policy & Practice, and the two practice learning portfolios, 925.1 and 926.1) you will receive developmental feedback along with your mark, via Moodle. Feedback is designed to help you understand the strengths and areas for development of each submission so that as an adult learner, you can monitor, understand, and take account of your progress throughout the course. We aim to be fair and consistent in terms of the marking of assessments and examinations, and the calibration and moderation processes described above help us to ensure this. If you have questions about the feedback or marks you receive, your practice tutor should be your first point of contact.

In year one, your assessment feedback and provisional results will be returned to you within 20 working days of submission (not including public holidays), usually by being published on Moodle. In rare occurrences where we are unable to return your assessments within the agreed marking period due to an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., a prolonged period of staff sickness),

you will be informed as soon as possible of the date by which you can expect the work to be returned. Any referral for possible malpractice/poor academic practice, or absence of required elements such as correctly completed consent forms, will also delay the release of grades and feedback.

Grades released via Moodle are provisional until they have been moderated and ratified as part of the examination board processes. The examination board meets to ratify module grades and at the end of the year to recommend that an award of PGDiploma be made to those who have passed the full 120 credits. In-year module grades are published to participants' interactive transcripts normally up to 10 working days after the relevant examination board. End-of-year awards are subject to ratification by Lancaster University's Classification and Assessment Review Board (CARB), which normally takes place in November.

Ratified end-of-year module grades will be published to participants' interactive transcripts normally up to 10 working days after the end-of-year examination board. Ratified awards are usually published into the interactive transcript within 10 working days following CARB. Award certificates and hard copy transcripts are typically dispatched within 6 weeks following ratification by CARB. Academic appeals can only be made after grades/awards have been ratified by the relevant body and usually only if the grade has an impact on the final classification or continuation on the programme.

3.5. Limits on assessment length

The limits for each assessment will be clearly publicised to participants as part of assessment guidance documents and will normally be given as a range. For example, rather than an absolute limit of 2500 words for an essay or 15 minutes for a recording, a range such as 2000-2500 words or 15-17 minutes will be used instead. A range gives participants a broader target to aim for and allows greater flexibility when making any final edits on an assessment. As well as the upper boundary of the range providing a maximum length, the lower boundary of the range allows us to indicate to participants what we see as the optimum length to meet the marking criteria and learning outcomes. Participants are encouraged to aim for any point between the lower and the upper end of the range. In the case of practical assessments where recordings are submitted, the lower boundary of the range (in minutes) should be taken as a minimum length. Written assessments have no minimum word count.

Participants may have experience on other university courses of being allowed a certain tolerance over and above the specified word limit, within which there would be no penalty for over-length coursework. For example, a 10% tolerance on a 2500-word assignment would have

effectively extended the limit to 2750 words. Such tolerance is not in place for assessments on this programme (see 3.5.1 for how under and over-length assessment will be considered).

3.5.1. Under and over-length assessments

Where the word/time limit has been exceeded by 20% or less the assessment will initially be marked in full. After an initial mark has been assigned for the full piece of work, only then will a suitable penalty be applied, if applicable. But for an over-length piece of coursework where the word/time limit has been exceeded by more than 20%, the part of the coursework beyond the excess 20% will not be marked.

After an initial mark has been assigned for the work, a suitable penalty will also then be applied, if applicable. Where penalties are being applied for a piece of over-long assessment, we will use a sliding scale of penalties, rather than a flat rate penalty. When applying a sliding-scale penalty, the deduction will depend by how much the word/time limit has been exceeded.

Amount over the word/time limit	Deduction
0 to 10%	5 marks
10.1% to 20%	10 marks

3.5.2. What is counted within a word limit?

The normal approach is that the word count will include the main body of the assessment (including in-text references, footnotes, tables and diagrams) but will not include administrative information (such as the participant name, programme of study, etc.), the assessment title or question, the appendices, or the bibliography. However, there may be variance to this approach depending on the requirements of each assessment. Participants should check assessment guidance for any such variance.

For some assessments it may be appropriate to include an appendix. However, appendices must not be used to extend your work beyond the word limit, nor contain information that is essential for the basic comprehension of the work. If appendices are used inappropriately, academic judgement will be applied when deciding on a mark that best reflects the extent to which the main body of the work satisfies the marking criteria and meets the learning outcomes.

3.5.3. Monitoring word/time ranges

Participants are required to provide an accurate statement of length as part of the submission of their work. When submitting your work you should record word counts /recording lengths on the front page of each assignment, or on supporting documents in the case of recordings.

3.6. Submission format

Unless specified otherwise, you will submit all academic assessments electronically via Moodle as word documents (either .doc or .docx). All assessments must be submitted with a coversheet confirming that the work is your own.

The following formatting conventions should be applied:

- Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial font
- minimum 11-point main text size
- margins of at least 2.5 cm at the top, bottom, left and right of the page
- portrait layout, unless you have specific elements (e.g. large tables) that are easier to read in landscape
- Numbering on all pages
- The main text should be 1.5 or double-spaced; acknowledgments, references and can be single-spaced
- Text can be either left-aligned or justified

When uploading your assessments, please ensure that you are submitting all relevant components into the correct file submission area by following the instructions provided. It is your responsibility to check that you have made your submission in the correct format and place, and that it can be read/heard after submission: you will not be able to make changes after the submission deadline, so failure to check may lead to failure of the assessment.

If your Individual Learning Support Plan [ILSP] includes the use of a reminder to markers about appropriate application of marking criteria for participants with Specific Learning Differences [SpLD – e.g. dyslexia], this will be attached automatically when you submit. Please refer to [section 6.5.2](#) for further information.

3.7. Anonymisation

To maintain the confidentiality of the children, carers and organisations cited within your academic work, please ensure that all references and identifiable data used are anonymised. You are required to use pseudonyms in written work. Further detail is provided in the 'Data

protection, confidentiality, and consent requirements for year one participants' document, found on Moodle, which you are required to read and adhere to. You will also be asked to complete the 'Getting Started' course prior to the start of the Readiness for Practice stage, which includes within it an e-learning focused upon GDPR. Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in a reduction of the grade awarded, and in the most serious and/or repeated cases, to failure of the assessment and/or referral to Fitness to Practise procedures.

3.8. References

The purpose of adding references to an assessment is to show from where you have obtained data or ideas, and to acknowledge the sources of quotations from other writings. Participants are required to use Lancaster University's version of the Harvard referencing system, details of which are available via Moodle and through the [university's main portal](#).

3.9. Academic integrity, plagiarism and academic malpractice

We use plagiarism detection systems to check the integrity of assessed work. These systems search the internet and an extensive database of reference material including other participants' work to identify any duplication with the work submitted. More information about Lancaster University's plagiarism framework can be found [here](#), and the programme's Academic Integrity policy can be found on Moodle and on the Frontline [website](#).

Plagiarism includes "the commissioning or use of work by the participant which is not their own and representing it as if it were."

This includes the use of text which has been generated or improved by artificial intelligence systems such as Chat-GPT, Co-Pilot, Gemini and Claude. There are a limited number of ways in which these tools can be used to assist with the preparation for some of your assessments, which are explained in the assessment specification for each one. With each assessment, you will be asked to include a cover sheet in which you declare any permitted use of Generative A.I.

3.9.1. Language Enhancement Applications (LEAs) and paraphrasing tools

Language Enhancement Applications are online tools/software plugins which assist in our writing, offering improvements and changes to our writing, for example correcting grammatical errors, or suggesting alternative words and sentence rephrasing. If used appropriately to check for errors, and if permitted in the assignments, the use of LEAs is not considered academic misconduct. Participants must check individual assessment specifications in relation to the use of LEA and generative artificial intelligence. However, it is important to understand that premium

LEA services (such as Grammarly Pro/Premium) and other online tools/software plugins used to improve writing use additional AI features and are not permitted. Participants are not permitted to use paraphrasing tools (such as Quillbot, or features of Microsoft Word 'Editor' or Grammarly which make improvements to style or tone, or which reduce wordcount). Further guidelines and the Lancaster University policy on their usage can be found at <https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/ask/administration/policies-regulations/university-position-on-artificial-intelligence/>.

Participants with an Individual Learning Support Plan (ILSP) may have been justifiably recommended Grammarly Pro/Premium and other similar software which uses Gen A.I. to support with grammar and punctuation or to enable work to be dictated rather than typed. Where an ILSP is present this should be considered permission for the participant to use software which supports their assessed needs.

Participants who are permitted to use AI tools in their assessed work must acknowledge their use. As minimum the following should be included in acknowledgements:

- Name and version of the generative AI system used, e.g. Grammarly Pro
- Publisher (company that made the AI system), e.g. Grammarly Inc.
- URL of the AI system
- Brief description of the context in which the tool was used.

Further guidance on referencing use of AI tools is available on [Cite them right](#), including examples.

The undeclared use of AI to generate text (such as ChatGPT and its variants), to translate text (using DeepL or other software) or to enhance text (using Grammarly Pro/Premium, for example) is a breach of Frontline's Academic Integrity policy (see extract below) and will be treated as academic malpractice.

“1.3.3 False Authorship: This is a form of plagiarism where the participant has deliberately engaged with a third party and/or software tool to complete an assessment, either in part or whole. This engagement can be direct or through an intermediary. This may include work produced or improved by another individual, an essay mill, a tutoring service, or through the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence software. As it is the authorship of the work that is contested, there is no requirement to prove that the work has been purchased. The submission of undeclared work which is generated and/or improved by A.I. software for the purposes of gaining marks will be regarded as False Authorship and seen as an attempt to gain an intentional unfair academic advantage.”

Because of the dual nature of the social work course, i.e., professional and academic award, and the SWE requirement that qualifying participants are deemed fit for registration as qualified social workers, plagiarism, cheating and the fabrication of information are taken particularly seriously. In the case of a proven academic offence, in addition to any academic penalties (see Academic Integrity policy), the Fitness to Practise policy and procedure may be invoked. All policies can be found on the Frontline [website](#), also linked on Moodle.

3.10. Problems submitting an assessment

You are advised to complete and submit your work well in advance of the deadline to avoid last-minute delays. However, we know that sometimes you may experience a personal or significant event which is unexpected and unpreventable and has an adverse effect on your ability to complete an assessment within the usual timeframe, i.e., serious illness or a bereavement. In such instances, you may be able to receive additional time and/or consideration. The [Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#) outlines the processes and parameters in full. Participants should bear in mind that while extensions will be offered where there are compelling reasons to do so, this can lead to clustering of deadlines, not receiving feedback ahead of subsequent deadlines, and in the case of assessment deadlines falling late in year one, delays to qualification, progression, and registration with Social Work England.

Advice on all matters relating to exceptional circumstances can be sought from Academic Registry via academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk.

We encourage you to raise issues as early as you can, and to be aware that if your circumstances do not meet the necessary criteria, as set out in the Exceptional Circumstances policy, your application will be declined. The policy sets out areas in which the panel has discretion, including the consideration of applications beyond the usual deadlines.

3.10.1. Penalties for late work

Work submitted up to three days late without an agreed extension will receive a penalty of 10 marks/percentage points (for example, a mark of 62% would become 52%), with a mark of zero (non-submission) thereafter.

Saturdays and Sundays are included as days in this regulation; however, where the third day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Bank Holiday, students will have until 10.00 a.m. on the first working day to hand in without receiving further penalty.

Where the application of a late submission penalty results in a fail mark, the assessment will be treated according to the standard procedures for failed work. Where circumstances outside your

control lead to late submission (within the three-day window for late submission), you may apply for the penalty to be lifted, by requesting mitigation under the Exceptional Circumstances procedure.

3.11. Postgraduate progression requirements

3.11.1. Criteria for Awards

To gain the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work, you will need to complete and pass all six modules (totalling 120 credits) in year 1. To gain an MA in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families you will register again with Lancaster University in year 3 and complete one further module worth 60 credits. The 120 credits gained from the PGDiploma will be counted towards your MA and your MA will be classified on all 180 credits of study across year one and three. The dissertation module is designed to draw on your experience in practice, so during year three you must remain employed as a social worker in a team working with children and families, usually at a Frontline-partnered local authority.

At Lancaster University, the pass mark for taught postgraduate degrees is 50%. All assessment elements must be passed in each module. A module cannot be passed with a failed assessment element, even if the aggregated (weighted average) mark is above 50%. Condonation of failed modules is not permitted on the programme.

There are three award classifications: distinction, merit, and pass. Where the overall average, calculated to one decimal place, falls within one of the following ranges, the exam boards will recommend the award stated:

Percentage	Award classification
70.0%+	Distinction
60.0 - 69.9%	Merit
50.0 - 59.9%	Pass
Below 50.0%	Fail

Where the mean overall average falls within one of the following 'borderline' ranges, additional rules apply:

- 68.0-69.9% either distinction or merit
- 58.0-59.9% either merit or pass

For all students whose overall average mark falls into a borderline range, the higher award should be given if half or more of the credits from across the programme are in the higher class.

3.11.2. Examination boards

At multiple points, the work that you submit for assessment will be reviewed and ratified by the board of examiners. The board of examiners includes internal examiners (academic staff from Frontline and Lancaster University), and external examiners. The date of the examination boards is set in line with the completion deadlines for each module, as noted below:

Exam board date	Module / element
Mid-August 2026	FLSW921.1 Readiness for Practice
Mid-March 2027	FLSW922 and FLSW925
Mid-June 2027	FLSW923 and reassessments for FLSW922
Late-August 2027	FLSW924, FLSW926 and reassessments for FLSW923
Mid-September 2027	Reassessments for FLSW924, 926 and any other outstanding modules
Late-October 2027	October board is primarily for ratification of dissertation results but will also consider any year 1 results with exceptional delays.

In-year and end-of-year ratified grades and module results are published to individual transcripts (accessed via the [Lancaster University portal](#)) normally up to 10 working days after the relevant examination board. End-of-year awards require ratification by Lancaster University's Classification and Assessment Review Board, which normally meets in November ([see section 3.4 for further detail](#)).

Participants can register with Social Work England (SWE) as qualified social workers once Lancaster University has informed SWE that they are eligible to do so. Frontline will communicate to participants when SWE has received confirmation of your qualification (once assessment grades and module results have been confirmed by the exam board), and you will then be able to start the registration process. This is usually in mid-September, within one to two weeks of the completion of placement, provided that the August exam board has ratified that you have passed all modules (120 credits) of the PGDiploma and is recommending to CARB that you be made an award. Local Authority partners are aware of this timescale and have various processes for moving Frontline participants into qualified employment. Where year

1 placement and academic work have been successfully completed, local authorities are often able to offer non-qualified temporary employment (at a lower salary) after the end of placement and until registration is complete.

If for any reason the August exam board cannot confirm that you have passed the 120 credits that count towards the PGDiploma (for instance because you had an extended deadline for an assessment late in the year, have not yet completed your minimum 200 days, or have an opportunity to resubmit a failed assessment) ratification of your year one module results and recommendation of an award of PGDiploma will take place at a later exam board (e.g. in September or October), and notification to SWE will follow normally up to 10 working days after that later board. You will not be able to register with Social Work England, or begin employment as a qualified social worker, until SWE has been notified that you are eligible. In this case there is no guarantee that non-qualified employment will be available for the full period.

If you fail any year one assessment at resubmission and have no further resubmission opportunities remaining, you will fail the programme and will not be able to continue on Approach Social Work, nor will you be able to qualify as a social worker. In this situation you may have grounds to appeal under [Lancaster University's academic appeals policy](#).

Following the formal publication of results, an examination board transparency report will be made available via Moodle which will provide information considered by the board when making decisions. This may include: average module marks; whether any scaling was undertaken (or proposed); any other contextual information specific to individual modules considered by the board. Additionally, you can ask for a results appraisal if you do not understand how your results were determined. If you would like to request a results appraisal then please contact Frontline Registry (academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk) and they will liaise with Lancaster University so that a results appraisal can be provided to you. A request for a results appraisal will not affect your right to submit an academic appeal.

3.11.3. Resit and reassessment of failed assessments

If you fail an assessment element, reassessment of that element is compulsory. You will have one reassessment opportunity for each assessment element failed. Reassessment marks are capped at the pass mark (i.e. 50% in the case of elements with numerical marks).

If at the first attempt you had failed the module overall (i.e., your total module percentage mark is below 50%) and consequently pass the failed element(s) on second attempt, your total mark for the module will be capped at 50% so that you are not advantaged by having the resit opportunity.

If, alternatively, at the first attempt you had passed the module overall (i.e., your total percentage mark is 50% or above) but have failed one or more element(s), you will have one reassessment opportunity for those element(s). If you pass the reassessment the element mark will be capped at the pass mark (i.e., 50% in the case of elements with numerical marks) and your overall module percentage mark will be unchanged, remaining at the mark it was before the reassessment.

Worked example:

Assessment element	Element mark (first sit)	Weighting	Module percentage mark (first sit)	Element mark following (reassessment)	Final module percentage mark
Coursework 1	70	60%	54 (pass)	N/A	54
Coursework 2	30 (fail)	40%		50	

3.11.4. Other parameters surrounding reassessment

- If the mark for an assessment is below 50% then reassessment is compulsory
- Submission deadlines for reassessment are set by exam boards, and you will usually receive a minimum of three weeks' notice of the date.
- You do not need to wait for notification of the submission deadline to start work on your resubmission.
- If the reassessment percentage mark does not exceed your original mark, the original percentage mark will stand.
- The resulting percentage mark will count towards the module average, according to its weighting.
- You may not seek reassessment to improve a passing grade (50% or above) unless mitigation has been approved for the first attempt.
- The PGDiploma is classified on the module grades from the 120 credits of study in year one.
- The MA is classified on the module grades from the 180 credits of study in year one and year three.

3.11.5. Exit awards

If you fail to meet the requirements of the PGDiploma having exhausted all reassessment opportunities, or you choose to withdraw from the programme before the end of year 1, you may

receive an exit award ('Postgraduate Certificate in Social Studies') if you have passed modules worth at least 60 credits in total.

Please note that with a Postgraduate Certificate you will not be eligible to apply to register as a qualified social worker with Social Work England (SWE). Exit awards are considered and confirmed by Lancaster University and must follow the formal process for confirmation and publication of ratified awards; this means that there may be several months delay between your decision to withdraw from the programme and the award of an exit qualification.

3.12. Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures (MARP)

Approach Social Work will follow [Lancaster University's Manual of Academic Procedures and Regulations \(MARP\)](#), except in regard to variations which have been agreed and approved through the appropriate Lancaster University academic governance process. The approved variations for the programme [can be found here](#).

MARP and Frontline's agreed MARP variations are the definitive source of authority for all regulatory information and supersede all other documentation where a discrepancy is noted.

4. Practice Learning

4.1. Social Work England's professional standards

Approach Social Work aims to ensure that you develop the skills and knowledge necessary to meet Social Work England's (SWE) Professional Standards by the time you complete year 1 of the programme.

Full guidance on Social Work England's Professional Standards is available on its website. The standards are:

- Promote the rights, strengths and wellbeing of people, families, and communities
- Establish and maintain the trust and confidence of people
- Be accountable for the quality of my practice and the decisions I make
- Maintain my continuing, professional development
- Act safely, respectfully and with professional integrity
- Promote ethical practice and report concerns.

Although Social Work England does not regulate students, it does expect social work students to understand and work towards its Professional Standards in preparation for when you apply for registration. The Learning Outcomes of each module are mapped against the Professional Standards and against the British Association of Social Workers' [Professional Capabilities Framework \(2018\)](#).

You should make sure that during the programme, including while you are on placement, you do not do anything that contravenes the Professional Standards: if you do, you may be referred to the Fitness to Practise procedure.

4.2. Readiness for Practice (RfP) assessment as part of Module FLSW921 Readiness for Practice

Readiness for direct practice is part of the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and is 'what students should demonstrate at the point of assessment of readiness for direct practice (prior to first placement)'. Your Readiness for Practice assessment must be passed before you begin your practice learning experience. Guidance and support will be provided to you during the Readiness for Practice stage and through Moodle in the module area for FLSW921 Readiness for Practice.

Your Readiness for Practice assessment is a written portfolio, which you will upload to Moodle along with the signed confirmation from your Consultant Social Worker that you completed shadowing in the local authority, and GDPR eLearning certificate of completion. This assessment must be correctly uploaded to pass. Participants who fail will have one reassessment opportunity. Please note that your practice learning placement cannot start until the Readiness for Practice assessment is passed, so if an extension is needed the start of placement may be delayed. If you fail both your first submission and your reassessment, you will be unable to continue the programme.

4.3. The Practice Learning Experience

The underlying principle of practice learning on Approach Social Work is that theory is fully integrated into practice. It is for this reason that you are based in a practice setting for the duration of year one.

As part of a local authority children's services department/children's trust, you will be placed in a practice hub typically with four other participants. The hub structure, as part of the ISBM, is based on elements of the 'secure base model' (Biggart et al., 2017) and the unit model, first used in the Reclaiming Social Work model in Hackney, where it was found to provide an excellent learning and supportive context for social work practice (LSE online, 2010; Forrester et al, 2013). The model has been adopted so that you can integrate theory and intervention methods into your day-to-day practice with children and families under the guidance of a CSW. You will be immersed in social work practice and will work with families alongside your CSW and fellow participants. The weekly hub meeting provides an environment for reflection, critical analysis and the development of emotional resilience and intelligence throughout the programme.

A highly skilled and experienced CSW, who is employed by the local authority, will lead the hub throughout the year. The CSW acts as the practice educator. They will support and assess you throughout your practice learning experience, including during the Contrasting Learning Experience (CLE). The CSW will also supervise, observe, educate, and line-manage you throughout the year, and will write end of first placement and the final report recommending whether you pass or fail the practice learning experience. Your CSW will have no other responsibilities outside of their role as CSW, meaning that they are dedicated to you and your hub. More information is provided in [section 4.6.2](#).

You will also receive regular visits from your practice tutor who will regularly monitor and assess your progression. Your practice tutor will typically visit you and your hub on nine occasions in your local authority during the first year. Your practice tutor will help you to critically reflect on

the development of your skills against the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and ensure the practice learning arrangements meet your learning needs. Both your CSW and practice tutor will provide you with clear and specific feedback to help you build your skills. More information is provided in [section 4.6.3](#). Your practice tutor will also lead eight Practice Seminars, delivered online to four hubs, focusing on theory and practice.

4.4. The stages of the Practice Learning Experience

Participants will complete a minimum of 200 days of practice learning in year one.

A placement day is equivalent to a working day within the placement setting (approximately 7-7.5 hours).

Any issues that might prevent you from completing enough days in year one should be discussed with your CSW and practice tutor.

This practice learning experience is divided into two modules: FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One and FLSW926 Practice Learning Two.

Module	Typical time period	Maximum possible days in placement (not including teaching days)	Typical number of days in placement
FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One	September to mid-January	90	70
FLSW926 Practice Learning Two	Mid-January to mid-August	135	100
	Mid-late August	9	Often participants chose to use remaining holiday allocation in this period.

The required minimum 200 placement days is also inclusive of up to 30 Skills Days, which are taught throughout year one of the programme normally between July, when you start the Readiness for Practice stage, and the following spring.

If because of approved absence you cannot complete the required minimum of 200 placement days within the normal timeframes, the programme's Placement Scrutiny Committee (PSC) may exceptionally consider an extension of a maximum of 30 calendar days to your practice learning experience. This would take place at the end of the same programme year and does not come

with any extension of bursary payments. More details of placement extensions can be found in the Attendance & Engagement Policy.

4.5. Working in partnership with local authorities

Frontline works in partnership with local authorities across participating regions to ensure Approach Social Work participants experience consistently high-quality practice learning settings. Prior to your placement within a practice hub, all practice learning settings are audited in line with BASW's Quality Assurance of Practice Learning (QAPL) benchmark statement and SWE's Education and Training Standards, so that your learning experience meets the necessary criteria conducive to a 'safe and supportive environment' (BASW).

We have developed strong relationships with local authorities in the development of this programme and have implemented processes to facilitate collaborative working. All local authority partners sign a Collaboration Agreement, which outlines the respective responsibilities and conditions that Approach Social Work and the local authority will provide for participants during the programme.

We expect participants to be mainly office-based to undertake their practice learning experiences. However, since 2020 there have been some changes to local authority working patterns and participants will work within the parameters set by their local authority. This may involve some working from home but wherever possible this should not be the norm, due to the rich informal learning that can be gained from being based in a social work team environment. Approach Social Work and the local authorities have also developed a rigorous process for the joint recruitment and appointment of CSWs. All new CSWs complete a training and development programme, delivered by Approach Social Work and social work experts, that covers the Approach Social Work practice models and practice education.

Termly Review Meetings between programme staff and senior local authority representatives take place to discuss and resolve any issues that arise and to plan future involvement.

4.6. Practice learning responsibilities

4.6.1 Local authority responsibilities

The local authority is responsible for providing practice learning for you, with this normally including:

- A 12-month practice learning opportunity in a statutory setting;

- A CSW to act as a full-time supervisor and practice educator;
- An appropriately qualified ‘deputy’ to take on case-holding and supervisory responsibilities if your CSW is absent for any reason, where possible;
- A participant hub placed within a children and families social work team in the Children’s Services department;
- Adequate resources to support the functioning of your participant hub;
- Provision of Contrasting Learning Experiences comprising a minimum of 30 days in total;
- An appropriate amount and level of casework

During the practice learning experience, you will be covered by the health and safety arrangements of your local authority, and your local authority will:

- Provide you with an induction regarding the workplace health and safety arrangements, including fire precautions, specific hazards and health and safety precautions;
- Include you and your role in health and safety assessments;
- Provide appropriate instruction and training in working practices;
- Provide ongoing supervision and training in the undertaking of your duties;
- Maintain a system of recording and investigating accidents and incidents

Your local authority will also be responsible for employer liability and public liability insurance. This will equally apply to Contrasting Learning Experiences. Further details will be confirmed in your Practice Development Plan and Contrasting Learning Experience plans.

4.6.2. Consultant Social Worker responsibilities

The Consultant Social Worker (CSW) will:

- Arrange an induction programme for you at the beginning of Stage 1 of the Practice Learning Experience;
- Model excellent social work practice and scaffold your learning in developing your own practice skill.
- Lead weekly hub meetings encouraging systemic and relational social work practice, peer challenge and critical reflection, facilitating group decision making about work with families;
- Provide one to one supervision to you on a fortnightly basis during Practice Learning Experience One of your Practice Learning Experience, and every three weeks thereafter (this is in addition to the weekly hub meetings). They should also make time for further one to one meetings as and when you need them, to privately discuss issues or concerns;
- Attend and contribute to the four Progress Reviews that evaluate how you are progressing during year one;

- Use a range of evidence from numerous sources to continually and holistically assess your progress;
- Provide supervisory, pastoral, and educative support to you throughout your Practice Learning Experience, so that you understand how your learning is assessed;
- Work closely with your practice tutor and share information about your progress.

If you have concerns about the supervision you get from your CSW, individually or within the hub, you are encouraged to speak to your CSW directly in the first instance, if you feel comfortable to do so. If not, you should raise any issues with your practice tutor.

4.6.3. Practice tutor responsibilities

In relation to participants, it is the practice tutor's role to:

- Attend and chair your Practice Development Plan meeting;
- Chair and record four Progress Reviews;
- Attend some of the weekly hub meetings in your local authority (typically nine local authority visits over the course of the year);
- Facilitate a minimum of three personal tutorials (delivered online);
- Negotiate and determine action plans to promote progress and overcome any identified learning needs;
- Monitor your attendance, sickness, development and assessment grades;
- Give you developmental feedback to enable self-assessment and development;
- Comment on the CSW's reports of your progress at the end of Progress Review Two and Progress Review Four;
- Maintain a record of participant tutorials, meetings and correspondence;
- Provide pastoral care and support or refer/signpost participants to appropriate services or staff in the event of personal problems which are outside the boundaries of the practice tutor and participant relationship.

More generally, the practice tutor will:

- Maintain links between Frontline and the local authority;
- Act as the link between academic and work-based learning;
- Deliver the curriculum of the Readiness for Practice Stage and throughout your practice learning experience (e.g., teaching days and in- Practice Seminars teaching)
- Regularly liaise with the CSW to discuss your progress;
- Mentor the CSW;

- Monitor the quality of the practice learning setting including the environment, equal opportunities, how participant needs are met and the implementation of appropriate reasonable adjustments.

4.6.4. Your responsibilities in the Practice Learning Experience

As a prospective entrant to the profession, hoping eventually to register with Social Work England (SWE), you are required to adhere to the following whilst on the programme:

- [Professional Standards \(see 4.1\)](#)
- To conduct yourself professionally and in accordance with all relevant policies and procedures of the local and authority (e.g., safeguarding, confidentiality) and Frontline's Practice Learning Experience Agreement. This includes ensuring that children and families know that you are a trainee and that they have the option to not receive support from a student social worker.
- To apply to register with SWE upon award of your PGDiploma, so that you can be employed as a social worker in years 2 and 3 of the programme.
- To maintain the confidentiality of children, carers and organisations by ensuring all references to them in academic work and other evidence are anonymised, and by following data protection requirements.
- To mutually agree a supervision contract with your CSW. You are required to be fully engaged with this process and to provide information and work where requested, as these supervision meetings will be used to inform the CSW's holistic assessment of your progress. All supervision records must be signed by both you and the CSW.

You are advised to keep a reflective diary of your learning and practice over the year. This can be used to aid supervision sessions. The reflective diary is personal and can be completed in the format that works best for you. It must be completely anonymized. The reflective diary should focus on your own practice reflections and not describe or outline the details of the families you are working with.

4.6.5 Working hours in placement

Your placement experience is full time, and a placement day is equivalent to a working day within the placement setting. Your exact working hours will therefore depend on your Local Authority, but typically you can expect to work 9.00am – 5.00pm, or approximately 7-7.5 hours plus a lunch break, Monday to Friday. This is also in line with Social Work England expectations.

Given the nature of social work and the changing needs of the children and families you will be working with, there may be times when your placement day is extended or when there are

circumstances that mean you need to continue to support families beyond normal hours. This would be exceptional and not an ongoing feature of your placement.

In these circumstances you would accrue TOIL ('time off in lieu'), and this is agreed and managed by your Consultant Social Worker (CSW). It is important that TOIL is taken relatively quickly after the event to ensure you have time to reset and to be able to manage your health and wellbeing, along with the demands of the programme.

We would not expect TOIL to mount up, so we ask CSWs to ensure you have time to take any accrued hours within the same week and if not, within a maximum of a two-week window. We would not expect an accumulation of hours at any point during placement.

If you have any concerns, you can of course discuss this with your CSW and/or practice tutor.

4.7. Assessment in the practice learning setting

4.7.1. The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)

The PCF is a framework established to support the learning, progression, and development of all social workers. It sets capability statements of what is to be expected at each stage of a social worker's career from entry into training, to the most advanced level of a social work practitioner's career. It provides a clear and comprehensive framework for your learning and progression.

There are clear descriptions of 'levels' that any social work student should progress through, and these form the basis of your assessment at each of those levels:

- readiness for practice (FLSW921.1 Readiness for practice assessment)
- end of first placement (FLSW925.1 Practice Learning Experience One Portfolio)
- end of last placement/qualifying level (FLSW926.1 Practice Learning Experience Two Portfolio)

As such it is an essential reference document for you as a participant, CSWs and practice tutors. Your progression is formally assessed using the PCF at three points which correspond to the levels of the PCF as described above.

4.7.2. The Practice Learning Experience One and Two Portfolios

CSWs make judgements about your progress against the PCF through the course using the Practice Learning Portfolio as evidence of your progression. You will complete a practice learning portfolio for FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One and for FLSW926 Practice

Learning Experience Two. Your CSW will provide a final judgement, on a pass/fail basis, of whether your practice is at a level consistent with social work qualification. As a student social worker, you will be routinely observed by your CSW whilst you carry out your duties with colleagues, children and families as this will contribute to your CSW's overall assessment of your practice at the relevant progression point. However, four formal observations of your direct work with children and families and adults, to assess your integration of theory and developing practice skills, will also take place. The four formal direct observations of practice are conducted by your CSW, evidence of which must be included in your Practice Learning Portfolios (two observations within each portfolio). The direct observations of practice will include formative feedback provided by your CSW for your own development and learning. The minimum four formal direct observations of practice are an essential component of the practice learning experience and must take place for you to pass.

Your learning and progress are discussed at a number of planning and reviewing points throughout the year. These are all three-way meetings with you, your CSW and your practice tutor, who chairs them:

Practice Development Plan Meeting (PDPM)

Following a supervision session with your CSW to explore your levels of experience and initial learning needs, your PDPM will take place. The goal of this meeting is to formally set out the focus of work for the initial stages of the practice learning experience as well as discuss any learning or support needs, or any questions you may have. It also confirms health and safety, whistleblowing, and complaints procedures, as well as procedures for dealing with concerns that arise in the practice learning setting. Following the meeting, the CSW will set deadlines for portfolio items and practice learning tasks.

Progress Review 1 (PR1)

PR1 is held after you have been in placement for approximately 35 days, halfway through FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One. The purpose is to consider whether you are making sufficient progress in demonstrating what is required at the 'end of first placement' level of the PCF. You should ensure you have completed some of the pieces of work for the Portfolio by this point and discuss these with both your practice tutor and CSW. You are expected to prepare for your PR1 meeting using the guidance on Moodle.

Progress Review 2 (PR2)

This is a formal assessment point against the 'end of first placement' level of the PCF. You must complete all elements of your FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One Portfolio. Your CSW

considers everything you have included in your Portfolio and assesses your practice in placement up to this point. They will write a report which includes a recommendation as to whether you have met the 'end of first placement' PCF level, which is required to progress to FLSW926 Practice Learning Experience Two. The second function of this meeting is to plan for the next stage of practice learning and consider the learning opportunities available and your learning needs. You are expected to prepare for your PR2 meeting using the guidance on Moodle.

Progress Review 3 (PR3) – midpoint

The purpose of the meeting is to consider if you are making sufficient progress towards meeting the 'qualifying' level of the PCF by the end of FuLSW926 Practice Learning Experience Two. The review is a chance to look at what you have completed for your portfolio, discuss your progress in placement and address any concerns or questions. You are expected to prepare for your PR3 meeting using the guidance on Moodle.

Progress Review 4 (PR4)

PR4 is the final Progress Review, is typically held upon nearing completing your minimum 200 days placement days. The format is the same as Progress Review 2. The purpose of the meeting is to consider if you meet the 'qualifying' level of the PCF. This is the final formal assessment of your practice, however, the placement will only be signed off once the minimum 200 days have been completed. Your CSW considers your FLSW926 Practice Learning Experience Two Portfolio and assesses your practice in placement, and then writes their final report. This includes a recommendation as to whether you meet the 'qualifying' PCF level. You are expected to prepare for your PR4 meeting using the guidance on Moodle.

Practice Assessment Panel (PAP)

After both PR2 and PR4, Practice Assessment Panels (PAPs) are convened to confirm your CSW's recommendation on your FLSW925/ FLSW926 Practice Learning Experience One/ Two Portfolios. A sample of Portfolios is examined by each PAP to moderate the recommendations made by CSWs, and the PAP confirms whether or not they recommend that each participant has passed their practice learning experience, which is a requirement for registration as a social worker with Social Work England. Following the PAPs, a Central PAP, led by the Principal Curriculum Lead for year 1, is convened. The central PAP moderates a further sample of Practice Learning Portfolios, and reviews Practice Assessment Panels for core themes. The central PAP then confirms all PAP recommendations and these recommendations are the Practice Learning Experience One/ Two Portfolio assessment results, which are presented to the relevant Lancaster University Examination Board for ratification.

4.8. Contrasting Learning Experience

Typically 30 of your minimum 200 practice days will be in a Contrasting Learning Experience (CLE). The CLE must be in an adult facing social care setting. There are four types of CLE setting stipulated for the Frontline model: adult mental health, adult substance misuse, adult learning difficulties and domestic violence.

Normally the CSW should discuss the specialist adult areas listed above with their participants during the induction fortnight, before making a final decision about which participant is linked to which CLE. Ideally, each participant in the hub should be in a different setting so that they can bring the range of experiences back to the hub.

The intention is that participants do the full 30 days in the same CLE. These 30 days can be taken in different ways – for example, one day per week or short blocks – as long as they do not fall on days when the weekly hub meeting is held or cause participants to miss teaching days. However, typically 10 CLE days should be completed as part of FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One (between September and January) and 20 CLE days should be completed as part of FLSW26 Practice Learning Experience Two (between February and July).

It is the responsibility of the local authority project manager to organise the CLEs. CSWs should also be involved in the organisation and liaising with the CLE provider.

The Contrasting Learning Experience is designed to ensure that participants achieve the following:

- understand issues relating to risk, safeguarding and need when working with adults;
- experience direct work and risk assessment with adults in an alternative setting; develop expertise in a key adult area, including mental health, substance misuse, learning difficulties and domestic violence.

4.9. Areas of specialism in adult issues

You are expected to develop an area of specialism in relation to an adult issue. The curriculum is designed to support you in developing this area of specialisation, to help you to make links across your learning to working with adults in a variety of contexts, broaden your area of experience beyond children and families and to support you to share your learning effectively within the hub. By undertaking the CLE along with dedicated study, participants are expected to develop specialist knowledge and practice in either adult mental health, adult substance misuse, adult learning difficulties or domestic violence.

One of the goals of specialisation is to embed learning around adult issues to ensure that your qualification is generic. The practice tutor works with you to apply broader learning beyond the core curriculum to your practice in placement. This learning is designed to support you to become an effective and reflective learner who can apply research and theories to their practice.

4.10. Genericism

Although you are based in a children and families team during year one, generic social work values, skills and knowledge permeate both the curriculum and the practice learning experience. In so doing, Approach Social Work offers you the opportunity to gain a generic qualification in social work and to ensure you are equipped with the knowledge and skills to work with people of any age or background, in any social work setting and are safe and effective in this role.

4.11. Dealing with difficulties in the practice learning setting

4.11.1. Initial concerns and the use of Approach Social Work programme policies

The programme is both an academic and professional award and is therefore responsible for assessing your suitability for professional practice as well as your academic ability. The practice assessment strategy is designed to ensure participants are eligible to apply for registration with Social Work England as qualified social workers upon successfully completing year one.

You are advised to talk to your practice tutor in the first instance where difficulties arise.

Should difficulties continue which cannot be resolved through discussion with your practice tutor, it may be appropriate for the practice tutor to refer the issue to an appropriate policy or procedure. [Approach Social Work's programme policies](#) apply to the programme as a whole, including the practice learning experience.

4.11.2. Serious concerns, including discrimination

In instances where you witness abusive, unprofessional, unsafe, or discriminatory practice in the practice learning setting, you should discuss this matter with your practice tutor or CSW (whomever you feel is the most appropriate based on the circumstances). If the issue remains unresolved or is of a serious nature or a matter of public interest, then you should follow the local authority's or Frontline's whistleblowing policy, as appropriate. You should be protected by the same whistleblowing arrangements as employees of the local authority during your Practice

Learning Experience, as well as the arrangements relevant to students with Frontline and/or Lancaster University.

All local authorities have an equality and diversity policy in place which applies to every participant, as agreed in the Collaboration Agreement. If you feel discriminated against at any time in your local authority, you will be supported to follow the correct procedures as per the local authority's policy. You are encouraged to discuss any equality or diversity concerns with your practice tutor who will provide the support needed to follow these procedures, or who will escalate the issue with local authority staff if necessary. Additional support for participants of the global majority, including a list of alternative programme staff with whom issues can be discussed, can be found in [section 6.8](#).

4.12. Failure to meet the Professional Capabilities Framework in the Practice Learning Setting

There is no automatic entitlement to retake a placement if failed. Practice Learning Experiences may only be retaken with the recommendation of the Practice Assessment Panel. As a professional qualifying programme, Approach Social Work has a responsibility to ensure participants are 'fit to practise' at each stage of the course, therefore a failure to meet the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) at either Readiness for Practice level (end of FLSW921 Readiness for Practice module), at the end of the first placement (module FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One), or at the end of the second placement (module FLSW926 Practice Learning Experience Two) will normally be taken as failure of the course. Participants who, at progress reviews, are not on track to meet the PCF at the appropriate level (at the end of FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One, or FLSW 926 Practice Learning Experience Two), but are deemed to be able to meet the PCF with some additional forms of evidence, may be given a limited predefined period in which they must show progression to meet the level of the PCF as required.

Participants who fail to meet the PCF at the appropriate level (that was not easily rectified) may be referred to the Frontline Fitness to Practise policy if there are issues within the participant's failure that meet or exceed the fitness to practise thresholds.

Please refer to our bursary and financial guidance for information about how this may impact your funding. [All policies can be found here](#).

5. Learning resources

5.1. Virtual Learning Environment: Moodle

Once you have successfully registered as a student with Lancaster University (registration link will be sent to participants 30 days prior to the start of Readiness for Practice), you will be given access to Moodle, the programme's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Moodle is where you will find all key documentation and resources (e.g., module outlines, teaching schedules, lecture slides, learning resources, policies, recordings of some taught days, assessment guidelines, hand-in dates etc.). It also is where you will be expected to submit your assessments. Digital skills training is hosted on Moodle and must be completed prior to commencing the programme.

If you experience issues with accessing/navigating Moodle (e.g., not being able to access content, assessment submission support) please get in touch with us through our [Contact Us page](#) and select 'Online learning support' as the topic of your query.

For general IT queries (e.g., LU registration issues, queries around your LU email, library access) please refer to [section 7.16](#), 'Lancaster University IT related support'.

5.2. Library resources

You will have access to Lancaster University's library online via Moodle, the library website, and the Student Portal, and physically on the LU campus. Prescribed and suggested reading lists will be provided by the Curriculum Team.

As a Lancaster University student, you are entitled to SCONUL membership, which enables you to use the library facilities of other universities that are members of the SCONUL scheme. For further information on library services please see [section 7.17](#) and [section 7.18](#) of the handbook.

6. Participant support

6.1. The emotional impact of the curriculum

Although incredibly rewarding, participants should be aware that embarking on a professional qualifying social work programme can sometimes be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Given the nature of the programme, these issues cannot be avoided and you need to be appropriately supported to develop the skills to deal with and address difficulties. Frontline's integrated 'emotional curriculum' (Grant and Kinman: 2012), looks to help participants build emotional literacy and reflective abilities, so that they are enabled to be successful on the programme, develop the skills required to manage the emotional demands of practice, and build the emotional resilience necessary for their future career.

We will, where appropriate, provide 'content warnings' to highlight topics that may be distressing. Please note these are not intended to censor teaching material or content. We recognise that it is not always possible to anticipate, and alert participants to, all potentially distressing material and that on occasions participants may, because of a personal event or experience, find particular scenarios or lectures potentially distressing. You should inform the relevant teaching staff if you do not feel able to take part or possibly need to withdraw from an element of the teaching for personal reasons and seek support through your practice tutor where necessary.

The programme offers a range of support structures both formal and informal to ensure you are enabled to be successful on the programme. You can always find the latest updates on participant support on the 'Participant support page' on Moodle including a list of external wellbeing and resource services that you may also find useful.

6.2. Peer Support

Peer support within the hub is an important source of support in the Approach Social Work model, and participants are encouraged to support one another's learning and development throughout year one.

You are encouraged to participate in affinity groups (which are formed during the Readiness for Practice Stage).

Distressing incidents are bound to come up in the practice learning environment, and your first point of call for debriefing, discussion and support should be with your CSW. The joint working

of cases with your CSW or another qualified social worker takes pressure off individuals to make the 'right decisions' alone and allows space for discussion, evaluation of thinking, and exploration around the proposed approach that can be taken in each situation. Thus, you are expected to look after your peers, make time in hub meetings to discuss challenges and issues that might be arising for individuals, and come up with solutions as a group.

6.3. Practice tutors and CSWs

Practice tutors are allocated to you and your hub to provide both teaching and pastoral support. You can speak to them about any concerns you have relating to your placement or academic studies. Alongside this your CSW will work with you daily to support you in practice and placement.

Both these people will get to know you well throughout your first year and you should speak to them if you have any concerns.

Please note that information a participant discloses to their practice tutor/CSW will be kept confidential, unless there is a risk to the participant, other participants, staff members, children and families or the general public. In such cases, the information will be discussed with/passed on to relevant staff. Information disclosed about disabilities is shared with Lancaster University unless you specifically request otherwise (see section 6.5.1 for more details).

6.4. Mental health and wellbeing

Frontline aims to foster independence, self-awareness and personal responsibility among all participants. It is also important that participants take an active part in the process and take suitable action to manage their own health and wellbeing in order to fulfil their academic potential, as is outlined within the Approach to Social Work [Supported Study & Fitness to Study policy](#). There may be times, however, where you require additional support.

While registered as a student of Lancaster University during year one and year three of Approach Social Work, you will have access to mental health and wellbeing support via the Student Assistance Programme (SAP).

Where you have initial or emerging concerns about your wellbeing or mental health, participants are encouraged to seek advice from SAP, as well as directly from NHS services.

The [SAP wellbeing and mental health advice line](#) is run for Lancaster University in partnership with Health Assured. The counsellors on the helpline can provide you with help and advice for a range of issues including:

- Mental health
- Stress and anxiety
- Bereavement
- Relationship advice
- Family issues
- Tenancy and housing concerns
- Alcohol and drug issues.

We know it can be difficult to take those first steps to seek support, the qualified and experienced staff are on hand to give you that help when you feel ready to access it. The mental health and wellbeing line is available 24/7, 365 days, so help is always available at a time that suits you.

Speak to the team by calling:

- +44(0)8000 283 766 (if calling from the UK)
- +44(0)2070 524 617 (for international based calls, charges may apply).

Participants also have access to an online self-help programme, SilverCloud which is based on cognitive behavioural therapy techniques. There are different programmes available covering issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, resilience, mindfulness, money worries, alcohol, sleep and body image.

To access SilverCloud, [please register on their website](#) with your Lancaster University e-mail address and follow SilverCloud's instructions to create an account and get started.

6.4.1 Support with disabilities, long-term conditions and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

As an Approach Social Work participant, you are entitled to support if you have a disability, long-term condition and/or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD). Academic-related disability and inclusive practice support will be provided by Lancaster University during year one and three of Approach Social Work, while registered as a student of Lancaster University.

Although you are not legally obliged to disclose your disability, long-term condition or SpLD to Lancaster University or Frontline, you are strongly encouraged to do so at the earliest opportunity so that Lancaster University and Frontline can work together to make arrangements

for you to be supported and assessed appropriately across all learning contexts, and to make reasonable adjustments where necessary (e.g. writing you an Inclusive Learning and Support Plan, ILSP, and implementing reasonable adjustments).

Whilst we strive to make all of our teaching and assessments accessible, we recognise that some participants will need further adjustments. We will not be fully aware of your support needs unless you have explicitly disclosed to Frontline or Lancaster University that you require them. In some circumstances, we may ask for further information or supporting documentation to better understand your needs.

If you believe that you may have a support need, you should contact the following teams:

- **Prior to Readiness for Practice stage:** admissions.support@thefrontline.org.uk
Frontline's admissions and support team
- **Once the programme has started:** speak to your PT, or contact Lancaster directly disability@lancaster.ac.uk

While Frontline and Lancaster University commit to treating sensitive information appropriately, please note that disability information is usually shared between the partners unless you explicitly object. If you inform Lancaster University of a disability or long-term condition but later decide to decline support, you will be contacted to complete a 'Non-Disclosure Form' which states you did not wish to access disability support or reasonable adjustments. For more information about this you can email disability@lancaster.ac.uk.

If you do object to the information being shared with either Lancaster University or Frontline, there may still be times when we will need to share this based on assessment of risk, in accordance with [Lancaster University and Frontline privacy notice](#). Any such action will be clearly communicated to you, and it is ultimately at your discretion whether to engage with the support on offer.

Where you disclose a disability, long-term condition or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) to a member of staff at your local authority, then Frontline and Lancaster University will not routinely be informed of this, and adjustments and support will not be put into place. It is therefore paramount that where you choose to inform us about a disability, you notify Frontline or Lancaster directly. We advise you to also notify your practice tutor of any issues that you are experiencing so that they can support you through this process, where required.

Please note that medical evidence will be required for any application for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). If you have a specific learning difficulty, such as Dyslexia, a full educational psychologist assessment will be required to be provided with your application. If it is identified that you may require an assessment with an educational psychologist to determine a SpLD

diagnosis, Frontline will currently subsidise part of the cost of your assessment. If you decide you would like an assessment, please contact admissions.support@thefrontline.org.uk

For more information, please see the [Lancaster University Disability and Inclusion Service webpage for Approach Social Work participants](#).

6.4.2. Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD) Coursework Coversheet

If it is noted within your Inclusive Learning Support Plan (ILSP) that you are eligible for a SpLD Student Coursework Coversheet alongside your assessments, this will be automatically added to all your submitted assessments on Moodle. This will also apply to any written examinations that you sit. If you do not wish your SpLD Student Coursework Coversheet to be automatically uploaded, then you can choose to opt out.

Please note that your decision applies across all assessments. If you change your mind either way you should contact Lancaster University's Disability and Inclusive Practice Service who will update your preferences.

The upload of your coversheet means that the academic marker of your work will take into consideration the marking guidelines for students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLDs), where this is appropriate (i.e., for issues outside of defined competence standards).

Please note that if you opt out of having the coversheet automatically attached to your work, the marker will be unaware of your needs. Submissions will not be remarked solely on the basis of absence of a cover sheet.

6.4.3. Disabled Students' Allowance

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) is funding provided by the government for disabled students that can be applied for through your Funding Body, (e.g. Student Finance England (SFE), Student Finance Wales (SFW), Student Finance Northern Ireland (SFNI) or Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS). DSA may cover any extra study-related costs you incur due to your impairment, mental health condition, or learning difficulty by paying funds directly to suppliers of support as determined by a Study Needs Assessment. It is neither a benefit nor a loan, so it doesn't need repaying. The amount you'll receive depends on your individual needs not on your income, nor that of your parents or partner. DSAs are typically used for things such as software, hardware or human non-medical support/helpers.

You will not receive DSA in year two of Approach Social Work, as you will not be engaged in academic studies. Receiving support during in this time may result in being asked to pay funds back to your funding body.

You will need to reapply for DSA prior to the start of year three, when your studies recommence.

For further information on how you can apply for DSA and its eligibility requirements, please refer to the government's [DSA guidance](#).

For more information about support applying for DSA, please see the Lancaster University LU Disability and Inclusive Practice Service webpage for Approach Social Work

<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/disability-and-inclusive-practice-service/programme-partners/approach-social-work/>.

Additionally, if you have any specific questions in relation to your DSA application for Approach Social Work, then we would recommend that you speak to a Lancaster University Disability and Inclusive Practice Advisor for more details about the application process. Please email disability@lancaster.ac.uk if you have any queries.

6.4.4 Assistive tools and technologies

All LU students can access information about [assistive tools and technologies | ASK - Lancaster University](#).

Assistive technologies encompass a range of products and services designed to assist individuals with disabilities or impairments in performing tasks they may otherwise find challenging. The resources in the above linked webpage, can help with learning, enhance communication, and improve digital access for students and staff who require support. These tools are also beneficial for anyone who may need to access information in alternative formats. If you are experiencing difficulties or if you have any queries please contact IT Support.

Assistive Tools and technology information:

- [Cognitive](#)
- [Mobility](#)
- [Hearing](#)
- [Learning](#)
- [Vision](#)
- [Device accessibility settings](#)
- [Web browser accessibility tools](#)

6.5. Academic support

At Frontline, we recognise that postgraduate academic study is a rigorous and demanding undertaking. Accordingly, our programme has been deliberately designed to provide a comprehensive and structured offer of academic support to enable participants to engage effectively with their studies and to achieve academic success.

We place a strong emphasis on the importance of tailored academic support as a key enabler of participant progression, attainment, and excellence. To this end, we have developed a robust and inclusive academic support framework that is embedded throughout the programme.

For each assessment alongside formal teaching, participants benefit from extensive guidance, including live assessment briefings and facilitated workshops. These are complemented by a programme of academic skills development sessions covering all aspects of postgraduate study, including critical reading, academic writing, learning strategies, and research skills at master's level.

We have also invested in specialist academic leadership through the appointment of a Principal Academic Inclusion Lead, an academic member of staff with responsibility for leading the academic support and wellbeing offer providing targeted support to participants.

In addition, participants have access to a dedicated Moodle space entitled Essential Academic Skills, which houses a wide range of resources, guidance materials, and links to live academic skills workshops delivered throughout the academic year.

While registered as a student of Lancaster University, during year one and three of Approach Social Work, participants have access to a Learning Developer, who is part of the Learning Development Team at Lancaster University. Learning development aims to help participants reach their potential, regardless of current or previous attainment.

Learning development provision includes one-to-one tutorials, where participants meet to discuss strategies for developing writing, criticality, and analysis. It is usually helpful if you can bring a piece of work with you to a tutorial, either something that you are currently working on or a previous piece assessment to use as an example.

Tutorials will be held via Microsoft Teams; however, if anyone is local to Lancaster and prefers to meet in-person, a meeting can be arranged at the Lancaster University campus.

The Frontline Learning Developer provision is a finite resource (0.2FTE). Please bear in mind that your e-mail may not be responded to immediately and that the support may be fully booked at times.

Please contact learningdevelopmentfl@lancaster.ac.uk for further information and to arrange a time to meet. This provision includes some daytime and some evening hours.

6.6. Additional funding and loans

6.6.1. Lancaster University

If you are experiencing financial hardship during year one of the programme, you are eligible to apply to two of Lancaster University's funding support pools: [Lancaster's Opportunity and Access Fund \(LOAF\)](#) and its [emergency loan](#).

Please ensure that prior to applying for extra financial support, you read the supporting terms and conditions for each support option. These general principles may also assist further:

- There is an expectation that all postgraduate students will have secured appropriate funding to cover their costs, for the duration of their programme, prior to commencing their study.
- The LOAF grant is only intended for those who experience significant and unexpected changes to their incomes stream /funding during their studies.
- As Approach Social Work participants receive a bursary/salary and do not pay tuition fees it is less likely that you will be eligible unless there is a sudden and unexpected change in circumstance.

Participants are advised to budget for any gap they may experience between their last August bursary payment and first salary when commencing employment. Failure to plan for this is not grounds for a loan or grant.

6.6.2. Frontline hardship fund

Frontline operates a Hardship fund for year 1 participants who are facing particular financial challenges where they would otherwise be unable to continue the programme due to financial difficulties.

As part of our commitment to equality and diversity, our financial assistance is primarily targeted at individuals and groups who are more likely to face hardship. This assistance is by way of two routes: a bursary advance, normally up to a maximum of £500, and in qualifying cases, a non-repayable grant. Details surrounding eligibility and how to apply are available on the 'Your key information' page on Moodle, under the wellbeing and support section.

6.6.3. Student Money Advice service

Participants can contact Lancaster University's Student Money Advice for guidance and support in managing money and building confidence on dealing with money matters such as budgeting, making money go further, scoping for minimising expenditure and maximising income, banking language, opening a bank account, suspected fraud/scam, awareness and signposting to specialist advice etc. More information can be found [here](#).

6.6.4. Government support

The bursary may affect participants' eligibility for other benefits or financial support. For example, Approach Social Work participants are unlikely to be eligible for Universal Credit, as the bursary amount exceeds what would otherwise have been payable by way of Universal Credit. Frontline cannot advise on participants' individual circumstance, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit> for further information on what you are eligible for.

Unfortunately, Approach Social Work participants are not eligible for the NHS Social Work bursary. This is because Approach Social Work is a work-based course, and because participants are already receiving a publicly-funded bursary from Frontline. In previous years, participants who contact NHS SWB directly have sometimes been given incorrect information, and later been disappointed that the award cannot be confirmed, so please do not count on this funding when planning your finances.

6.7. Support for global majority participants: promoting inclusion and countering exclusion

As part of Frontline's Racial Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan we are committed to anti-racism and promoting and valuing racial diversity and inclusion. Frontline is committed to a diverse participant community on all of our programmes and all the benefits and value such diversity brings. In addition, we have a Frontline Participant Charter, which is underpinned by four key principles:

- We treat one another with dignity and respect .
- We work together to secure Frontline's vision of a safe and stable home for vulnerable children and families.
- We are open and inclusive to difference; to people, to ideas, to places and methods.
- We will inspire and enable our own learning and that of others

Similarly, we have a number of formal policies including but not limited to the [Fitness to study policy](#), [Fitness to practise policy](#) and [Participant discipline policy](#), which outline expectations of

conduct and behaviour. If the conduct of a fellow participant falls below these conduct and behaviour expectations, you should report this in the first instance to your practice tutor (or another member of Frontline staff, as listed on the 'Participant support' page of Moodle), who will be able to refer it to the appropriate policy and offer you any support you need.

The programme offers a range of support structures, both formal and informal, to ensure you are enabled to be successful on the programme. However, we recognise it is crucial to align Frontline's support offer with our diverse participant community and to recognise some of the additional barriers and challenges that participants of the global majority face. So, in addition to our formal policies, processes, and support offer, we have also introduced several additional elements to promote racial diversity and inclusivity and counter exclusion. Of course, this list is not exhaustive, and we are open to feedback about how we can further and better support participants of the global majority.

6.7.1. Preferred language

Frontline aims to be clear and specific when talking about people's identities and experiences. We use the term Global Majority during learning spaces, in storytelling and cultural discussions where the focus is on identity and empowerment. We use "racialised minorities/groups" in policy, compliance, and data reporting, where legal accuracy is important (for example, under the Equality Act 2010 or funder requirements).

6.7.2. The Network: Dedicated Support for Participants of the Global Majority

Frontline is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion across all areas of our work. We recognise that achieving our mission depends on valuing and amplifying a wide range of voices, experiences, and perspectives. Diversity strengthens both our learning environment and social work practice.

We also acknowledge that participants of the global majority may encounter additional barriers and experiences of discrimination in education and professional practice. While Frontline provides a comprehensive universal support offer for all participants, we recognise the importance of tailored support that responds directly to these systemic challenges.

To complement our universal provision, we have established *The Network*: a formal support network for participants of the global majority. The Network has been developed in partnership with participants and the Frontline Racial Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group. More information in relation to the Network can be found on Moodle.

Purpose of The Network

The Network provides a dedicated and supportive space and aims to:

- foster belonging and community,

- provide programme assistance,
- create peer and professional networks of support,
- celebrate participant achievement, and
- challenge exclusion and discrimination within the sector.

What The Network Offers

Welcome and social event

A welcome and social event for The Network at the Readiness for Practice residential, to enable connection with peers and Frontline of the global majority.

Community space

Facilitated virtual sessions provide a safe and principled space to connect, share experiences, and seek support, including in relation to racism or discrimination encountered on placement or within the programme.

Named Frontline contacts

It is recognised that due to experiences of racialisation and discrimination for some participants, it might be difficult to raise and discuss instances of discrimination or racism on the programme with white staff members. If you would therefore prefer your point of contact to be a Frontline member of staff of the global majority, please contact one of the below individuals:

- **Roshilla Pillay**, Associate Practice Tutor – Roshilla.Pillay@thefrontline.org.uk
- **Ann Magona**, Practice Tutor – Ann.Magona@thefrontline.org.uk

Development workshops

Targeted webinars focused on programme support and development. These sessions also provide opportunities to network with peers.

Coaching

Confidential one-to-one coaching is available on request, including support related to experiences of racism or discrimination. Participants should speak with their Practice Tutor to access this provision or go to the participant support page on Moodle.

Peer pairing (Buddy Network)

The Buddy Network connects participants with small, self-led peer groups to encourage mutual support, shared learning, and informal connection. Buddies are allocated at the start of the year. For queries, contact Chavionne.Richardson@thefrontline.org.uk.

6.8. Community spaces

To find out further information about all the community spaces we run, please visit the 'Access support' page on Moodle, where you will find a link to our diversity and inclusion support offer. In previous years, we have run spaces for the following groups:

- Global Majority
- LGBTQIA+
- Neurodivergence
- Lived experience of Social Work
- Disability

6.9. Participant led affinity groups during the Readiness for Practice stage

We will be facilitating affinity groups during the Readiness for Practice stage. This will be a peer support opportunity, where people in similar situations can get together to share their ideas, experience, and advice on any elements of the programme or balancing it with your home life. Affinity groups will be optional and participant-led with no staff involvement. Affinity groups for this summer are still to be confirmed, but in the past groups have included:

- Black and racialised minority groups
- Islam and social work
- Career changers
- LGBTQIA+
- Christianity and social work
- Men in social work
- Decolonising social work
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Diversity in social work
- Parents and carers
- Intersectional feminism in social work
- Recent graduates

There is no limit on how many participants can be a part of each affinity group and all groups are participant-led. Likewise, these groups can continue to meet throughout the course of the programme.

Please note, that although affinity groups are participant-led, we expect participants within affinity groups to abide by the principles set out in the [participant charter](#).

7. General information

7.1. Getting in touch with Frontline

You can reach us via the [Contact Us page](#), and your query will be directed to the appropriate team.

Please note that your Practice Tutor will usually be your first point of contact for:

- Academic and work-based learning
- Pastoral care and support
- Progress reviews
- Attendance and engagement

You will be allocated a Practice Tutor towards the end of RfP.

Please also note the following contact information and when it should be used:

Contact information	When you should contact:
Frontline staff of the global majority Roshilla Pilay Roshilla.Pillay@thefrontline.org.uk Ann Magona Ann.Magona@thefrontline.org.uk	– Due to experiences of racialisation and discrimination for some participants, it might be difficult to raise and discuss instances of discrimination or racism on the programme with white staff members. To contact a Frontline member of staff of the global majority.
Whistleblowing whistleblowing@thefrontline.org.uk	– Where you need to disclose a matter of serious concern or concern of public interest. For full definitions please refer to Frontline's whistleblowing policy.
Complaints complaints@thefrontline.org.uk	– if your concern or complaint is about any service provided by Frontline or provided by an organisation Frontline is in partnership with, including Lancaster University. – Where informal resolution is not appropriate or has been unsuccessful

Contact information	When you should contact:
Participant representatives (Participant representatives' email addresses will be shared with individuals within their region to contact where required)	– Where you wish to feed in your thoughts to our participant rep meetings that happen on a quarterly basis

7.2. Using your Lancaster University email account

Once you begin the Approach Social Work, you can expect to be contacted via your Lancaster University email account. We also expect you to contact us and Lancaster University staff through this email account. You should not use your local authority email address to contact Approach Social Work staff.

We wish to stress the importance of regularly logging in to your Lancaster University email and Moodle account, as this is where you will receive important updates such as assessment deadlines, timetable changes, financial assistance and wellbeing, and other key messages from Frontline. Lancaster University will also communicate to you via this email address. You may of course set up an automatic forwarding rule so that emails sent to this address are visible in another inbox.

7.3. Holiday and study leave

You may take up to 25 days off in year one, and up to 5 additional study days when you can be absent from placement to focus on academic work. These can be taken throughout the year and must be approved in advance by your CSW. They cannot be carried into year 2. Days taken as holiday or study leave are not included in the practice learning days which will be counted when assessing whether you have completed the minimum of 200. Time off will not be withheld unreasonably but should be organised in advance and will be approved upon consideration of the workload of the hub. This is because the hub is a real team working with children and families and therefore requires the application of real workplace procedures and protocols. You should consult the schedule for teaching days and assessment deadlines and avoid booking leave that will impact your attendance and timely submission of work. For further information around this, please refer to our [Attendance and Engagement policy](#).

7.4. Time away from studies

Circumstances may arise which lead to you wishing to interrupt your studies and join the subsequent cohort, meaning that you will cease to participate in Approach Social Work for that period. This is known as 'intercalation'. For further information about the parameters and implications of time away from studies on your practice learning experience and academic studies, please refer to the Approach Social Work intercalation policy or pregnancy and parenting policy (available on [Frontline's website](#)).

7.5. Year one bursary

Participants in year one receive a bursary. Your bursary payments begin in August and will be paid in 13 monthly instalments (typically on the 1st working day of the month). If that day is a weekend or a bank holiday, you will receive payment on the next working day. More information about the bursary can be found in the [Bursary and financial policy](#) on the Frontline website.

Please note: Your first employment payment will normally arrive between 15-30 September 2027 (local authority depending, and assuming you have finished year one successfully and on time). With Social Work England's (SWE) registration process only able to commence after you have finished your placement at the end of August, your assessment grades and module results have been ratified by the exam board and the pass list has been sent and processed by SWE, your first employment payment will typically be for an unqualified salary. You should make provisions for this gap in payments.

Please note that as you will be receiving a bursary in year one, you will not be eligible to apply for a Student Finance Loan through Student Finance England.

7.6. Participant feedback

Evaluation of our programmes and activities is integral to our ethos at Frontline. We promote a data-driven culture where we aim for decisions to be informed by evidence. We wish to provide programmes of the highest quality and one of the most pivotal ways in which we assess this is by gathering feedback from our participants. We are also keenly interested in assessing our wider impact as well as the reality and experience of professionals within the sector. We do all this for the ultimate benefit of children at most risk of harm. Receiving your feedback is integral to helping us assess the effectiveness of Approach Social Work and its many parts.

Frontline is a charity and as a result, we are contractually obliged to provide rigorous evaluation of our performance to our funders. Our funder for Approach Social Work is the Department for Education who enable us to provide the programme free for our participants. So not only does the feedback you provide enable us to make improvements for you and future cohorts, but it is also essential for us to continue to deliver the programme.

You will therefore be expected to provide Frontline with regular feedback, and in return Frontline will address key findings and respond to all participants via Moodle.

Month	Feedback and response point
July	Pre Readiness for Practice survey – Launched before the start of the Readiness for Practice Stage – Mandatory survey to be completed by all participants about your onboarding experience and your confidence and knowledge at the beginning of Approach
August	Post Readiness for Practice survey – Launched on the last day of the Readiness for Practice Stage – Mandatory survey to be completed by all participants about their experience of the RfP Stage
October	Participant Rep Meeting – Organised and facilitated by regional teams. – Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into mid-year review.
January	Participant Rep Meeting – Organised and facilitated by regional teams. – Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into mid-year review.
February	Winter survey – Mandatory survey released early February and to be completed by all participants about their experience of the programme.
March	Mid-year review – Frontline will review all feedback provided through first-half of the year to identify areas of strength and development. – Not all feedback will be able to be addressed immediately and may feed into the following cohort's experience.
April	Feedback communicated to participants – Summary of all feedback (first-half) with any changes or responses will be shared on Moodle.
May	Participant Rep Meeting – Organised and facilitated by regional teams. – Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into mid-year review.
June	Summer survey – Mandatory survey released on Teaching Day 20 to be completed by all participants about their experience of the programme. – .
July	Participant Rep Meeting – Organised and facilitated by regional teams. – Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into mid-year review
August	End of year review

Month	Feedback and response point
	– Frontline will review all feedback provided from both surveys and participant representative meetings to identify areas of strength and development. – Not all feedback will be able to be addressed immediately and may feed into the following cohort's experience.
September	Feedback communicated to participants – Summary of all feedback with any changes or responses will be shared on Moodle.

7.6.1. Participant representatives

The role of a participant representative is to collate feedback from their peers, and present this to their regions through quarterly meetings. The participant representatives are expected to provide feedback on the collective regional experience of Approach and be informed in how this feedback has been used by the delivery, curriculum, and programme management teams to enhance the participant experience of Approach.

Core responsibilities of a participant representative:

- Seek out the views and opinions of all participants in their region on matters affecting their education and pastoral experiences, using a variety of different communication methods
- Liaise with other representatives to gain support and share thoughts and ideas
- Feedback and discuss issues raised at staff-participant meetings with their fellow participants.

Participants will be offered the opportunity to apply to be a participant representative at the start of year one.

7.7. Becoming a Fellow

The Frontline Fellowship is a community of social workers and aligned professionals who have completed training with Frontline. It brings together individuals in different roles and at varying career stages to strengthen practice, develop their careers, and contribute to positive system change.

As a participant on the Approach programme, you will join the Fellowship upon successful completion of your PGDip in Social Work and registration with Social Work England. If you

choose to withdraw from the programme before completing the first year, you will not be eligible to join the Fellowship community.

The Fellowship exists to sustain momentum beyond your initial training. It creates opportunities for collective learning, peer connection and collaborative action so that you are not working in isolation, but as part of a wider professional community committed to improving outcomes for children.

During your programme there will be various touch points throughout e.g. e-learning modules, contact from fellowship team, designed to introduce you to the Fellowship and help you develop skills further to maintain high impact as a social worker.

After you complete the programme, the Fellowship provide you with ongoing support and development. You will have access to professional development, leadership programmes, funding opportunities and sector insight. The Fellowship community platform and app will be your main hub for connection enabling you to stay in touch with your cohort, the wider network, access opportunities, contribute your expertise, and collaborate with others to drive meaningful change across the social care system.

7.8. Lancaster University graduation ceremony

As a student of Lancaster University, when you complete your Postgraduate Diploma [PGDip], and later your MA degree, you will be able to attend a Graduation ceremony should you wish to. Postgraduates whose degree is ratified by an examination board by the end of October are invited to attend the Winter Graduation in the same year. Your place at Graduation is subject to your degree being approved by the relevant exam board and confirmed by Lancaster University's Senate. Details about the dates of the Graduation ceremonies and how to register to attend will be sent to you in the months before you are due to complete your PGDip. In due course, when you complete your MA in year 3 of Approach, you will be invited to graduation again.

7.9. Changing your name or contact details

It is important that both Lancaster University and Frontline have an accurate record of your name, contact details (including address) and your trusted contact for emergencies. You will provide these to Lancaster when you register with the University, and to Frontline during the application process. If the name you go by is different from the one on your legal documents, you will need to tell us both.

If any of your details change, you must notify Lancaster University and Frontline of this.

You can update your details with Lancaster University via the Lancaster University Student Portal, and with Frontline by emailing your regional inbox via southregion@thefrontline.org.uk or northregion@thefrontline.org.uk.

On a bi-annual basis, Frontline will also contact all active participants via email asking them to re-enter their contact and emergency contact details, where these have changed. If changes to your personal details occur in between these periods, you should contact your regional inbox via southregion@thefrontline.org.uk or northregion@thefrontline.org.uk.

When you register with Social Work England (SWE) after qualifying as a social worker, you will need to upload ID. SWE will check this against the list of eligible participants sent by Lancaster University. If the two do not match, this will cause a delay in your registration and in your moving into fully qualified employment. To avoid this, please let Frontline and Lancaster University know if the name you use, or the name on your ID document(s), changes during Approach. This will also ensure that the correct name is used on your degree certificate.

7.10. Social media

You must be mindful of the use of social media and online communications whilst on Approach. As a participant, you are involved in providing a service to the public under supervision during practice placements in year one, prior to registration with Social Work England, and as a qualified social worker in years two and three.

Given that you are representing Approach Social Work, your local authority, and the profession itself, it is essential that you are familiar with the expectations relating to conduct in the public domain, acting professionally and respectfully at all times, and in accordance with the [Professional Capabilities Framework](#) and [Professional Standards](#). Conduct or behaviour at any time that does not uphold social work standards may bring the profession into disrepute. This includes the use of social media and all communication platforms.

You should be mindful of your interactions on social media and be aware that, even where privacy settings are in place, content may reach the public domain. Where behaviour is considered inappropriate, this may result in concerns regarding fitness to practise or a disciplinary investigation. Please see the [Approach Social Work Participant discipline policy](#) for further guidance on the use of social media and online communications.

7.11. Complaints and appeals

Approach Social Work has a robust approach to dealing with complaints, detailed in the [Complaints Policy & Procedure](#).

This should not be confused with the [Lancaster University Appeals](#) procedure which relates to issues of assessment. Participants should be aware that academic appeal via Lancaster University is an option, if valid grounds exist, only after all opportunities for reassessment have been exhausted, and an exam board has ratified the decision that a participant has failed the programme and cannot continue. Before you make an appeal, you are strongly advised to refer to a copy of the Transparency Report from the exam board that considered your results.

Appeals can take a number of weeks to resolve. Where academic appeals are upheld and further opportunities for reassessment are awarded later in the year, Frontline and Lancaster University will aim to consider your reassessment, progression and eligibility to register as a social worker at the earliest opportunity.

7.12. Whistleblowing and safeguarding

If you wish to disclose a serious concern or matter of public interest related to the actions of Frontline or Lancaster University then you should follow the steps outlined in either [Frontline's](#) or [Lancaster University's Whistleblowing](#) policy. If you are uncertain whether the matter should be disclosed to Frontline or Lancaster University then you should make the disclosure to Frontline in the first instance.

You should also familiarise yourself with [Frontline's Safeguarding policy](#). However please note that if you have a safeguarding concern in relation to a case you are handling as part of your practice learning experience or subsequent employment by the local authority, you should follow your local authority's policies and procedures instead of Frontline's policies and procedures.

7.13. Lancaster University student ID cards

Lancaster University will provide LU student ID cards to you in a digital format via the [iLancaster app](#).

The iLancaster app can be downloaded from the Apple/Android app stores and will require LU username and password to sign in. After signing in, the digital ID is accessed by clicking the

person icon in the top left-hand corner of the app. Further guidance is available via Lancaster Answers webpage, which gives advice on installing, customising and accessing app features.

In the event of any significant technical error with digital ID cards via the app, you may request a physical ID card once you are fully registered. To request a physical ID card, you should email frontlineparticipants@lancaster.ac.uk including your full name and Lancaster ID number. You should allow up to 30 days for a request for a physical card to be processed and posted to them.

Participants should be aware that the Lancaster student ID card does not indicate a validity period and therefore may not be accepted by all retailers offering a student discount. Participants are advised to sign up to UniDays if student ID is required for retail discount purposes.

7.14. Lancaster University Students' Union (LUSU)

As a student of Lancaster University, you will automatically become a member [of Lancaster University Students' Union \(LUSU\)](#).

For more information on how to seek advice from LUSU is [see here](#).

7.15. Lancaster University's Graduate College

Lancaster University is proud to be one of only a handful of UK universities to have a collegiate system and as part of being a student of Lancaster University you will be a member of [Graduate College](#). Graduate College is the dedicated college for all postgraduate students.

The college's role is to enhance your experience at Lancaster through academic-related, and non-academic activities and events. They can also help you to navigate your way through university life. We have a team of staff based at the College, and remotely via phone, email and Teams - who can assist you. Find out who's who on the college webpages: [College Staff](#).

Whilst College members usually pay a membership fee of £15 for one-year courses, this is not charged to distance learners so you will not be expected to pay for your Graduate College membership.

7.16. Lancaster University IT related support

For IT related information please see the [Digital and IT webpages](#).

Information about IT help and support is available [online](#).

7.17. Lancaster University library resources and services

You can access Lancaster's library [here](#). Access is also available directly from the student portal on Moodle when logged in.

The library provides a wide range of resources to support your studies including ebooks, ejournals, databases and streaming video collections. A good place to start exploring the materials available is the subject guide for [Social Work](#) with its focused information and content. Use the discovery tool [OneSearch](#) to find and access the Library's online collections.

If you need help with finding and using Library resources, get in touch with your Faculty Librarians, by email at facultylibrarians@lancaster.ac.uk or book an [online appointment](#). You can also use the [Library chat service](#) for general enquiries and consult the [guide for distance learners](#) for information about further tailored support.

7.18. SCONUL access

SCONUL access is a scheme which allows many university library users to access study spaces or books and journals at other libraries which belong to the scheme. Some library users may be able to borrow print books from other libraries too.

To obtain SCONUL access, you should apply online at <http://www.sconul.ac.uk>. This will prompt a verification process which will require Lancaster University's library team to verify that you are a fully registered student with Lancaster University. All libraries in the scheme will have different requirements about what a student will need to do/demonstrate the first time they want to access their site, so this will differ between institutions.

7.19. ASK: (virtual) student information desk

Lancaster University have a team called ASK (Advice, Support and Knowledge) who provide specialist student support and advice helping students to access information and signposting them to other services where needed. You can contact them at ask@lancaster.ac.uk.

Their contact page on the [ASK Portal](#) also has a Contact Form for queries which operates (9am-5pm Mon-Fri), and links to ASK Enquiries and highlights key services such as [IT Support](#).

Staff on the desk will also be able to direct students to ASK Enquiries to deal with queries that would normally be handled by their department/college.

7.20. National railcards

Approach Social Work participants under the age of 30 will be able to purchase either a 16-25 railcard or a 26-30 railcard independently. These railcards can be purchased online without any need for verification from Lancaster University. For full instructions on this please see the Railcard and National Rail webpages.

For the 16-25 Railcard as a mature student there are differing online and physical application routes. Please read the mature student section below for direction on the application and verification process.

It is important to note that through applying for the 16-25 Railcard as a mature student, you will get 1/3 off Standard Anytime and Off-Peak fares, whilst through the 26-30 Railcard you will be eligible to get 1/3 Off-Peak and Peak travel, as long as you meet the minimum fare of £12 between 04:30 and 10:00 Monday to Friday.

The 16-25 Railcard as a mature student is therefore generally more financially advantageous, but to obtain this you will need to confirm your student status through Lancaster University once you have started with the student registration process (please see '16-25 Railcard for mature students' section for instruction on this process both prior to and post-receiving your physical student ID card).

Railcard	Guidance
16-25 railcard	- Participants aged 25 and under can apply online directly to national rail for a 16-25 railcard. - If you're between 16 and 25 years old, you're eligible. In this case, you can buy your Railcard online using a valid debit or credit card, a valid UK driving license or international passport, and a digital passport-style photo for uploading. Your 16-25 Railcard gets you 1/3 off Standard Anytime and Off-Peak fares, as well as Standard Advance and First Class Advance fares. Please note that there is currently a £35 fee attached to purchasing a railcard for one year, or where eligible, you can apply for a three-year railcard at the cost of £80.

Railcard	Guidance
26 – 30 railcard	– If you are a participant aged 26-30 years old and are in full-time education, you can choose whether to buy a 26-30 Railcard, or buy a 16-25 Railcard as a mature student. – For the 26-30 Railcard, participants can apply online directly to national rail. It's available to buy online and will be downloaded to the Railcard app on a smartphone. The cost is currently £35.
16 – 25 railcard for mature students	– To apply for a railcard as a mature student, download and complete the orange application form. The railcard company no longer accept a digital copy of Lancaster student ID via the app because of the lack of a Lancaster University logo on the digital version. – Participants can apply for a physical student ID card please see Section 7.13 on how to request a physical ID card). – Once you have received your physical student ID card, please send a JPEG file of a copy/photograph of the ID card to ask@lancaster.ac.uk, along with the completed orange application form. – An alternative is to complete the railcard application form available from rail stations and post this completed form, along with a passport photo and a photograph of the physical student ID, to ASK at Lancaster University (postal address below). The ASK team will then stamp and sign the form (once you are fully registered) and return it to you by post, for you to send to the railcard company.

Lancaster University's student enquiry desk at ASK (formerly The Base):

Email address: ask@lancaster.ac.uk

Postal address: ASK,
(Frontline Railcard),
University House
Lancaster University,
Bailrigg
Lancaster,
LA1 4YW

Please note that you can submit the form to Lancaster University any time after completing the online.

7.21. Transport for London (TfL) Student Oyster photocard

Approach Social Work participants are not able to apply for TfL's Student Oyster photocard at this time due to TfL's restrictions surrounding educational establishments outside of Greater London and their eligibility for the scheme.

Participants will however be able to link up their national railcards to their Oyster cards for a reduction on off-peak travel. For details on how to do this, please read TfL's guidance on [National Railcard Discounts](#).

7.22. Student council tax exemption

You usually have to pay council tax if you're 18 or over and own or rent a home. As a full-time student during year one of Approach, you are normally eligible for Council Tax exemption if you live in a household where everyone is a full-time student, however Lancaster University make no guarantees that participants will be exempt from council tax as it is at the discretion of the local in which authority you live to determine your eligibility.

Where there is someone in your household who is not a full-time student, your household may still qualify for a discount.

Once you have fully registered as a student of Lancaster University, you will be able to obtain confirmation of your registration and student status via [the Student Portal](#).

Lancaster University will use the home address that you provide to them during the online student registration process. If you need to update your address after registration, you can do so via the [Student Portal at Your student record](#). It is essential that participants keep their address up to date in Lancaster University's record system.

To obtain evidence of your registration and student status, first log in to your [Student Portal](#). You will need to go to 'My Area', then 'Dashboard'. In 'Student Record' box you should click 'Document Download' link and 'Download' to obtain an electronic copy of your Registration Certificate.

7.23. Student discount

UniDays: To obtain UniDays membership (discount on a number of popular retail stores and food outlets), you can apply online at www.myunidays.com once you have provisionally or fully registered with Lancaster University as a student and have a personal LU institution email address (you do not require your student ID card to confirm your student status). Signing up is optional, however the process is free to complete.

NUS Totum: To obtain NUS TOTUM Student, participants should apply online at <https://www.nus.org.uk/student-discounts> . A student ID card is not required to submit an online application; however, you will require a personal LU institution email address. Signing up is optional and there is an attached cost to TOTUM Student+ membership, however you will be provided with a number of student discounts.

For information on eligibility, costs and available brand discounts, please refer to the website .

Student Beans: [Student Beans](#) is also free. Participants will need to sign-up with their Lancaster e-mail to receive Student Beans discounts.

7.24. Office Pro Plus and other learning resources

Once you are fully registered with Lancaster University, you will be able to access Office Pro Plus via your Microsoft 365 account.

Office 365 can be accessed online at www.office.com . You will be redirected to the LU portal where you enter your personal LU institution email address. Alternatively, you can access Office 365 via the [Student Portal](#).

Additionally, you will also be able to access the following:

- Nvivo: a qualitative data analysis computer software package, which can support qualitative researchers to organise and analyse data (e.g. interviews, open-ended survey responses, journal articles and web content).
- SAS: a Statistical Analysis Software suite for data management, advanced analytics, multivariate analysis, business intelligence and predictive analytics.
- Maple: a symbolic and numeric computing environment, as well as a multi-paradigm programming language. It covers several areas such as symbolic mathematics, numerical analysis, data processing, visualisation and others.
- Leximancer: a computer software that conducts quantitative content analysis using a machine learning technique.
- SPSS: a software package used for statistical analysis.
- SPSS Amos: a structural equation modelling software.
- OriginPro: a computer programme for interactive scientific graphing and data analysis.
- LibreOffice: an office productivity software suite.
- R & R Studio: a programming language and software environment for statistical computing and graphics, widely used among statisticians.
- Audacity: a digital audio editor and recording application software.

- Any open-source software available on AppsAnywhere (an 'app store' for accessing software).

Participants should consult the [ISS information pages](#) for more information about how to access these.

7.25. Registration on concurrent courses

As per the Study Regulations found within Lancaster University's [Manual of Academic Regulation and Procedures \(MARP\)](#), no student shall normally be allowed to register concurrently for more than the equivalent of one full-time higher or further education scheme of study.

7.26. Work-related driving and business insurance

All drivers must hold valid driving licenses and follow relevant driving laws.

Also where relevant, participants must have business/commuter insurance and provide evidence of this at the beginning of their PLE. A copy may be retained by the CSW/team manager until the end of the PLE.

Annexure

Annex 1: Definitions

Academic module: The teaching and assessment of year one of the programme is split into six modules, and year three has one academic module. Please see the Module Handbooks for more information. Assessments will make up the grade awarded per module in year one. You must also pass the holistic assessments of your practice learning in Readiness for Practice, and Progress Reviews 2 and 4 to successfully complete each academic module in year one.

Aggregate: This is the process where the percentage marks for module elements are combined according to their percentage weighting to produce the overall module percentage mark.

Assessment: Assessments are set pieces of work that must be completed as part of the academic modules. These will be both academic and practice focused pieces of work and will be graded.

ASYE: the assessed and supported year in employment is undertaken by all newly qualified social workers in a local authority. This is undertaken in year 2 of Approach Social Work.

Moodle: The Virtual Learning environment (VLE) for Approach Social Work is Moodle. This is where all the resources are housed that will support your learning and development on the programme.

Condonation: This is where a failed module can be 'excused' or condoned by an assessment board in confirming an award. Condonation of failed elements or modules is not permitted within the assessment regulations for Approach Social Work.

Contrasting Learning Experience (CLE): The term used to describe the 30 days typically spent in an adult setting to gain experience and understanding of working with adults. You must complete various pieces of work linked to the contrasting learning experience, which are assessed.

Fully registered participant: An individual who has successfully met all the necessary pre-programme admissions and suitability checks, completed Lancaster University's online pre-registration process, and whom Lancaster University has officially registered on the programme, with confirmed student status.

Hub: A hub is the primary setting of a participant's practice learning for the duration of year 1. It typically consists of five participants and one CSW. The hub will be situated within a long-term children and families social work team within children's services in a local authority. The hub will share cases and work collaboratively and supportively. The CSW will manage the hub and hold case responsibility.

Intercalation: An extended break from the programme. Normally, only one request can be granted which will be for a maximum of one academic year.

Local Authority (LA): Practice learning will take place predominantly within a local authority. All local authorities' practice learning opportunities are audited and continually monitored by Frontline to ensure that they are of a high standard, consistently across authorities.

Practice learning experience (PLE): Participants will start their practice learning just after completing the Readiness for Practice module. Participants are based in Participant hubs during the practice learning setting, which is within a local authority children's services team, with periods spent in the contrasting learning experience spent outside of the Participant hub. The practice learning period will continue for one calendar year and is split into two stages or modules – FLSW925 Practice Learning Experience One (September to mid-January), and FLSW926 Practice Learning Experience Two mid-January to end of August).

Practice Assessment Panel (PAP): The Practice Assessment Panel is an essential part of the quality assurance process and is responsible for overseeing the quality of practice learning provision and outcomes. The PAP comprises key programme staff, experts by experience and representatives from local authorities. The PAP reviews Practice Learning Portfolios for sufficiency and quality of evidence in meeting the relevant level of the PCF.

Practice Learning Portfolios (PLPs): This is a collection of evidence that you compile throughout your practice learning to show you have demonstrated the PCF at the appropriate stage. Further details of the PCF can be found [here](#).

The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF): The PCF is a framework established to support learning, progression and development of all social workers. It sets capability statements of what is to be expected for all stages of a social worker's career from entry into training to the most advanced level of a social work practitioner. Through the Frontline programme, participants will be expected to show how they meet the relevant level of the PCF, according to the stage they are at in the programme.

Provisionally registered participant: An individual who is still undergoing or has outstanding pre-programme admissions and/or suitability checks, but who has commenced study on the

Frontline programme and completed Lancaster University's online pre-registration process. Full registration and confirmation of student status with Lancaster University will only be confirmed subject to the individual completing their outstanding checks and meeting the necessary admissions and/or suitability criteria.

Readiness for Practice stage (RfP): which consists of five weeks of intensive teaching, including a three-day residential and two in-person regional days, which every participant will attend before starting their practice learning. RfP includes lecture-based learning, group work and role play. It is where you will learn the theory underpinning effective social work as well as developing the skills needed to impact children's lives as a social worker. An assessment of readiness for practice, against the relevant level of the PCF, must be successfully completed by each participant prior to starting the first stage of practice learning experience.

Social Work England (SWE): the statutory regulator which protects the professional title 'social worker' in England.

- Regulates initial social work qualifying education and training by setting Education and Training Standards, which social work education and training course providers must meet. These standards ensure that students who successfully complete a social work course can meet SWE's Professional Standards and can apply to be registered with Social Work England.
- Sets the Professional Standards which describe what a social worker should "know, understand and be able to do after completing their social education or work training". You must demonstrate these standards in order to pass the programme, and subsequently to register with the regulator.

Annex 2: Key staff, teams and roles

Job Title	Key roles	Description of role
Delivery Team		
Chief social worker	Academic and delivery leadership	Leads the delivery of the programme, including development, quality issue resolution and programme regulation and validation.
Heads of delivery	Programme leadership of the north and south	- Lead the delivery of the programme. - Responsible for the operational leadership of the programme in the regions, ensuring parity of participant experience. - All registered social workers.
Principal practice tutor (PPT)	Oversight of regional hubs	Principal Practice Tutors (PPT) have line management responsibility for a group of PTs in a particular geographical area and oversee the hubs in that region. PPTs also undertake the teaching and assessment tasks that PTs do.
Practice tutor (PT)	Providing academic and pastoral support to participants	- Practice Tutors (PT) are qualified and registered social workers, who are also responsible for the delivery of direct teaching, contributing to assessment points, delivery of the curriculum, and supporting CSWs. - All participants will have a PT.
Partnership and placement manager (PPM)	To secure and sustain partnerships with local authorities (LAs) and children's trusts	- PPMs hold responsibility for the relationships with named partners on behalf of Frontline - Securing LA partnerships, allocating applicants to regions based on need, liaison with Local Authorities around reasonable adjustments and supporting with practical & operational issues arising in the local authority. - Also responsible for monitoring quality in practice learnings settings (QAPL).
Delivery officer	Coordinating the administration of the region	Supporting the head of delivery, and participants with all aspects of the programme including teaching days and attendance of these.
Curriculum Team		
Head of curriculum	Academic leadership	Leads and oversees the design, content, and teaching approach for all programmes including quality assurance, development, and innovation.
Principal curriculum	Course leads (year 1 & year 3 respectively)	Responsible for the quality assurance and standards (Education and Training Standards and Professional

Job Title	Key roles	Description of role
leads		Standards), development practice model and all aspects of the curriculum for participants and CSWs. – Liaise with Lancaster University as the awarding university.
Curriculum leads	Curriculum development	– Responsible for ensuring the curriculum is up to date and relevant
	Module Leads for each module	– Overall responsibility for individual master's modules, maintaining an oversight of each module and managing the activities associated with it.
Programme Management Team		
Head of Programme Management	Programme compliance and logistics	– Responsible for managing and overseeing the logistical and administrative functions of the programme. – Particular focus on providing participants with a high-quality programme experience.
Digital learning	Managing the online learning environment and learning resources.	– Responsible for ensuring the VLE is accessible and holds high quality resources. Lead on troubleshooting for problems with online resources.
Academic registry	Administration of the courses	– Responsible for processes which support participants' academic journey, and which monitor the academic standards set by Frontline and Lancaster University.
Operations	Organisation of the RfP stage	– Leading on the logistical elements of the Readiness for Practice stage, including the residential.
Admissions and Support team	Leading on conduct and health compliance from conditional offer to start of programme.	– Ensuring that participants are suitable to begin the programme from the perspective of health and conduct including DBS checks, Occupational Health referrals, suitability panels.
Lancaster University Staff		
Director of Studies	The academic lead for the programme and partnership within Lancaster University.	– Ensuring that the academic standards of the Approach Social Work programme continue to meet Lancaster University's benchmark and relevant processes are monitored effectively.
Deputy Director of Studies	The Lancaster moderation lead for the Frontline programme and deputy academic lead.	– Supporting the Director in activities to ensure that the academic standards of Approach Social Work continue to meet Lancaster University's benchmark and monitoring processes are carried out effectively.
Disability Adviser	To provide support and specialist advice on disability, wellbeing, and mental health matters.	– Ensure effective service provision, liaising with external agencies as required. – Implementation of effective support for participants across the country which meets equality legislation and

Job Title	Key roles	Description of role
		Lancaster University's obligations towards students on the programme. – Liaising with participants about their Inclusive Learning Support Plans (ILSP) and Disabled Students' Allowance.
Teaching Coordinator	To provide administrative support in updating and maintaining Approach Social Work participants' student and academic records.	– The person within Lancaster who is responsible for academic administration of the programme and student records. – They will liaise with Frontline's academic staff, programme management team and registry.
Learning Developer	To provide learning development support for Approach Social Work participants.	– Aims to help participants achieve their full potential by supporting effective study and good academic writing practices.
Other		
Consultant social worker (CSW)	Local authority hub support and supervision	– Provides supervisory, pastoral, and educative support to participants throughout their time in the practice learning environment. – Named case holder for the hub. Responsible for practice education and assessment, both holistically against the PCF at Stages 1 and 3, and directly observing and grading practice.
Speakers	Support the delivery of the programme, providing specialist knowledge of social work.	– Experts in social work, consisting of both care leavers and academics; and experts in other relevant fields.

Annex 3: Level 7 marking criteria

80 + (Distinction)

A piece of written work in the 80 + range signals that it is a piece of outstanding quality, requiring an exceptionally high level of conceptual ability (for Master's level work) and an extremely thorough and conscientious approach to study. Work in this range will be of publishable quality and undoubtedly demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree. It is distinguished by:

Argument

- A very clearly expressed and convincing argument which is used to develop a highly coherent, original and logical framework within which to answer the question or address the topic.
- A thorough grounding of the above in existing theory and research
- A reasoned conclusion fully supported by the foregoing material.
- A capacity to relate the theoretical and empirical material consistently to the conceptual framework.
- Substantial evidence of independent research.
- The absence of irrelevant or extraneous material.

Understanding

- A thorough understanding of the topic and its implications.
- A very clear and consistent focus on the issues raised by the question/topic.
- Insightful understanding of theoretical literature, including the ability to identify points upon which to build as well as grasp and limitations
- An insightful argument showing strong signs of originality in ideas, argument and/or empirical research.

Style

- Excellent grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.
- Thorough and consistent use of conventions in referring to other people's work.
- Marks within this classification may vary due to–
- An original capacity to develop arguments, ideas
- The extent to which empirical research has been conducted (in the case of dissertations)
- The depth and sophistication of the conceptual argument.
- The level of command of the theoretical and research literature.

70 + (distinction)

A piece of written work in the 70+ range is one of exceptional quality, requiring a high level of conceptual ability and an extremely thorough and conscientious approach to study. Work in this range will clearly demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree. It is distinguished by:

Argument

- A clearly expressed and convincing argument which is used to develop a coherent logical framework within which to answer the question or address the topic, and which is well grounded in existing theory and research, leading to a reasoned conclusion fully supported by the foregoing material.
- A capacity to relate consistently the theoretical and empirical material to the conceptual framework.
- Substantial evidence of independent research.
- The absence of irrelevant or extraneous material.

Understanding

- A thorough understanding of the topic and its implications.
- A clear and consistent focus on the issues raised by the question/topic.
- An insightful argument showing signs of originality in ideas, argument and/or empirical research.

Style

- Good to very good grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.
- Thorough and consistent use of conventions of referring to other people's work

Marks within this classification may vary due to:

- An original capacity to develop arguments beyond those available in the literature.
- The depth and sophistication of the conceptual argument.
- The level of command of the theoretical and research literature.

60-69 (merit)

A piece of written work of a good to very good standard requiring clarity of thought and expression. It will display an ability to handle the relevant literature in an analytical manner. It will be more than a good description of the various theories and/or studies relevant to the question – it will demonstrate a marshalling of relevant information by means of analysis and

interpretation. It will not necessarily have a watertight argument, but it will be clearly structured and its conclusions will not take the reader by surprise. Such a piece of work will generally show less independence of thought and mastery of detail that is required for a Distinction (mark of 70 or over). There may be some errors or misjudgements with regard to issues which are not central to the argument. Work in this range will normally demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree. It is distinguished by:

Argument

- A logical, coherent framework within which to answer the question or address the topic.
- An ability to organise the data in a way that provides a clear and logical answer to, or discussion of, the question/topic.
- A clearly expressed theme or argument developed from a critical consideration of relevant literature.

Understanding

- A good understanding of the topic and its implications.
- A good to very good familiarity with the relevant literature and empirical data.
- A good command of theory and some analytical depth.
- The avoidance of irrelevant or extraneous material.
- Evaluation of competing arguments.
- Conclusion supported by the body of the argument and evidence.
- Some evidence of independent research.
- Avoidance of unsubstantiated assertions.

Style

- Good grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.
- Good use of conventions of referring to other people's work

Marks within this category may vary due to:

- The clarity and cogency of the overall argument.
- The level of command with the relevant literature and data.
- The depth and coherence of the analysis.

50-59 (pass)

A piece of written work of a passable to satisfactory standard. It will be descriptively strong. It is distinguished from the 60-69 piece by the level of analysis displayed and by the coherence with which the material is organised. There may be some significant errors, misjudgements or

omissions of important details. A mark in this range would not normally demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree. It is characterised by:

Argument

- An attempt to answer the question or address the topic.
- A conclusion not entirely supported by or relevant to the body of the essay.
- A failure to adequately organise an answer into a coherent whole.

Understanding

- A reasonable understanding of the topic and its implications.
- A level of empirical knowledge and relevant reading which demonstrates a conscientious attempt to tackle the question/topic.
- The use of some extraneous material.
- A failure to grasp at least some relevant points or address some relevant literature.

Style

- Adequate grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.
- Referencing that is incomplete or fails to observe some conventions for referring to other people's work.

Marks within this category may vary due to:

- The level of empirical and theoretical knowledge displayed.
- The seriousness with which an attempt has been made to answer the question or address the topic.
- The number of major points that have been covered.
- The coherence of the essay.
- The degree of unsubstantiated assertion.
- Written style (grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence construction).

40- 49 (Fail)

A piece of written work in this category shows signs of engagement with the question or topic, but has inadequacies for Master's level work. It signals a failure to give sufficient thought to the work in hand, displaying inconsistent argument, unsubstantiated assertions, and a patchy acquaintance with the relevant literature. It may lack a convincing conclusion and it is likely to include significant errors, omissions and misunderstandings. It is characterised by:

Argument

- An ability to pick out some of the points required for a satisfactory argument.
- A failure to order this material so as to provide an adequate answer to the question or problem addressed.
- Inadequate conclusion: it is either lacking or at odds with the rest of the essay or dissertation.

Understanding

- Some knowledge of appropriate empirical material.
- The use of irrelevant material.
- An inadequate familiarity with relevant literature.

Style

- Sub-standard grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.
- Inadequate use of conventions of referring to other people's work

Marks within this category may vary due to:

- The level of empirical knowledge displayed.
- The extent to which an effort has been made to answer the question or address the topic.
- Evidence of conscientious effort.
- The degree of unsubstantiated assertions.
- Written style (grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction).

Marks below 40 (Fail)

Marks in the 30 - 39 range indicate that the piece of written work is inadequate in every respect with pronounced errors and misunderstandings. It is characterised by:

- Some empirical knowledge.
- Some evidence of study in the area concerned.
- An inability to develop any but the flimsiest answer to the question.
- Problematic conclusion.

Low marks

Marks below 30 (Poor Fail)

A mark below 30 means that the student has not given sufficient attention to study, has a lack of basic knowledge, and an inability to tackle the question or topic. It is characterised by –

- Inadequate knowledge of relevant literature.
- Inadequate understanding of relevant literature.
- No or totally flawed attempt to examine the issue(s) posed in the question.
- No or totally confused attempt to answer the question.
- Little or no structure in the presentation of argument.
- No, or irrelevant conclusion.

Marks of below 20% will be given to work demonstrating almost no knowledge or understanding of the literature and of the subject area. Any knowledge displayed will be completely misinterpreted.

Marks of below 10% will be given to work demonstrating almost complete incoherence and irrelevance.

Annex 4: Calendar of assessment

Module	Module Title	Credit	Assessment Code	Assessment Title	Weight %	Deadline	Results published
FLSW 921	Readiness for Practice	10	FLSW921.1	Readiness for Practice	100%	27 July 2026	10 August 2026
FLSW 922	Principles for Relational Social Work Practice Practice	30	FLSW922.1	Holistic Child Assessment essay	60%	28 October 2026	25 November 2026
			FLSW922.2	Use of Motivational Interviewing	40%	3 February 2027	3 March 2027
FLSW 923	The Legal Context of Social Work Practice	30	FLSW923.1	Online open book exam – Social work law, policy and practice*	30%	8 December 2026	22 December 2026
			FLSW923.2	Coursework – critical case study*	70%	24 March 2027	21 April 2027
FLSW 924	Advanced Relational Social Work Practice	30	FLSW924.1	Case study – Evidence-based interventions	100%	26 May 2027	23 June 2027
FLSW 925	Practice Learning Experience One	10	FLSW925.1	Practice Learning Portfolio One	0 (pass/ fail)	20 January 2027	17 February 2027
FLSW 926	Practice Learning Experience Stages Two and Three	10	FLSW926.1	Practice Learning Portfolio Two	0 (pass/ fail)	7 July 2027	4 August 2027

All assessments are released on Moodle at the start of the year, except FLSW923.1: released 9:30am Tuesday 8 December 2026, and FLSW923.2: released 9:30am Wednesday 24 February 2027.