



Approach Social Work

Year three handbook 2026

About this handbook

This handbook and all its sections are designed to give participants information about year three of Approach Social Work. It covers the structure of year three, 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 dissertation supervisor 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).

Contents

About this handbook	2
1. Introduction to Approach Social Work Year 3 master's and support period	7
1.1. Welcome	7
1.2. Regulatory commitments	7
1.3. The Participant Charter	7
1.4. Frontline's commitment to racial diversity and inclusion	9
1.5. The Frontline team	9
2. Master's module information: FLSW927 Research minded relational social work	10
2.1. Aims	10
2.2. Intended learning outcomes	10
2.3. Syllabus	11
2.4. Learning and teaching strategy	11
2.5. Module structure	12
2.6. Module bibliography	12
3. Year at a glance	14
3.1. Delivery dates and format	14
3.2. Attending teaching days and managing local authority workloads	15
3.2.1. Start and finish times	15
3.2.2. Monitoring your academic attendance	15
3.2.3. Notifying us of an intended absence	16
3.2.4. Catching up on missed learning	16
3.2.5. Online engagement and camera usage	16
3.3. Study days	17
3.4. Self-directed research toolkit	17
3.5. Research support session	17
3.5.1. Start and finish times	18
3.5.2. Monitoring your academic attendance	18
3.6. Dissertation supervision	18
3.7. Literature review research proposals	19
3.7.1. Review	19

4. Assessment for FLSW927	20
4.1. Formative feedback and summative assessment	20
4.2. Marking, moderation, and grade ratification process	20
4.3. Return of feedback	21
4.4. Word limits	21
4.5. Assessment marking criteria	22
4.6. Submission format	23
4.7. Anonymisation	23
4.8. References	23
4.9 Academic integrity and plagiarism	24
4.9.1. Language Enhancement Applications (LEAs) and paraphrasing tools	24
4.10 Exceptional circumstances	25
4.10.1 Penalties for late work	26
4.11 Academic regulations	26
4.12. Examination boards	27
4.13. Principles and parameters of reassessment	28
5. Learning resources	28
5.1 Virtual Learning Environment: Moodle	29
5.2 Lancaster University library resources and services	29
6. Support for participants	31
6.1. The emotional impact of the curriculum	31
6.2. Peer Support	31
6.3. Community spaces	31
6.4. Support for global majority participants: promoting inclusion and countering exclusion	32
6.4.1. Preferred language	33
6.4.2. The Network: dedicated support for participants of the Global Majority	33
6.5 Mental health and wellbeing	34
6.5.1 Support with disabilities, long-term conditions and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)	35
6.5.2. Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD) Coursework Coversheet	37
6.5.3. Disabled Students' Allowance	37
6.5.4 Assistive tools and technologies	38

6.6. Coaching	38
7. Academic support	39
7.1. SCONUL access	40
7.2. Office 365 and other software	40
7.3. ASK: (virtual) student information desk	41
7.4. Additional funding and loans	41
7.4.1. Lancaster University	41
7.4.2. Student Money Advice service	42
8. Additional information	42
8.1 Getting in touch with Frontline	42
8.2 Relevant policies	44
8.3. Whistleblowing and safeguarding	44
8.4. Complaints and appeals	45
8.5 Study leave	45
8.6. Time away from studies	45
8.7 Withdrawing from FLSW927	46
8.8. Year three working patterns	46
8.9. Holiday	46
8.10. Participant feedback	47
8.11. Changing your name or contact details	47
8.12. Social media	47
8.13. Professional Indemnity Insurance	48
9. Additional Lancaster University information	48
9.1. Your relationship with Lancaster University	48
9.2. Lancaster University graduation ceremony	48
9.3. Lancaster University Students' Union (LUSU)	49
9.4. Lancaster University's Graduate College	49
9.5. Lancaster University IT related support	49
9.6. Using your Lancaster University email account	49
9.7. Lancaster University student ID cards	50
9.8. Student discount	50

9.9. Registration on concurrent courses	51
9.10. National railcards	51
9.11. Transport for London (TfL) Student Oyster photocard	52
Annexure	53
Annex 1: Definitions	53
Annex 2: Key year three staff, teams, roles	55
Annex 3: Assessment and marking guidance 2026/7	59
Annex 4: Dissertation supervision contract	68

1. Introduction to Approach Social Work Year 3 master's and support period

1.1. Welcome

Congratulations on completing Year 1 and 2 of Approach Social Work and welcome to Year 3 of the programme. Year 3 offers a combined programme of advanced academic study and professional coaching designed to support ongoing practice development. You will complete a free 60-credit master's module alongside your role, building on learning from Years 1 and 2 through an in-depth literature review that develops research-mindedness and new practice insights, supported by lectures, workshops, supervision and structured research resources. Alongside this, you will take part in four coaching sessions with a professional coach, focused on strengthening confidence, resilience and professional identity as an experienced social worker. Successful completion leads to a Master's in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families from Lancaster University.

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 2026)
- 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 research support sessions, arranging and attending meetings with your dissertation supervisor 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 [section 8.1](#) and [Annex 2](#) for more information on key staff, teams, and roles.

2. Master's module information: FLSW927 Research minded relational social work

2.1. Aims

Educational aims: subject specific

The aim of this module is to build upon the knowledge and understanding gained through the PGDiploma in Social Work and in social work practice, to identify a topic of interest for advanced level study. The expectation is for participants to undertake a literature review in an imaginative, creative and curious manner to develop new insights that will directly inform social work practice in some way. The module provides an opportunity for participants to develop their 'research-mindedness' and advanced knowledge in a social work topic:

- to formulate and investigate critically an appropriate and relevant research question
- to apply skills in assessing, interpreting and applying research and evidence to a specific area of social work practice
- to extend skills in examining the contribution of different approaches and stakeholders to research and evidence in social work policy and practice
- to extend skills in synthesising bodies of evidence and arguments from a range of sources, evaluate competing explanations, and draw reasoned conclusions relevant to social work.

Educational aims: general

The general aims of this module are:

- to make effective use of a range of library and online resources to gather information
- to synthesise bodies of evidence and arguments from a range of sources, evaluate competing explanations, and draw reasoned conclusions
- to present insights in a clear and reasoned way
- to work independently; effectively manage their time; plan, develop, and deliver work to set deadlines.

2.2. Intended learning outcomes

Learning outcomes: subject specific

Participants who pass this module should be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to synthesise existing knowledge within a chosen area of social work with children and families relevant to their practice.
2. Draw conclusions and insights based on the engagement with independent research.
3. Propose suggestions that have the potential to improve social work practice or policy with children and families.

Learning outcomes: general

Participants who pass this module should be able to:

4. Manage and organise their time effectively to complete an independent research study.
5. Clearly present findings and insights as appropriate to an intended target audience.

2.3. Syllabus

This module offers participants the opportunity to explore in some depth a social work-related topic of their choice. The module is an opportunity to apply and extend skills as a research minded practitioner by engaging with the social work research and knowledge with imagination, creativity and curiosity.

2.4. Learning and teaching strategy

This module runs from September 2026 to June 2027. We have designed this 60-credit module to be undertaken alongside you working in practice, providing live online lectures, workshops, one to one supervision sessions along with an interactive research companion and toolkit to help you every step of the way of your research project. We have mapped the research journey for you, and you will receive support, guidance and materials to help you complete each section of your literature review. This 60-credit module (representing 600 hours of learning) has been designed to support you as an independent researcher. Below is a breakdown of indicative learning hours:

- Teaching days: 24 hours approx.
- Research support sessions: 5 hours approx.
- Dissertation supervisions: 5 hours approx.

- Independent study (including completion of academic assignment and research activities): 566 hours approx.

2.5 Module structure

The module provides a sequenced programme of teaching, resources and guidance to support you at each step of the research journey. It has been designed around three stages of the research process to help you develop, complete and write up a literature review in a structured and manageable way alongside your work in practice.

Planning your research

The first stage focuses on helping you establish a clear foundation for your literature review. During this stage, you will develop your research question, become familiar with the assessment requirements and prepare your formative research proposal. Teaching Day 1, Toolkit 1, research support sessions and your initial supervision meeting will help you clarify your focus and develop a realistic plan for your research project.

Progressing your research

The second stage supports you to undertake the core research activities required for your literature review. You will develop skills in literature searching, critical appraisal, analysis and synthesis, while refining your understanding of your chosen topic. Teaching Days 2 and 3, Toolkits 2 and 3, research support sessions and supervision meetings provide structured guidance as your review develops.

Writing up your research

The final stage focuses on communicating your research clearly and effectively. Teaching Day 4, Toolkit 4, the final research support session and your supervision meeting will support you to organise your ideas, present your findings and complete your dissertation.

Together these stages provide academic guidance, opportunities for feedback and discussion, flexible independent learning resources and personalised support to help you successfully complete the module and further develop as a research-minded social work practitioner.

2.6. Module bibliography

Aveyard, H. (2023) *Doing a Literature Review in Health and Social Care A Practical Guide*. 5th Edition. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Becker, S. Bryman, A. Ferguson, H. (2012) *Understanding research for social policy and social work: themes methods and approaches*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Biggam, J. (2011). *Succeeding with your Masters Dissertation: a step by step handbook*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

D'Cruz, H and Jones, M (2013) *Social work research in practice: ethical and political contexts*. 2nd Edition. Los Angeles: Sage.

Greenhalgh, T. (2006) *How to Read a Paper*. 3rd Edition. Newark: Blackwell Publishing.

Hedges, F. (2010) *Reflexivity in therapeutic practice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Orme, J and Shemmings, D. (2010) *Developing research based social work practice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pawson, R., Boaz, A., Grayson, L., Long, A. and Barnes, C. (2003) *Types and Quality of Knowledge in Social Care*. London: SCIE.

Walker, S. (2015) Literature Reviews: Generative and Transformative Textual Conversations. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 16(3)
<https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-16.3.2291>.

Webber, M (Ed) (2014) *Applying research evidence in social work practice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

3. Year at a glance

Please see the image below for an outline of how learning activities are scheduled throughout the year.

Month	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	
Stage	Research stage: Planning your research			Research stage: Progressing your research			Research stage: Writing up your research			
Teaching days	TD 1		TD 2		TD 3		TD 4			
Self-directed	Self-directed: Toolkit 1			Self-directed: Toolkit 2		Self-directed: Toolkit 3		Self-directed: Toolkit 4		
Support sessions	Research support session: 1			Research support session: 2		Research support session: 3		Research support session: 4	Research support session: 5	
1:1 supervision	Supervision: 1			Supervision: 2		Supervision: 3		Supervision: 4		Supervision: 5
Assessment	Research proposal deadline									Dissertation deadline

3.1. Delivery dates and format

All teaching and support will be delivered online. In the unlikely event of changes to a planned teaching day date or delivery mode, we will always communicate this to you via announcement on Moodle. See table below for the year three teaching day schedule:

Date	Teaching day and topic	Time	Mode of delivery
08 Sep 2026	Day 1 – Getting started with your literature review	9:30-16:30	Online
28 Sep 2026	Research support session 1 – Developing your research question and proposal	13:00-14:00	Online
17 Nov 2026	Day 2 – Literature search and appraisal	9:30-16:30	Online
03 Dec 2026	Research support session 2 – Searching for literature	10:00-11:00	Online
19 Jan 2027	Day 3 – Literature analysis and synthesis	9:30-17:00	Online

Date	Teaching day and topic	Time	Mode of delivery
02 Feb 2027	Research support session 3 – Appraising literature	12:00-13:00	Online
09 Mar 2027	Day 4 – Writing your literature review	9:30-16:30	Online
24 March 2027	Research support session 4 – Analysing and synthesising literature	13:00-14:00	Online
14 April 2027	Research support session 5 – Writing up	12:00-13:00	Online

3.2. Attending teaching days and managing local authority workloads

Your Local Authority has agreed for you to attend these days in full therefore you are expected to fully participate and engage in the learning offered. This means you are not to engage in any work-related activity, including visits, meetings, emails or calls during a teaching day and must arrange any cover appropriate for your caseload.

If there is a work-related issue that you must attend to, as stipulated by your Local Authority, please contact your dissertation supervisor to discuss.

We track participant attendance and engagement so that we can provide early 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](#).

3.2.1. Start and finish times

Always refer to Moodle for accurate start times, but a typical teaching day is between 9.30am – 4.30pm, though some might end slightly later. Please check Moodle regularly for any scheduling changes and ensure you join on time, as we will start teaching promptly.

3.2.2. Monitoring your academic attendance

Frontline expects all participants to attend all teaching days during year three, with absence limited to circumstances that are exceptional and meet the expectations set out in the [attendance and engagement policy](#).

Frontline 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).

3.2.3. Notifying us of an intended absence

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

For teaching days, an email should be sent to your regional inbox (southregion@thefrontline.org.uk or northregion@thefrontline.org.uk) to request an approved absence and you should notify your dissertation supervisor. 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.

3.2.4 Catching up on missed learning

Where participants are absent from teaching days, they must catch up on missed learning. They 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 need to submit a [form](#) to confirm you have caught up on the learning from the day. A link to this form will be added to Moodle.

3.2.5 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. 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) 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.

3.3 Study days

You may take up to 4 additional study days to focus on academic work. These can be taken throughout the year and must be approved in advance by your line manager. Time off will not be withheld unreasonably but should be organised in advance and will be approved upon consideration of the workload of the team.

3.4. Self-directed research toolkit

You will have access to four self-directed research toolkits designed to support, reinforce, and deepen understanding throughout the module. All teaching day resources and toolkits will be released at the start of the academic year to enable you to plan your study effectively and access materials flexibly and at the point of need.

Teaching Day Pre-Work

Before each teaching day, you are required to complete specified pre-work. This will include selected sections of the relevant self-directed toolkit, alongside essential reading. Completion of this preparatory work is necessary to ensure full engagement with taught sessions.

Teaching Day Post-Work

Following each teaching day, you will be guided to complete sections of the toolkit to consolidate learning. These activities are optional but recommended to strengthen understanding and application of taught content.

All required and optional activities will be clearly signposted on Moodle.

3.5. Research support session

Research support sessions are optional, one-hour support sessions, led by experienced staff. These are semi-structured, with each session focused on a specific aspect required to complete a literature review research project followed by time for participant questions.

3.5.1. Start and finish times

Research support sessions take place at different times, please check Moodle regularly for any scheduling changes. Ensure you join on time, as we will start teaching promptly.

3.5.2. Monitoring your academic attendance

Attendance at research support sessions is optional, though highly recommended. In order to monitor engagement, Frontline will track 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).

3.6. Dissertation supervision

Participants are entitled to 5 supervisory meetings throughout the year. Your first supervision meeting will be a group session led by a Frontline practice tutor and will take place before you are due to submit your research proposal. Once you submit your research proposal, you will be allocated a dissertation supervisor. Where possible, the same practice tutor that has supported you through year one or two of the programme will continue to support you through year three as your dissertation supervisor, and if this is not possible, another practice tutor will be allocated to this role. Their role is to guide you through the research process, offering advice and providing encouragement at each stage.

The remaining 4 supervision sessions will be 1-1 meetings with your dissertation supervisors. You are responsible for arranging these with their dissertation supervisor. Dissertation supervisions are typically 30-45mins but can be up to an hour and will be held online.

The responsibilities of the supervisor are as follows:

- To discuss and guide you on your dissertation plan
- To discuss and guide you on research ethics and research proposals
- To support/advise you with any difficulties which arise in preparing the dissertation
- To read and comment on a chapter/plan of work (no more than 1500 words) – Feedback will be provided within a supervisory meeting and timing of submission and feedback must be agreed with the supervisor in advance
- Supervisors do not read full drafts of dissertations

The supervisor does not, however, have any responsibility for the preparation of the dissertation itself, for the ideas and material that it includes, or for the standard that it attains. The dissertation must be entirely your own work.

The participant's responsibilities and how to make the most of your dissertation supervision:

- To initiate and maintain contact with your supervisor
- To keep a record of what has been agreed at each dissertation supervision
- To make the most of your supervision, you should submit material for discussion in advance of each meeting. This could be agreed with the supervisor at the end of each supervisory meeting.
- You should set the agenda and inform your supervisor of what you wish to discuss. Dissertation supervision are for your benefit. It is, therefore, to your advantage if you take the lead on how to plan each supervisory meeting.

Please note, engagement with your dissertation supervisor is an important part of your academic study. Participants who utilise this support effectively are likely to be better prepared for the completion of their dissertation due to the increased focus on planning, discussion of ideas and troubleshooting any concerns related to their research project. You are strongly advised to be proactive in arranging and attending all five of your supervisory meetings and to contact your dissertation supervisor via email if you have any queries that need to be addressed outside of these meetings.

3.7. Literature review research proposals

You will be required to submit a research proposal by **10am Wednesday 21 October 2026**. You will find support and resources in Toolkit 1 and Teaching day 1 for the preparation of your proposal. It is advised that you discuss the content of your research proposal in your first group supervision meeting.

The research proposal proforma can be found on the FLSW927 Moodle page. <mailto:academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk>

3.7.1. Review

Your research proposal will be reviewed by your dissertation supervisor. Proposals that were submitted by the deadline will receive notification of the supervisor's feedback no later than 5pm **Wednesday 25 November 2026**. Supervisors' feedback will be uploaded on Moodle, and you are advised to check back regularly to see if your application has been reviewed before this date.

The research proposal is an excellent opportunity to get formative and personalised feedback from your supervisor on your research question, aims, and objectives, in the early stages of the module. If you are unable to submit your proposal by the deadline, we strongly encourage participants to let us know by submitting an extension request via our [online form](#).

If the research proposal is not submitted by December 2026, then it cannot be marked but can still be used as a tool to help you plan for your literature review.

4. Assessment for FLSW927

4.1. Formative feedback and summative assessment

Reflection and reflexivity are essential components of social work practice, and so formative assessment and feedback is woven throughout this module. A range of Frontline teaching staff and peers will provide **formative feedback** in this module using a variety of methods including, but not limited to, individual supervisory meetings and summary group feedback. Peer feedback and self-assessment will also be utilised to help you develop critical thinking, reflection, and reflexivity.

The purpose of summative assessment is to ensure that participants have met the module learning outcomes and that participant work is at the appropriate academic level.

There is **one** summative assessment element in this module, which is the dissertation (60 credits). To successfully complete the FLSW927 module, you **must** pass the dissertation. Listed below is the submission deadline, weighting, and feedback release date for this assessment.

You will be provided with developmental feedback on the summative assessment to aid your future learning and development.

Summative assessment element	Weighting	Submission deadline	Feedback release date
10,000 - 12,000 words	100%	10am - Wednesday 2 June 2027	5pm - Wednesday 14 July 2027 (mark is provisional until ratified at Exam Board)

4.2. Marking, moderation, and grade ratification process

All academic summative assessments will be marked against the Lancaster University Postgraduate Level Social Work marking matrix ([annex 3](#)) with the pass mark all for Level 7 assessment set at 50%. Please note that for the dissertation, an enhanced version of the marking criteria is used, which will be shared with you via Moodle.

The dissertation will be double marked. This marking will be completed by the dissertation supervisor where possible and by a second marker. Moderation and discussion take place

between the two markers once they have independently reviewed the dissertation, and they will then agree the final grade. If the difference in grade is more than 10% and cannot be resolved in discussion, the submission is then 'third-marked'. When a third marker is needed, they will not see the grade of the first two markers beforehand.

Moderation Reports are shared with our External Examiners and the Lancaster University Director of Studies for Frontline or their nominee. A sample of assessments is shared with our External Examiners for an additional, external check that the feedback and submitted work is at the required academic level. Further moderation is carried out by the Lancaster University Director of Studies for Frontline or their nominee.

All marks are provisional until they are ratified by the joint Frontline-Lancaster University Exam Board.

4.3. Return of feedback

Your **provisional** assessment results and feedback will be returned to you within six weeks of submission (excluding public holidays). As stated above, all marks are provisional until they are ratified by the joint Frontline-Lancaster University Exam Board.

In rare occurrences where Frontline is unable to return your assessments within the agreed marking period due to an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., if one of the markers is unexpectedly unavailable for a significant period and no replacement can be found), you will be informed as soon as possible of a firm date by which you can expect the work to be returned.

4.4. Word limits

The limit for this assessment is 10,000-12,000 words. 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 in order 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.

There will be no penalty for under-length work, but it is important to note that work which is seriously under the prescribed length is likely to be awarded a lower mark on grounds of inadequate content.

For an over-length piece of coursework where the word limit has been exceeded by 20% or less, the coursework 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. For an over-

length piece of coursework where the word limit has been exceeded by more than 20%, the part of the coursework beyond the excess 20% will not be marked.

Where penalties are being applied for a piece of over-long coursework, a sliding scale of penalties will be used, as follows:

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

What is counted within a word limit?

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's name, programme of study, etc.), the assessment title or question, the appendices, or the bibliography. 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.

Abstracts, contents tables, appendices, diagrams, acknowledgements, title/front page and references are not included in the word count.

Monitoring word/time ranges

Participants are required to provide an accurate statement of length as part of the submission of their work. Word counts should be recorded on the front page of your dissertation when submitting your work. If you experience problems with meeting the required word length, please speak in the first instance to your dissertation supervisor.

4.5. Assessment marking criteria

Specific assessment guidance for the dissertation is provided on Moodle. The dissertation assessment guidance provides detailed information about what should be submitted in this assessment and the criteria it will be marked against, as well as suggested reading.

You must read this assessment guidance before starting the dissertation.

4.6. Submission format

You will submit your dissertation electronically via Moodle as Microsoft Word documents (either .doc or .docx). Your dissertation 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 dissertation, 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 after submission: you will not be able to make changes after the submission deadline, so failure to check may lead to failure of the dissertation.

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 6.4.2](#) for further information.

4.7. 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. 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.

4.8. 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](#).

4.9 Academic integrity and plagiarism

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.

4.9.1. 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. If used appropriately to check for errors, and if permitted in the assignments, the use of LEAs is not considered academic misconduct. However, it is important to understand that many LEA services (such as Grammarly Pro/Premium) and other online tools/software plugins used to improve writing use additional AI features and these features may not be used. 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/universi>

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 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.

4.10 Exceptional circumstances

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 dissertation 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 and participants must use the [Exceptional Circumstances Form](#) to request an extension to the dissertation submission deadline.

Participants should bear in mind that while extensions will be offered where there are compelling reasons to do so, this may mean that marking is not completed in time for the September 2027 exam board. Longer extensions may mean that marking is not completed in time for the deadline for making awards which will be conferred at the Lancaster University winter graduation ceremonies. Participants who complete and are awarded the MA after this date will be invited to attend a graduation ceremony in the following year (winter 2028).

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.

4.10.1 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.

4.11 Academic regulations

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 weighted average of your Year 1 and Year 3 marks, 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
- 48.0-49.9% either pass or fail

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.

4.12. Examination boards

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 examination board for this module is held in September 2027. Reassessment submissions (following a fail) and submissions which have been delayed due to exceptional circumstances will be reviewed at the exam board in March 2028.

Following on from the exam board, your award and classification are ratified by the Lancaster University Classification and Assessment Review Board (CARB) in November 2027. Once CARB has met, you will be notified about your ratified module result and your final award classification. Any marks shared prior to the exam board will be provisional until ratified by the exam board. Any final award classification shared will be provisional until ratified by CARB.

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.

4.13. Principles and parameters of reassessment

In this module, the assessment element is compulsory. This means that the assessment must be passed.

Reassessment is compulsory for any assessment mark below 50%. If you fail the assessment, you will have one opportunity for reassessment. Reassessment is not permitted where an assessment mark is a pass (mark of 50% or above).

Submission deadlines for reassessment are set by exam boards and you will usually receive a minimum of twelve weeks' notice of the date.

You do not need to wait for notification of the submission deadline to start work on your resubmission. Should you pass the reassessment, if the module percentage mark after reassessment is an improvement on the original mark, the new percentage mark will count subject to a cap of 50%; otherwise the original percentage mark stands as your result for the module. The resulting percentage mark will count towards the overall average for the programme. You cannot pass the programme or be awarded the qualification (MA) if you have failed this (or any module) after your one reassessment opportunity.

5. Learning resources

5.1 Virtual Learning Environment: Moodle

Ahead of starting year three, you will need to re-register as a student of Lancaster University. You will receive registration instructions via email and will be able to register from 3rd August 2026. Once you have successfully registered, you will be given access to Moodle, Lancaster University'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. The pages where you will find these resources are the module page, 26/27: FLSW927: Research-minded Relational Social Work [1], and the programme page, 26/27: MA Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families (Frontline) (Part Time) [1].

If you experience issues with accessing/navigating elements of the Moodle (e.g., not being able to locate or access content, requiring assessment submission support) please contact our Digital Learning Team via the following email address: digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk.

For general IT queries (e.g., LU registration issues, queries around your LU email, library access) please refer to [section 9.5](#), 'Lancaster University IT related support'.

5.2 Lancaster University library resources and services

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 7.1](#).

Library support for research

All students have access to 1:1 research support from their faculty librarians.

Undertaking assignments or dissertations? Wondering what information you need and where to find it? Faculty Librarians can meet with you to help.

This is usually via Teams but faculty librarians also endeavour to accommodate requests for in-person meetings on campus (if you are in close proximity to Lancaster University).

What librarians can assist with:

- Planning research questions, scoping searches (e.g. via Google Scholar or multi-disciplinary databases), understanding the academic landscape and what's available to you
- Identifying sources (e.g. for literature reviews) including journal articles, books, data, policy, newspapers, and much more
- Understanding library tools and resources to get the best from them (e.g. Onesearch, subject databases, subscription materials)
- Accessing and requesting specialist subject resources for your research
- Approaches to referencing, including reference management software

Library Teaching and Engagement Team | ASK - Lancaster University

6. Support for participants

6.1. The emotional impact of the curriculum

Although incredibly rewarding, you will be aware that embarking on a professional qualifying social work programme can sometimes be emotionally and intellectually challenging.

In completing the first two

years of the programme, you will have developed strategies and utilised your support network to help you deal with these challenges. Approach Social Work'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 dissertation supervisor 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 programme page (26/27: MA Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families (Frontline) (Part Time) [1]) on Moodle including a list of external wellbeing and resource services that you may also find useful.

6.2. Peer Support

Peer support 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 the programme. Previous participants have found informal study groups, WhatsApp support groups and library study sessions helpful.

6.3. Community spaces

As you move into Year 3 of the Approach Social Work programme, you still have access to aspects of our wellbeing offer. You can continue to access the community spaces which are there to create a sense of connection related to different aspects of identity. Community spaces bring together members of the programme who share in different aspects of identity. These are spaces where you can share worries or concerns, or moments of celebration, with other people who may have had similar experiences. These sessions run frequently but the schedule is determined by members of the individual spaces and coordinated by the community space leaders. These spaces are participant led but a Frontline member of staff will act as your point of contact and meet with the leaders to ensure that any issues or concerns are addressed.

If you wish to find out more about when these spaces will be running, reach out to following staff members:

	Designed contact	Email address
LGBTQIA+	Brittany Bernard	Brittany.bernard@thefrontline.org.uk
Global Majority	Roshilla Pillay	Roshilla.pillay@thefrontline.org.uk
Disability	Hannah Jenkinson	Hannah.jenkinson@thefrontline.org.uk
Neurodivergence	Siobhan Lonergan	Siobhan.lonergan@thefrontline.org.uk
Lived experience of social work	Penny McGee	Penny.mcgee@thefrontline.org.uk

6.4. 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 dissertation supervisor (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.

6.4.1. 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).

6.4.2. 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

Community space

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

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. If you would like to have a buddy or have any queries, contact Chavionne.Richardson@thefrontline.org.uk. Buddies will be allocated upon request.

6.5 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 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.

6.5.1 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 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 your dissertation supervisor, 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 dissertation supervisor 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](#).

6.5.2. 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. 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.

6.5.3. Disabled Students' Allowance

Eligibility for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) is determined by the funding body not Lancaster University or Frontline. 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 might cover 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 support you might receive will be determined by the funding body and 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 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.

6.5.4 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](#)

6.6. Coaching

During year three of the programme, you have a fantastic opportunity to engage in four online coaching sessions with an independent coach to support you throughout the year. These sessions offer valuable space to step outside of the day-to-day, reflect on your role as a social worker and equip you with tools to be a sustainable and effective practitioner.

Coaching will be available to all year three participants, including those who decide to withdraw from the final 60 credit academic component.

"I don't think I'd have got this far through the programme without my coach! They have helped me think about ways to build my resilience, make important decisions, and find motivation in my role." Frontline programme participant

You will be auto-enrolled in coaching and be prompted to review your own leadership skills through a platform called Lumus. As part of the coaching offer, we use the Development & Leadership Framework to support your professional growth and leadership development throughout the programme. This is not a requirement for coaching but it is an easy to use, interactive tool that will give you a report highlighting your strength and development areas. The insights you gain can help guide discussions with your coach and inform your ongoing development goals.

Here are some examples of the types of topics you might work on with your coach:

- managing yourself and your resilience as you adapt to the changes with year three;
- managing a heavy caseload and studying at the same time;
- knowing and using your strengths in work with families and other professionals;
- building relationships with others and influencing colleagues with a different approach;
- navigating around the complexity of the system you operate in with your colleagues and senior managers;
- challenges and goals that you want to focus on to help you build confidence in your ability, court cases for example;
- handling difficult conversations or conflict situations.

“I’m better able to manage my workload through reflexive practice. (The sessions are) very supportive, (I) always leave feeling relieved.” Frontline programme participant.

All participants will be contacted by the coaching team to complete a matching form and outline requirements the team should consider when allocating you a coach. Please note that we cannot always meet specific needs but will do our best to match you to the right coach for you.

Please note, that your coach will not be able to provide participants with academic support relating to their dissertation.

For further information, participants should refer to the coaching section on Moodle. For any queries, please contact the coaching team on coachingsessions@thefrontline.org.uk.

7. Academic support

While registered as a student of Lancaster University, during year 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.

7.1. 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 <https://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.

7.2. Office 365 and other software

As a registered Lancaster University student, you will be able to access Office 365. 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 [LU Student Portal](#).

Additionally, you will be able to access software, such as:

- 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. Please note that Lancaster University licenses may change, and it is not guaranteed that all the software listed will remain available. Please refer to the ISS information pages for current information.

7.3. 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 is 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.

7.4. Additional funding and loans

7.4.1. Lancaster University

If you are experiencing financial hardship during year three 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 Year 3 Approach Social Work participants are in employment as social workers, 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.

7.4.2. 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](#).

8. Additional information

8.1 Getting in touch with Frontline

There are several ways you can get in touch with us at Frontline. Please refer to the below table to ensure you contact the right team:

Contact information	When you should contact:
Dissertation supervisor (email will be shared with you after you start year three)	As your primary link between Frontline and the local authority, your dissertation supervisor will generally be your first point of contact for: – Academic and work-based learning – Pastoral care/support – Progress reviews – Attendance and engagement

Contact information	When you should contact:
Principal Practice Tutor or Head of Delivery southregion@thefrontline.org.uk or northregion@thefrontline.org.uk	– High-level regional issues/queries that cannot be answered/resolved by your dissertation supervisor and/or through other channels listed
Academic Registry team Academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk	– requests for confirmation of student status – advice on academic procedures, regulations, and policy – your EC [exceptional circumstances] or mitigating circumstances application
Digital Learning Team Digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk	For queries relating to: – Access to Zoom – Digital technology – Digital accessibility – Moodle – Technical issues uploading assignments
Admissions and Support Team admissions.support@thefrontline.org.uk	For queries relating to: – DBS – Overseas checks – Suitability panels – Self-declaration forms – Occupational health – Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
Regional inbox southregion@thefrontline.org.uk or northregion@thefrontline.org.uk	For queries relating to: – Absences at teaching days post Readiness for Practice stage – General low-risk region-related queries
Readiness for Practice Operations Team frontlineops@thefrontline.org.uk	For queries relating to: – Dietary requirements and accommodation needs during the RfP residential – Residential logistics and operations
Frontline staff of the global majority Roshilla Pilay Roshilla.Pillay@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

Contact information	When you should contact:
Ann Magona Ann.Magona@thefrontline.org.uk	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
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

8.2 Relevant policies

The handbook should be read and used alongside [Frontline policies and procedures](#). Where participants are enrolled as a student of Lancaster University and completing their 60 credit module in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families (FLSW927), they should also refer to [Lancaster University's Manual of Academic Regulations](#) (MARP) and the [Frontline supporting document](#) available to all participants on Moodle. These are the academic regulations in place for Approach Social Work.

8.3. 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.

8.4. 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

8.5 Study leave

Your local authority has agreed to provide you with study leave to attend the year three teaching days and research support sessions, dates of which have been provided in this handbook. Therefore, you can attend these formal taught sessions, supervisory meetings, and leadership coaching sessions without having to take annual leave. All other study activities will be in your own time.

You should consult the schedule for teaching days and avoid booking annual leave that coincides with these days.

Be prepared to do work in your own time to complete the research required on this programme. You will be expected to read extensively. You will need to put aside regular time in the evenings and/or weekends throughout the year to work on your research project.

8.6. 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 the programme for that period. This is known as 'intercalation'. For further information about the parameters and implications of requesting time away from studies, please refer to the Approach Social Work intercalation policy or pregnancy and parenting policy (available on [Frontline's website](#)).

8.7 Withdrawing from FLSW927

During year three, a minority of participants decide that due to personal exceptional circumstances, they are no longer able to continue with the 60 credit FLSW927 module and they therefore consequently withdraw from this. They do however often wish to continue on Approach Social Work to retain access to other support offered by the programme, such as coaching.

If you decide that you wish to withdraw from the 60 credit FLSW927 module, you will need to follow the process outlined within Frontline's [Withdrawal Policy](#).

Please be aware that where you withdraw from the academic element of the year two programme, that you will no longer be classified as a university student, and you will therefore lose access to the items listed in sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.5, 7 and 9 of this handbook.

Please note that where you are struggling with keeping up with the academic elements of the year three course, there are a number of support mechanisms and early intervention processes that can support you in completing. You therefore should notify your dissertation supervisor at the earliest opportunity if you are struggling, as we may be able to support your full completion of the course without you needing to withdraw.

8.8. Year three working patterns

Participants during year three of the programme will normally work full time at their local authority. However, participants are employees of the local authority in year three, and as such they may discuss their working patterns with the local authority.

Where participants agree with their local authority to move to part time working during year three, they will be expected to complete the academic element of year three within the same timescales of a participant working full time in their local authority.

8.9. Holiday

You are an employee of your local authority in year three and therefore all annual leave must be arranged in line with your local authority's policies and procedures. You should avoid booking leave which clashes with teaching days.

8.10. Participant feedback

Receiving feedback from our participants is integral to helping us assess the effectiveness of the programme and its many parts. The evaluation of this feedback enables ongoing reflection and improvement, which is vital for the continuing evolution of the programme. You will therefore be expected to provide Frontline with regular feedback throughout the programme, and in return Frontline will address key findings in a response to participants via Moodle.

8.11. 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 programme 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).

8.12. Social media

You must be mindful of the use of social media and online communications whilst on the programme. Given that you will be 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](#). Please see the [Approach Social Work Participant discipline policy](#) for further guidance on the use of social media and online communications.

8.13. Professional Indemnity Insurance

All social work professionals require professional indemnity insurance either provided by their employer or independently through providers such as BASW. It is your responsibility to confirm with your Local Authority if they provide this. This insurance covers you for costs you might face if your work, service, or advice causes a (client/service user) to suffer a loss. This can take the form of:

- Professional negligence: If you give incorrect advice or make a mistake
- Defamation: If you produce or support untrue and harmful statements about your client
- Breach of confidence: If you share sensitive information without permission
- Breach of copyright: If you infringe on copyrights, trademarks or intellectual property
- Lost or damaged documents: If you lose or damage documents while they're in your care

Please note that research activities undertaken by year two participants are additionally covered by Lancaster University's research insurance. If you would like further information about this, then please speak to your dissertation supervisor in the first instance.

9. Additional Lancaster University information

9.1. Your relationship with Lancaster University

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.

9.2. Lancaster University graduation ceremony

As a student of Lancaster University, when you complete your Master's degree you will be able to attend a graduation ceremony should you wish to. Postgraduates on taught courses (MA and PG Diplomas) are invited to attend Lancaster University's Winter Graduation, normally in the year they complete their degree. Your place at Graduation is subject to your degree being approved by the end of year three exam board in either September or October, and confirmed by Lancaster University's Classification and Assessment Review Board on behalf of its 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 academic programme of study. If you

complete your qualification after October, you will be invited to the Winter Graduation ceremony in the year following the exam board at which this is ratified.

9.3. 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](#)

9.4. 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.

9.5. Lancaster University IT related support

For IT related information please see [Lancaster University's Information Systems Services](#) webpages.

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

9.6. Using your Lancaster University email account

You can expect to be contacted via your Lancaster University email account. We also expect you to contact Frontline and Lancaster University staff through this email account during the programme.

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, programme 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.

9.7. 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 on the programme. 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.

9.8. 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.

9.9. 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

9.10. 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.

Rail card	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 see the National Railcards website for further information.
26 – 30 railcard	– 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. Please see the National Railcards website for further information.

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

Postal address:
ASK,
Lancaster University,
The Student Centre, University House
Bailrigg

Email address:
ask@lancaster.ac.uk

Lancaster,
LA1 4YW

9.11. 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](#).

Annexure

Annex 1: Definitions

Academic module: The teaching and assessment of year t of the programme has one academic module. Information about this module is included within this handbook..

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.

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.

Formative assessment/feedback: Is an integrated and ongoing method of assessing individuals whilst learning is happening, rather than at the end of a module or sequence of learning. Formative assessment and feedback provide opportunities for you and teaching staff to assess your current level of understanding against the module learning outcomes and help provide guidance on how to close the gap between current and desired performance.

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.

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.

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.

Summative Assessment: A measure of cumulative learning over a programme. Summative assessments are formal, in that they determine the grade you are awarded for the module.

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 year three staff, teams, 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 leaders 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.
Dissertation supervisor	Providing academic support to participants	- Dissertation supervisors are qualified and registered social workers, and are the first point of contact for all matters relating to teaching and assessments in year three and. - All participants will have a dissertation supervisor
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 leads	Course leads (year 1 & year 3)	- Responsible for the quality assurance and standards (Education and Training Standards and Professional Standards), development practice model and all aspects of the curriculum for participants and CSWs. - Liaise with Lancaster University as the awarding university.

Job Title	Key roles	Description of role
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. - 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.
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	Supporting the Director in activities to ensure that the academic standards of Approach Social Work continue to meet Lancaster

Job Title	Key roles	Description of role
	deputy academic lead.	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 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

Job Title	Key roles	Description of role
		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: Assessment and marking guidance 2026/7

Assignment information, criteria and briefings will be available on Moodle

Your assessment will be marked according to the University of Lancaster Postgraduate Social Work marking criteria, which have been supplemented with additional specific marking descriptors for this assessment. You can use these to self-evaluate your work before you submit it.

Lancaster University Postgraduate Marking Matrix for Social Work

Distinction 80+			
LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:			
Exemplary range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes, secured by discriminating command of a comprehensive range of relevant materials and analyses, and by deployment of considered judgement relating to key issues, concepts and procedures.			
Social Work amplified descriptors:			
A piece of written work in the 80+ 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	Understanding	Style	Marks within this classification may vary due to–
A very clearly expressed and convincing argument which is used to develop a highly coherent, original a	A thorough understanding of literature review methodology, with excellent and creative demonstration	A very cohesive and clear structure typically expected in literature reviews, which offers clarity of	- An original capacity to develop arguments, ideas and apply self-reflexivity. - The extent to which empirical research

nd logical framework within which to answer the question or address the topic. • The research leads to a reasoned conclusion fully supported by the data gathered. • A thorough grounding of the above in existing theory and research. • 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.	of key processes including literature searching, appraisal, analysis and synthesis, and its implications for social work practice. • A very clear and consistent focus on the issues raised by the research question, including ethical issues, and its implications for social work practice. • Insightful understanding of theoretical literature, including the ability to identify points upon which to build as well as grasp and limitations. • An insightful, critical argument showing signs of originality in ideas, argument and empirical research.	presentation of findings. • An advanced academic writing style, which is succinct, logical and intentional in its reporting of methodology and findings. • Excellent grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction. • Thorough and consistent use of conventions in referring to other people's work. • Excellent adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity.	has been conducted/ reviewed. • The depth and sophistication of the conceptual argument. • The level of command of the theoretical and research literature.
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Distinction (70-79)

LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:

Exemplary range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes, secured by discriminating command of a comprehensive range of relevant materials and analyses, and by deployment of considered judgement relating to key issues, concepts and procedures.

Social Work amplified descriptors:

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	Understanding	Style	Marks within this classification may vary due to–
• A clearly expressed and convincing argument which is used to develop a coherent and logical framework to answer the research question at the centre of the completed literature review. • The research is well grounded and leads to a reasoned conclusion fully supported by the data gathered. • A capacity to consistently relate the theoretical and	• A thorough understanding of literature review methodology, analysis of its findings and its implications for social work practice. • A clear and consistent focus on the issues raised by the research question, including ethical issues. • An insightful argument showing signs of originality in ideas and argument.	• A clear structure typically expected in literature reviews, which offers clarity of presentation of findings. • Very good academic writing style, which is logical and coherent in its reporting of methodology and findings. • Good to very good grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction. • Thorough and consistent use of conventions of	• The capacity to develop arguments beyond those available in the literature including clear evidence of self-reflexivity. • The depth and sophistication in conceptual argument. • The level of command of the theoretical and research literature.

empirical material to the conceptual framework. • Strong evidence of independent research. • The absence of irrelevant or extraneous material.		referring to other people's work. • Good and consistent adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity	
Merit (60-69)			
LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:			
Conclusive attainment of virtually all intended learning outcomes, clearly grounded on a close familiarity with a wide range of supporting evidence, constructively utilised to reveal appreciable depth of understanding.			
Social Work amplified descriptors:			
A piece of written work in this marking range is of a good to very good standard and will show 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 water-tight 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 than is required for a 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	Understanding	Style	Marks within this classification may vary due to–
• A logical, coherent framework is used to answer the research question at the centre of literature review completed. • An ability to organise the data in a way that provides a clear and logical answer to posed research question. • A clearly expressed theme or argument developed from a critical consideration of relevant literature. • Conclusion supported by the body of the argument and evidence. • Some evidence of independent research.	• A good understanding of the literature review approach, a clear discussion of the findings and consideration of their implications for social work practice. • 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.	• Good academic writing style and a clear structure, which is logical and coherent in its reporting of methodology and findings. • Good grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction. • Good use of conventions of referring to other people's work • Good and consistent adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity	• The clarity and cogency of the overall argument. • The level of familiarity with the relevant literature and data. • The depth and coherence of the answer and the level of self-reflexivity.

Avoidance of unsubstantiated assertions.			
Pass (50-59)			
LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:			
Clear attainment of most of the intended learning outcomes, some more securely grasped than others, resting on a circumscribed range of evidence and displaying a variable depth of understanding.			
Social Work amplified descriptors:			
A piece of written work in this marking range is of a moderate to good 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	Understanding	Style	Marks within this classification may vary due to–
An attempt to answer the research question at the centre of literature review completed.	A reasonable understanding of literature review approach and implications for social work practice.	Adequate academic writing style and structure, which is mostly offers clear reporting of methodology and findings.	- The level of empirical and theoretical knowledge displayed - The seriousness with which an attempt has been made to answer

• A conclusion not entirely supported by data gathered and analysed or relevant to the body of the essay. • A failure to adequately organise an answer into a coherent whole.	• 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.	• Adequate grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction. • Referencing that is incomplete or fails to observe some conventions for referring to other people's work. • Adequate adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity.	the question or address the topic. • The number of major points that have been covered. • The coherence of the essay and level of self-reflexivity • The degree of unsubstantiated assertions. • Written style (grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence construction).
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Marginal Fail (40-49)

LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:

Attainment deficient in respect of specific intended learning outcomes, with mixed evidence as to the depth of knowledge and weak deployment of arguments or deficient manipulations.

Social Work amplified descriptors:

A piece of written work in this category shows signs of engagement with the question or topic, but has inadequacies at Master's level. 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	Understanding	Style	Marks within this classification may vary due to–	
• A failure to order this material so as to provide an adequate answer to the research question at the centre of the literature review completed. • An ability to pick out some of the points required for a satisfactory answer. • Inadequate conclusion that is either lacking or at odds with the rest of the dissertation.	• Some knowledge of appropriate empirical material. • The intrusion of irrelevant material. • An inadequate familiarity with relevant literature.	• Sub-standard grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction. • Inadequate use of conventions of referring to other people's work • Inadequate adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity	• The level of empirical knowledge and self-reflexivity. • 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 assertion. • Written style (grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction).	
Fail (30-39)				
LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:				
Attainment of intended learning outcomes appreciably deficient in critical respects, lacking secure basis in relevant factual and analytical dimensions.				

Social Work amplified descriptors:

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.

Poor Fail (20-29)

LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:

Attainment of intended learning outcomes appreciably deficient in respect of nearly all intended learning outcomes, with irrelevant use of materials and incomplete and flawed explanation.

Annex 4: Dissertation supervision contract

Dissertation supervision contract

You may find it helpful to know what they can expect from their dissertation supervisor. This contract summarises the expectations for both the supervisor and the participant. The general principle is that the participant is responsible for planning, completing the ethical approval from Frontline and the Local Authority and for carrying out the dissertation and the role of the supervisor is to advise.

Participants are entitled to 5 dissertation supervision throughout the year and are responsible for arranging these with their dissertation supervisor. Dissertation supervision is held online and it is best to arrange these in advance to account for annual leave and work commitments.

The responsibilities of the supervisor are as follows:

- To approve the initial choice of topic
- To approve the research proposal
- To discuss and guide the participant on their dissertation plan
- To support/advise the participant with any difficulties which arise in preparing the dissertation
- To read and comment on a chapter/plan of work (no more than 1500 words) – Feedback will be provided within a dissertation supervision and timing of submission and feedback must be agreed with supervisor in advance.
- Supervisors do not read full drafts of dissertations or edit/proofread your work

The supervisor does not, however, have any responsibility for the preparation of the dissertation itself, for the ideas and material that it includes, or for the standard that it attains. The dissertation must be entirely your work, and the help given by the supervisor must necessarily be limited.

The participant's responsibilities and how to make the most of your supervision:

- To initiate and maintain contact with your supervisor
- To write your own notes on the supervision
- To make the most of their supervision, participants should submit material for discussion in advance of each meeting. This could be agreed with the supervisor at the end of each supervision.

- You should set the agenda and inform the supervisor of what they wish to discuss. Supervisions are for your benefit; it is therefore to your advantage if you take the lead on how to plan each supervision meeting.

Key topics for discussion with your supervisor during the year usually include:

- Your original proposal and its feasibility
- Ethics, research design, methodology and analysis
- Relevant literature on the topic
- Progress
- Chapter plans and writing up

Areas to consider	
Is there anything specific you want your dissertation supervisor to know about how you wish to be supported?	
What is your plan for booking dissertation supervisions within the designated window?	
What planning is needed to attend all elements of the programme (research support sessions, teaching days, dissertation supervision)?	
What tools can help you get on (and stay on) track?	
How will you let your dissertation supervisor know if you are struggling and/or need additional support?	
How often will you have contact with your dissertation supervisor (and how?)	
Any other info that is helpful for your supervisor to know about you?	

Participants signature:	Dissertation supervisor's signature:	Date: