

Internship opportunities available to Open University students who do not currently have employer sponsorship



The Sweet Project in collaboration with The Open University is offering internships of up to two years to enable students to progress to Stages 2 and 3 of the Social Work Degree course.

The Open University Social Work Programme is a work-based route delivered in collaboration with students' employers. Therefore students cannot normally register onto the degree unless they can secure a sponsorship from an employer.

Through the Internship Scheme, The SWEET project will provide practice learning opportunities (PLOs) to successful candidates to enable them to study the practice learning modules at Stages 2 and 3 of The Open University degree. The duration of the PLOs complies with current regulatory requirements, currently 70 days on the first placement (year one of the internship) and 100 days on the second. All placements will be based in Birmingham.

The current (2017) round of applications is for students seeking to join the first practice learning module *Applied Social Work Practice* (K216) in February 2018. In order to be eligible for an internship, students will be required to:

- meet the minimum entry requirements for entry to the OU social work degree (see <http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/qualifications/q32#am-i-ready>)
- have completed and passed the OU modules that comprise Stage 1 of the degree programme (see <http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/qualifications/q32#course-details>),
- successfully complete the selection process, which includes a formal interview, written test and group activity, and
- have completed (or be currently studying) the module *The law and social work in England and Wales* (K270).

To continue onto the second year of the Internship, students will need to meet the criteria for admission to the practice module K315, which are to pass K216 and either have completed or be studying towards their OU level 3 option module. It is expected that students will take their option module in October 2018, and K315 in February 2019, in order to complete the internship within a 2-year period.

Please note the Internship Scheme does not include a right to employment and will not attract a salary or payment of any kind. It is the responsibility of students to organise their own finance for the module fees and to be able to travel to Birmingham and surrounding areas at their own expense, every day for the duration of each PLO.

There will be a selection process based on joint interviews to be held in November with The Open University and The Sweet Project. Placements will commence in February 2018.

For information on how to apply contact Deb Groves, Operations Director at The Sweet Project on 0121 458 2270 or debbieg@thesweetproject.org

For more information about the Social Work degree go to <http://www.open.ac.uk/health-and-social-care/main/social-work/ba-hons-social-work-england> or contact our enquiry line 01908 654229, email wels-sw-enquiries@open.ac.uk

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS MONDAY 2ND OCTOBER 2017

Frequently asked questions

How many places are available?

We expect to offer up to 10 internships to start on K216 in January 2017.

Where will the placements be?

The main base for all students is The SWEET Project in Kings Norton, Birmingham. Cases may be allocated from across Birmingham and the West Midlands. As a general rule, the first placement (K216, 70 days) will focus on adults and the second (K315, 100 days) on children and families. Interns need to be physically present in Birmingham and/or the surrounding area every day for the duration of each placement.

What if I've already passed K216? Can I apply for a one-year internship for K315?

Yes, we can consider applicants who have completed Stage 2 of the degree for entry directly onto K315. We would normally expect you to have completed your Stage 3 option, or be registered for the October 2017 presentation, before you apply.

What if I fail my placement? Can I stay on the programme?

The SWEET project is not able to provide repeat placements for students who fail on their first attempt. You would need to make your own alternative arrangements to repeat the module. If you fail your first placement (K216) we cannot guarantee that a place will be available for your second placement at a later date. However if you do subsequently pass K216, you may re-apply for an internship for K315 provided that the scheme is still running. Neither the OU nor The SWEET project is able to guarantee that internships will be offered every year.

How can I find out more about the SWEET project before I apply?

We will be holding an Open Day for candidates to visit the Project, meet our staff and some of our current placement students, and ask questions. Further information about the event including the date, will be sent to everyone who requests an application pack.

Can I apply for a Social Work bursary?

As a work-based training programme, The Open University degree does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Social Work bursary. Candidates are responsible for all of their own costs including attending the Open Day and interview, module tuition fees, travel to workshops, any set books for the module, all travel costs during the placement.

Will I still be an OU student?

Yes, you will register directly onto your module(s) with the OU and all OU policies and regulations will apply (for example Conditions of Registration, Student Code of Practice and OU Complaints and Appeals procedures)

I have additional access and/or study support requirements, what support will be available?

If you feel you may need additional support with any aspect of your study or practice learning, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss your individual requirements. Even if you have previously arranged support through the OU – such as specialist software for dyslexia or visual impairment – it may take several weeks to make arrangements for this to be made available in the placement setting so it's essential to discuss this with us at the earliest possible opportunity. Please contact Gill Walker in the first instance (see contact details overleaf).