



UNIVERSITY
of York



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL WORK

Social Policy and Applied Social Science Undergraduate Programmes



Welcome

If you want to influence the national agenda, find solutions to current social problems or make a positive impact on people's lives, then our Department will show you how social science facilitates social change.

The fields of social policy and applied social science will open your eyes to the political, economic, social and global issues that affect our lives and their impact on the wider society.

By choosing to study in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at York, you will gain insights from world-leading academics at the forefront of their subject and actively influencing the world with their research ideas. You'll join a Department whose league table rankings are consistently high.

We are a welcoming and friendly Department, committed to our students. We want to help you to develop the necessary skills for your chosen career pathway or further advanced study.

Join us and find out how you can make a positive contribution to our society and the world in which we live.

Professor Nick Ellison, FACSS, Head of Department



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Have you wondered why we're not better at solving society's problems?

Would you like to learn how to carry out research for government, charities, think tanks, or international institutions?

Do you think the world could be fairer?

Are you interested in how decisions made by organisations affect our daily lives?

Are you concerned about the impact of global trends on the way we all live?

Why study Social Policy?



Social Policy draws on ideas from across the social sciences: sociology, social psychology, criminology, politics and economics. By studying it you will learn critical thinking skills that will help you to understand how governments try to improve the lives of people and to critique them when they fail to deliver. The study of Social Policy involves understanding the role governments play in shaping our society. It also involves understanding social issues and social

problems, which requires an exploration of the ways charities, businesses, communities, families, indeed all of us as individuals, affect the everyday lives of ordinary people.

Social Policy also recognises that the global nature of key social problems – and the role of globalisation in shaping the modern world – demands a wider perspective. Social Policy at York seeks to connect the local and the global, offering an approach that draws ideas from a



“After attending an open day I knew that I wanted to study within the Department. I’m really interested in crime and the policy that surrounds it. For me, the crime and criminal justice pathway was a perfect way for me to combine my interests.”

Jake, 2nd year student

broad range of subjects, including geography, management and environmental science, as it explores how best to maximise the well-being of people.

Marrying rigorous theoretical knowledge with a commitment to applying theory to real-world problems, Social Policy is a fascinating and expanding area of study and one that will equip you with skills for many different areas of employment.



1 The Department was established in 1966, making it one of the oldest and most respected in the country. It is also one of the largest in Europe, so we can offer a wide range of modules and flexible courses taught by leading experts in their fields.

2 Our social policy and social work research is ranked first in the UK for impact and third overall; 54% of our research is classed as 'world leading'. We are ranked 25th in the world for social policy and administration in the QS University rankings.



10 Research-led teaching: we deliver internationally significant research for world-leading organisations and governments, such as Unicef, Oxfam, UK government departments and the European Union. Insights from our research feed directly into our teaching, ensuring it reflects the latest thinking and draws on up-to-date evidence.



10 reasons to study at York

9 The University of York is a leader in applied social science research. 'Justice and equality' and 'Health and well-being' are two of the University's key research themes, reflecting our outstanding reputation in this area. The University has received two Queen's Anniversary prizes for its applied social science work, the most recent for the Department's Social Policy Research Unit.



8 The city of York has a long tradition of campaigning for social reform that predates the foundation of the University. The Rowntree family were major social reformers and York was the site of the world's first scientific study of poverty published in 1901. The family's legacy lives on through the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), based in York, one of the major charities campaigning for social change.



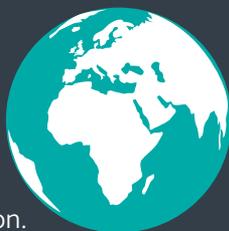
3 Our NSS student satisfaction rates are consistently high, most recently reaching 97%.



4 Our students are employable. Our teaching is applied to the real world and you will learn marketable skills in critical thinking, research methods, policy analysis and more. We offer multiple volunteering, internship and job placement programmes as well as access to alumni professional networks and mentoring opportunities. Visit our website to find out more.



5 The University of York is a Russell Group university with an excellent reputation. A York degree is internationally recognised and respected.



6 York is a beautiful city. With a population of 200,000, it is big enough to feel cosmopolitan, but small enough to feel friendly. It's the perfect city for students to feel at home in and, being only two hours from London, it's easily accessible from around the world.



7 As a member of one of our colleges, you will always find something to take part in. We have more than 180 societies and more than 60 sports clubs, a vibrant art and music scene and, of course, the unique college life waiting to be enjoyed.



“York is such a lovely city to live in. The campus and collegiate environment give a really friendly feel to the university and make it really easy to get involved with university life. My lecturers all know me personally and the staff are always asking for our views and opinions and adapting to our needs. I feel like our opinions are really valued.”

Katherine – Applied Social Science, 2nd year student

Research

We believe passionately in research-led teaching to encourage creativity and problem-solving and to challenge our students to push the boundaries of knowledge and excel in their studies. We have a large and vibrant research community which enhances the teaching of Social Policy at York.

Question: Could the UK do more for its most disadvantaged children?

**John Hudson,
Professor of Social Policy**

Project synopsis: All children deserve a fair start to life, but it is a fact that some receive a worse start than others. A key question for policy makers is when do inequalities become so unfair that they demand corrective action? One way to approach this question is to benchmark countries internationally. John did this in a recent Unicef report which suggested the UK could do more for its most disadvantaged children. In countries such as Denmark and Finland inequalities in income, education, health and life satisfaction are smaller than in the UK, demonstrating smaller gaps are possible. The report was covered by around 100 media outlets around the world. It built on previous work undertaken by staff in the Department, including Jonathan Bradshaw's pioneering work on child well-being which helped to set new international standards for assessing the lives of children.

york.ac.uk/spsw/staff/john-hudson/



Question: Is there a 'corporate' welfare state?

**Kevin Farnsworth,
Senior Lecturer in Comparative
and Global Social Policy**

Project synopsis: One of the most contentious political debates, and one at the heart of social policy, concerns whether too much or too little is spent on key welfare state services such as education, the health service and social security benefits. Whether the scale of 'welfare' damages the economy is often at the heart of such debates, but Kevin's work has shown that many businesses receive 'welfare' too in the form of subsidies, tax breaks and other hidden support. In recent research, Kevin calculated the scale of 'corporate welfare' in the UK to be at least £93 billion a year. The sheer scale of this support triggered a national political debate, with the *Guardian* devoting a front page spread to Kevin's findings and major politicians using them to make the case for reform.

york.ac.uk/spsw/staff/kevin-farnsworth/



Question: Should street sex workers be protected not prosecuted?

**Kate Brown,
Lecturer in Social Policy and Crime**

Project synopsis: The criminal justice system protects people from harm and punishes those who break the law, but these goals can be in conflict for vulnerable groups whose behaviour is deemed to be deviant. The risk of being a victim of violent crime is high for street sex workers, but much of this crime goes unreported because the victims fear they will be prosecuted for illegally selling sex. Kate's research informed a new approach to street sex work in Leeds, where women can work in designated non-residential streets at agreed times without fear of prosecution. Their safety is prioritised through close partnership work between the police and sex work support agencies. The outcome has been a dramatic increase in the proportion of violent crimes reported, helping the police to prosecute dangerous offenders and giving sex workers more protection under the law. However, the approach is not without its opponents and has triggered a national debate about whether such initiatives are the best way forward.

Kate was nominated for a Yorkshire Women of Achievement award 2016. york.ac.uk/spsw/staff/kate-brown/

Visit the website to learn more about the Department's research



“To have the opportunity to discuss and debate topical issues with the people who are working at the forefront of the subject is amazing.”

Tu - Social Policy, 3rd year student



Course information

All our programmes will give you a grounding in sociology, social psychology, politics and economics so that you can apply ideas from across the social sciences to understanding real-world issues. In addition, you will study core modules designed specifically for your chosen degree. In the second and third years you will be able to choose from a wide selection of option modules. You will also undertake an independent study project on a topic of your choice.

BA Social Policy

Do you want to learn to tackle complex social and policy issues and produce creative solutions?

Do you want to use your knowledge of social and policy worlds to investigate social questions, evaluate evidence and communicate your ideas?

This course allows you to explore the diversity of human needs and societal responses to social injustice and disadvantage.

BA Applied Social Science

Do you want to explore answers to social questions from a breadth of perspectives?

Do you want to actively investigate contemporary social issues and understand how social science knowledge influences the world?

This course enables you to think critically about the complexity of the social world and apply your social scientific knowledge to the analysis of real-world social problems.

BA Social Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice

Are you interested in crime as a social problem?

Do you want to look deeper into the decisions that society makes about crime and its victims?

This course allows you to focus your studies on a specific area of social science. You will learn to critically assess the effectiveness of both criminal justice and social policy and practice in delivering justice to every member of society.

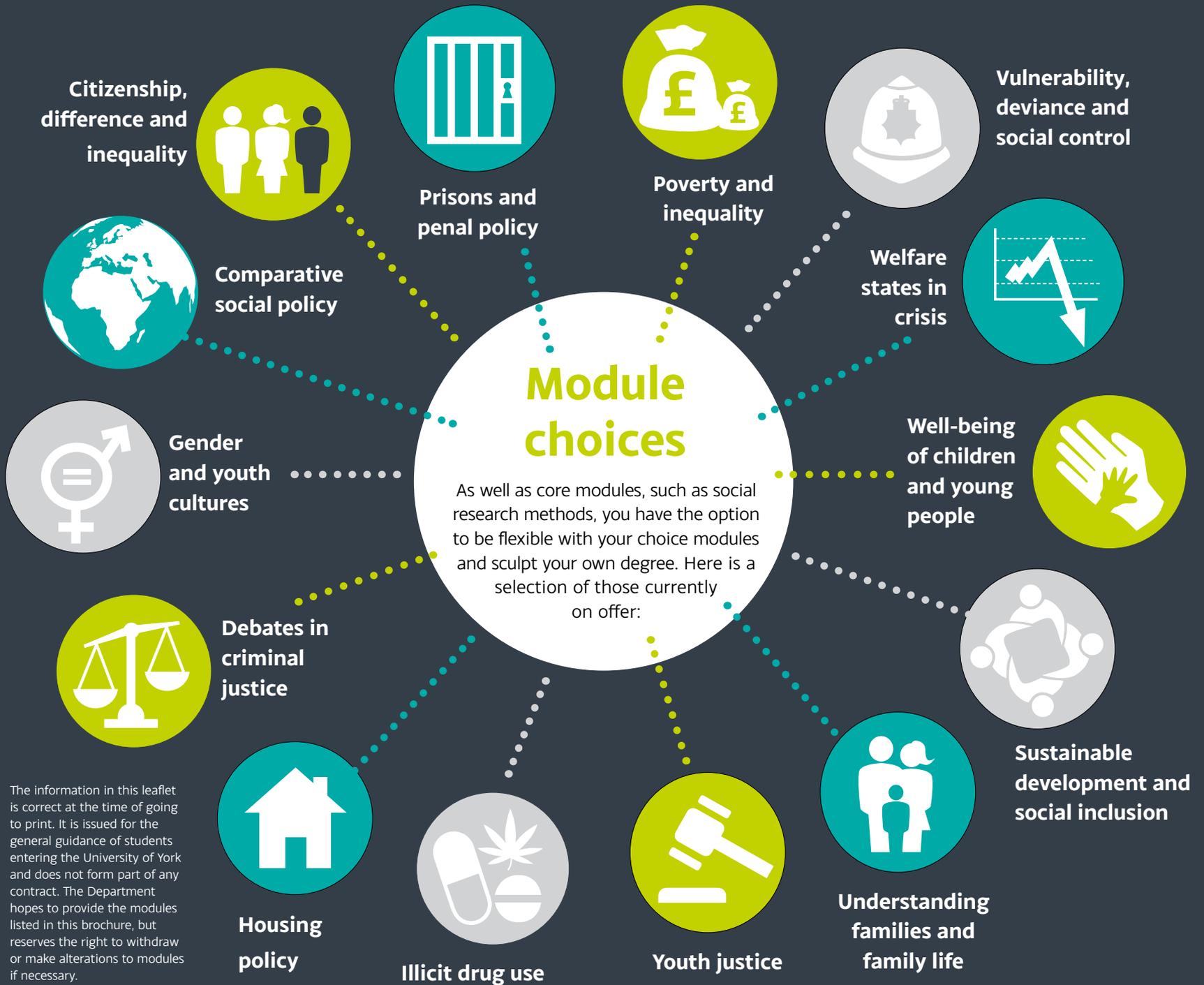
BA Social Policy, Children and Young People

Do you want to explore how society structures our lives?

Do you want to examine the ways that the experience of growing up can differ among children and young people?

This course allows you to focus your studies on a specific area of social science. You will see how theory translates into practice and how different social, cultural and family circumstances impact upon child development and youth transitions.

Visit our website for more information about each of our courses york.ac.uk/spsw/undergraduate/



The information in this leaflet is correct at the time of going to print. It is issued for the general guidance of students entering the University of York and does not form part of any contract. The Department hopes to provide the modules listed in this brochure, but reserves the right to withdraw or make alterations to modules if necessary.

Placements

“The placement module was invaluable to my degree as I was able to choose an organisation suited to my interests with young people. The ability to utilise my two years of academic knowledge in the work environment was exciting and fulfilling. It allowed me to further understand current social problems by getting a personal sense of the impact of social policy. Overall, the placement fuelled my passion to continue studying and advocate positive futures for young people!”

Samantha, Applied Social Science, 3rd year student, worked in a voluntary organisation with vulnerable young people.

Placement opportunities

All of our degree courses offer you the opportunity to carry out a work placement. It is a compulsory module for the Social Policy, Children and Young People and Social Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice degrees, and optional for Applied Social Science and Social Policy. The

placement is usually carried out in the summer between your second and third years and must last a minimum of 80 hours. Going abroad for your placement is also an option. It is a great opportunity to connect your learning to the real-world work environment.



Careers and alumni



The skills and knowledge that our graduates take from their degrees enables them to enter a diverse range of employment sectors or graduate schemes, and many go on to further study. Recent graduates have gone on to join fast-track graduate schemes in business or the public sector, to work with local authorities, the BBC, the Civil Service, National Probation Service, and charities such as Oxfam and The Children's Trust.

80% of recent graduates are in employment six months after graduation

*data from Unistats, 2016

“The staff were really brilliant, both for academic and pastoral support. I am currently working in a solicitors’ office. I am specialising in Family and Criminal Law. The Understanding Criminal Justice and Youth Justice modules have really helped me in dealing with our clients and understanding their circumstances.”

Megan, Legal Assistant



“I chose to study Social Policy because it seemed like a more practical course than Politics. Critical thinking is one of the key skills I learnt from my degree. Not only did I learn how to study, I also learnt how to analyse and view things from different perspectives, rather than just learning the right answers from books. I am now working in a prison department in Lithuania in a role which is directly linked to my degree.”

Zivile, Chief Specialist, Resocialisation Division at Prison Department of Lithuania

Teaching, learning and support

Student support

Outside timetabled contact hours, all of our staff hold regular drop-in sessions during which students are welcome to visit for additional support, guidance and information. These sessions are held on an informal, one-to-one basis, and ensure our students can access any help that they may need.

A member of the Department will act as your supervisor throughout your course, advising on your academic progress and helping with any personal development and well-being matters. You will meet regularly throughout



the academic year, so your supervisor will become familiar with your academic work and personal interests.

Flexibility

Although you will join the Department on a particular degree pathway, you will have lots of flexibility in the choice of modules you can take. Alongside the core modules designed specifically for your degree programme, you can choose from a wide selection of option modules developed specially by the Department, or choose from a wider range offered by other Departments, such as Politics or Sociology.

Careers adviser

Our careers adviser works with the Department to deliver careers content within the curriculum, as well as offering a range of elective workshops and sector and alumni events. Weekly appointments are available and many of our students send queries via email. The information, advice and guidance offered covers a range of concerns, including how to build confidence and skills, exploring

“The Department staff are really friendly and approachable. There is a vast range of study resources available and the course content is really varied.”

Lindsey, 2nd year student



career ideas, specific job sector advice and practical support with the recruitment process, such as application reviews and practice interviews. We take a very student-centred approach, so the support we offer is tailored to your individual needs and aspirations.

Varied assessment

We use a broad range of assessment techniques, predominantly essays and reports rather than unseen exams to develop your written and verbal communication skills.

How to apply

All applications must be made through UCAS. We usually make offers on the basis of information on the UCAS form, including your personal statement, reference, and academic grades or predictions. More information about the entry requirements and UCAS codes is available on the Department web pages: york.ac.uk/spsw/undergraduate

Visit us

The best way to find out about life at York is to come and meet our staff and students at an open day, so you can see the campus for yourself. Find out more: york.ac.uk/openday

Any questions?

Contact us if you have any questions about our degree programmes or the Department:

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