

The International Social Work Programme

Introduction

The International Social Work Programme at The Department of Social Work in Aarhus was established in 1999.

The programme is developed within the legal framework that is communal for all social work bachelor programmes in Denmark. The overall design and the learning objectives of the international programme are therefore identical with the domestic social work programme.

Objectives

The aim of the social work programme is to qualify students professionally and personally to practice social work independently and in cross-disciplinary co-operation upon completion of the programme.

In accordance with the general development in society and in the fields of social work and science the programme must qualify students to carry out theoretical and practical social work and counselling. The Social Work Programme must enable students to identify, describe, analyse, evaluate and act according to different living conditions and social problems at an individual level, at group level and in relation to organisations and society as a whole. Students must acquire knowledge of and insight in the situations of the target groups and environments enabling them to make changes and act as social workers both in a public and a private context.

Completion of the social work programme confers the title "Bachelor of Social Work".

Core competencies

Students must be qualified to:

1. practice and co-ordinate social work and plan social measures as well as providing guidance and counselling and implement preventive measures,
2. obtain critical and analytic competence with a view to identifying, describing and evaluating social problems in their entity and choosing relevant methods and measures in relation to the actual situation,
3. transfer theories and methods into practical measures and create changes in co-operation with users and other involved parties,

4. establish professional relations with users and be able to enter into dialogue with users and to see the users' resources and support them in utilising their resources,
5. participate in organisational processes with a view to influencing and changing the framework and conditions and to act and negotiate in relation to conflicting requirements and expectations,
6. carry out regulatory functions and make decisions while taking into account legal requirements, the actual situation of the users and the practice of the public administration and to be able to act according to the decisions made,
7. develop social work on the basis of documentation and evaluation, implement quality control and to follow, apply and participate in research within the field of social work,
8. continue post-graduate studies on completion of the programme.

(The Ministry of Education's Executive Order No. 536 (28 June 2002)
on The Bachelor Programme of Social Work)

Profile

The International Social Work Programme is designed to qualify students to work with social problems in Danish as well as international contexts. The International Programme focuses on social work at the individual, group and community level. Students are trained in following the global development critically, in communicating their knowledge of human consequences and in participating in social processes of change.

The students of the International Social Work Programme acquire a broad research-based understanding of the human consequences of the global development at the local as well as the international level, in relation to e.g. migration, unemployment, poverty and exclusion.

The people that social workers meet find it difficult to secure the safety of themselves and their families, and they therefore often live in insecurity and fear.

The curriculum of the International Social Work Programme includes all the fields of competence that a social worker needs to acquire – with particular emphasis on international contexts.

Focus

Within the legal framework that is communal for all social work bachelor programmes in Denmark, the special international aspects of the International Social Work Programme are reflected in the below focus areas.

The International Programme attaches more weight to:

- Social work in other countries

- social work in connection with development aid
- social work in or organised by international organisations
- social work in non governmental settings and / or organisations
- international relief work
- social work with transnational problems.

Other aspects that may be studied are:

- International conditions and internationalisation,
- conditions in other countries and other welfare systems / welfare regimes,
- the global development and the consequences hereof,
- demographic studies,
- environmental and climatic problems,
- absolute poverty,
- massive social exclusion and segregation,
- child labour,
- HIV/AIDS,
- human trafficking,
- migration,
- ethnicity, culture and minority ethnic groups,
- international conventions,
- collective methods as a supplement to individual methods.

Competence areas

Within the common framework of the Social Work Programmes at Aarhus School of Social Work the special international aspects of the International Programme are reflected in the below competences:

- Knowledge of methods and approaches to social work, social work with groups, project-orientated social work, community work and social change at organisational levels,
- skills in developing new methods and applying these with a view to supporting social change and problem solving at both national and international level,
- skills in analysing and reflecting critically on the choice of approach and method in social work at the same time utilising the knowledge that the importance of the context varies from setting to setting,
- knowledge of social and psychological consequences of the global development for individuals and groups in relation to identity, life style and living conditions,
- knowledge of cultural concepts and of the importance of various cultures for the development, identity formation and self-perception of the individual,
- knowledge of international conditions and the global development and the consequences hereof in Denmark and in other countries,
- knowledge of social and psychological consequences of the global development, for example in the form of flight, loss, alienation, prejudice and racism,
- proficiency in communicating and working with diversity in relation to identity, life style, living conditions and culture,
- skills in working with people who are exposed to oppression, prejudice and racism,

- knowledge of international conventions and their influence on Danish legislation,
- knowledge of the influence of international conventions on the development of other countries,
- knowledge of the legal systems in other countries and their influence on citizens' legal rights,
- knowledge of different welfare regime types, on how they affect individuals, groups and local communities, and how they influence the development of intervention strategies,
- knowledge of economic, social and cultural trends in the international and global development and skills in describing, analysing and discussing social problems, social work and social policies in the light of these trends.

Tuition

The programme includes tuition and supervised practice placements as follows:

Subject Area 1: Social Work

84 ECTS points

Students should obtain skills from the subject area's own theoretical and research-based foundation with a view to understanding the conditions and possibilities of social work including methods and choice of method.

Furthermore, the subject area must gather and integrate skills from its own field and from the other subject areas so that students obtain competence to support changes and act as professional social workers.

Subject Area 2: Psychology and Psychiatry

28 ECTS points

Students should obtain skills within the field of psychology and psychiatry with a view to understanding the human psyche and life, e.g. the dynamical development of the individual in interaction with the surrounding world, perspectives on relations between individual, group, organisation and society and an understanding of one's own learning process and development as a professional person.

Subject Area 3: Law

28 ECTS points

Students should obtain skills within the legal field and the field of public administration with a view to including relevant elements of common, substantive and procedural legal disciplines as a basis for the application of law in social work and for the counselling on the legal position of individuals.

Subject Area 4: Applied Social Sciences

34 ECTS points

Students should obtain skills within the sociological and organisational field and the fields of political and economical science with a view to understanding the function, structure and development of society, the relations between human living conditions, health problems and social problems. Furthermore, students should understand the conditions of social policy and labour market policy and the role and function of the social sector in relation to these policies.

Practice Placements

36 ECTS points

The following didactic objectives are emphasised in the methods of study:

The ability to work with one's own learning processes,

the ability to apply different methods and strategies of learning,

the ability to plan and organise the course of one's own learning.

The following forms of tuition can be involved:

Tuition within the individual subject areas, thematic cross-disciplinary modules and optional modules. The form of tuition can be lectures or seminars with a high degree of student involvement. Tuition often involves group work or exercises in the form of role-plays.

Practice placements

Project work based on a chosen subject. Project work is interdisciplinary, with application of different subject areas and it involves fieldwork / reference environments.

Study groups in relation to subjects of the students' own choice. Independent studies with assignments, cases and supplementary literature based on course tuition. Study visits to various agencies. Discussion groups. Exercises in social work practice.

The lecturers are recruited from the fields of Social Work, Psychology, Law and Social Sciences. Throughout the programme international guest lecturers are invited to work with students and teachers.

Structure

Each of the 7 semesters is equivalent to 30 ECTS credit points

Study themes	Semester	Study form	Assessments/ examinations

The context and practice of social work	1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice studies examination - First year examination
	2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition Project work: Social case-work within the public sector (local authorities), including 2 months' practice studies	
Different approaches to and types of social work in relation to social problems and social action	3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition modules 	1 subject area examination
	4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice placement (20 % tuition, 80 % practice placement) 	Assessment of the practice placement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of different aspects and types of social work; - emphasising the interaction between theoretical and empirical insight and social work action and competencies Development, dissemination, evaluation and research in social work 	5.	Studies based on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth modules 	2 subject area examinations
	6.		2 subject area examinations
Bachelor project	7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project work within an area of social work 	Project examination

1st year:

The content of the first year of study, apart from a 1-month introduction module about Social Work in an international understanding, is similar to the domestic social work programme. The rest of the year contains an introduction to social work in a Danish context, with an emphasis on casework within the public sector (local authorities).

2nd year:

The subjects taught in the second and third year are exemplified within the framework of different levels of intervention and contexts, methods and approaches as practised in

Denmark, Western countries and Non-Western countries.

The 3rd semester modules include:

- Social problems, approaches to and theories of social work, theory of science
- Social casework
- Social treatment
- The empowerment approach to social work in non-governmental organisations

In the 4th semester students conduct their practice placements locally or abroad.

Those who stay in Denmark are placed in social work agencies in the voluntary or the public sector.

The majority conduct their placements in 'Western' countries in Europe, Australia, Canada etc.

Others are placed in social work agencies in 'Non-Western' contexts in e.g. India, Tanzania, Kenya, Namibia and South Africa.

3rd year:

The in-depth modules on the 3rd year cover social work aspects in relation to

- Social intervention within organisational systems
- Ethnicity, culture, religion, gender
- Knowledge and research. Including evaluation and development of social work
- Social Development Work – North and South
 - Conceptualising social development
 - Competencies of social community development
 - Complex emergencies, conflict, conflict interventions and development

4th year (one semester):

Throughout the 7th semester students work with their bachelor project within a chosen area of social work.

A requirement for completion of the programme is that students conduct a minimum of one study element abroad (18 ECTS credit points). Several students carry out more than one study element abroad.