

The Service User and Carer Participation Advisory (SUPA) Group at the University of York is made up of carers and service users supported by a member of the academic staff team. We are based in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work.

We represent a wide range of people who have experienced involvement from social workers in our lives and offer a channel between service users, carers, staff, students and other SUPA groups to discuss inclusiveness and values in social work. The group was established in 2005.



Taking part

Our principal aim is to help continually improve the quality of the BA and MA Social Work programmes and to provide personal insights into the needs of service users and carers.

As part of the SUPA Group you will:

- Use your personal experiences to help the next generation of social workers understand their chosen profession from the perspective of service users and carers.
- Provide a voice for service users and carers.
- Offer 'big picture' perspectives on social work issues.
- Help social workers develop their professional identity and their social work skills.
- Inspire each other.

What a SUPA Group Member does

A SUPA Group member can participate in a number of different ways:

- Attend SUPA Group meetings.
- Contribute to the teaching programme: role plays, workshops, lectures.
- Interview prospective students.
- Act as a mentor to new SUPA group members

Typical commitments:

- Meetings are held 6 times a year and last for two hours.
- Teaching activities vary, but SUPA Group members are notified of opportunities in advance.

'Being in SUPA Group gives us a real opportunity to interact with students and staff -and we all gain'.

The SUPA Group is an active body that continually seeks to expand its membership and increase the ways in which it can support and influence the development of social work education and research .

'Being involved in the SUPA group has enabled me to share my lived experience in the training of social workers in a most rewarding way.'



Different ways to get involved

The SUPA Group welcomes new members to help us improve the quality of the BA and MA Social Work programmes. There are three types of membership:

- **Board members** attend all board meetings and take part in recruitment and teaching activities
- **Group members** do not attend board meetings but are actively involved in the teaching programme.
- **Associate members** are contacted regularly for advice and opinions on matters relating to social work and the academic courses. A current example might be members' experience of the new Care Act. All feedback can then inform the BA and MA courses.

Benefits

- All SUPA Group members are highly valued volunteers who contribute to the expertise of the department. As a SUPA group member, you will:
- Be remunerated for your time and effort
- Be able to claim back all travel expenses incurred as a result of your SUPA group work.
- Be entitled to associate membership of the university, with attendant benefits.
- Enjoy our regular social activities!

'SUPA Group members have all benefitted from the support of Social Workers and it is a privilege , in our small way, to be helping the next generation of professionals '.

How to join

Contact the Academic Lead of the SUPA Group, Ed Robson, to express your interest:

edward.robson@york.ac.uk

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