

## Welcome to Social and Community Development BA (Hons)

Congratulations on accepting your place on the Social and Community Development Course at the University of Northampton. We have created this welcome pack to help prepare for joining us in September. We hope you will find it useful.

### What's the course about?

Social and Community Development is a course that covers a wide range of contemporary subjects and topics. What these things have in common is that they will help you to tackle the social problems that matter most to you: homelessness, drug-use, violence, mental health, and many more.

### What will I be studying?

The course runs over three years. At University the years are called Levels. The first year is Level 4, the second year is Level 5, and the final year is Level 6.

In each year you will be studying a range of modules.

#### Level 4

- Social Policy and Law
- Perspectives on Human Behaviour
- Volunteering
- Developing Enterprising Communities
- Academic Literacy
- Anti-Oppressive Practice
- Faith and Spirituality.

#### Level 5

- Agency Approaches to Social Issues
- Community Involvement
- Research for Community Development
- Gender and Culture
- Social Care and Human Rights
- Issues of Immigration Control

#### Level 6

- Housing and Community Living
- Global Communities
- Collaborating for Social Change
- Issues of Substance Use
- Dissertation

## How is the course taught?

The course is taught using Active Blended Learning. This is about choosing the best way to learn what needs to be learned. Instead of simply attending lectures, you will be guided to a rich and varied set of learning materials. Then, when you meet for taught sessions, the focus will be on applying these materials to specific problems and topics.

For more details on this, have a look at this [YouTube video](#).

One important point to note, compared to pre-university study, you will be expected to be a self-directed learner. This means that tutors will not routinely chase you for work and you will need to set aside time to reflect and study either on your own or with a group of other students from the course. We cannot stress this highly enough. Success on this course is strongly related to how hard students study, and in particular the breadth and depth of their reading.

## How will my learning be assessed?

Each module will have one or more items of assessment. These will vary greatly, from an essay to group presentation. Some methods of assessing your work may be new to you, for example a poster or a social venture canvas. Do not worry, you will get plenty of support in how to complete these.

There are no formal exams in the course, although some modules have online tests.

## When will I need to be in University?

At Level 4, the main university days are Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. The timetable for the first teaching block (October to December) looks like this.

	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-1	1-2	2-3	3-4
Wednesday			SWK1003 Volunteering				
Thursday	SWK1048 – Developing Enterprising Communities			SWK1047 – Anti-Oppressive Practice		SWK1054 – Academic Literacy	
Friday	SWK1002 – Perspectives on Human	SWK1001 – Social Policy and Law					

In the second teaching block (January to March/April), SWK1046 – Faith and Spirituality replaces Anti-oppressive Practice.

## What can I do to prepare for the course?

There are a number of ways to prepare for the course.

### Join Our Facebook Group

One of the easiest ways to prepare for the course is to join the course [Facebook Group](#). This has a lively mix of staff, students, and alumni who are all prepared to answer questions and share their experiences of the course.

## **Read Course Related Books**

The key way to prepare for the course is to read. There are three types of reading that are likely to help. The first, is to read books related to the course. We would particularly recommend the following.

**Community Development in Action: Putting Freire into Practice** – by Margaret Ledwith

**The Short Guide to Community Development** – by Alison Gilchrist and Marilyn Taylor

**Analysing Community Work** – by Keith Popple

## **Read Study Skills Books**

The second is to read books related to academic skills. This is because many students have told us that the 'step-up' from pre-university to university level is a major challenge. We would particularly recommend the following.

**The Study Skills Handbook** – by Stella Cottrell

**The Good Study Guide** – by Andrew Northedge

## **Read for Pleasure**

Finally for reading, we also recommend that you read for pleasure. One way to develop your writing skills is to read the work of a variety of writers. What you read is up to you, but you are likely to find short stories easiest to fit into your schedule. If you have not read it before, I would recommend the following.

**The Thing Around Your Neck** – by Chimamanda Adichie

## **Keep an Eye on the Media**

It is important to keep in touch with what is going on in your local community, nationally, and globally. So make sure you watch the news, perhaps even compare news sources such as BBC News, Fox News, CNN, Al Jazeera, and Russia Today. You may be fascinated to see what each source reports, what they ignore, and how they present the same facts differently.

Do the same for newspapers as well.

The better informed you are, the easier you will find the course.

## **Watch Educational Videos**

A final thing that might be useful in helping you prepare for the course is to look at some of the TED talks on YouTube. If you have never seen a TED talk before, here are a few you might find interesting.

New Experiments in self-teaching – by Sugata Mitra ([link](#))

What Makes a Community? – by Roger Kitchen ([link](#))

## **What should I do if I have any concerns or questions?**

If you have any concerns or questions about the course, please email the Programme Lead - Victoria Boulton - [victoria.boulton@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.boulton@northampton.ac.uk)