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Year 2 participant

Programme handbook

2023-24

# **About this handbook**

This handbook follows on from the Frontline Year 1 Programme Handbook and is designed to give you information about Year 2 of the Frontline programme.

The handbook primarily focuses upon the 60-credit MSc module in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families (FLSW904), as this route is followed by the majority of participants and is endorsed by Frontline. Within the handbook, we outline in detail the module’s aims, learning outcomes and resources, teaching details, learning and assessment strategy and also information pertaining to being a student of Lancaster University (i.e. student privileges and additional support).

We also provide general information to participants who have chosen to withdraw from the academic element of Year 2, but who remain on the Frontline programme and are continuing with their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). Variations between the two different routes are demarcated within separate sections of the handbook so that you are clear on what privileges and support you have access to, which will vary dependent on your student status.

Please note that the information in this handbook is provided in good faith but may be subject to change; please contact your dissertation supervisor or line manager in the first instance with any queries. The contents of this handbook will be made available through Lancaster University’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), known as Moodle.

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# **Introduction to Year 2**

## Welcome

The Frontline Programme is an innovative two-year social work programme designed to equip you with the skills to bring about change alongside children and families. You will be working towards a Master’s in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families, with 120-credits completed in year 1 and the final 60-credits in year 2.

Having completed Year 1, it is worth taking some time to reflect on how much you have accomplished in your social work journey so far. You have immersed yourself in a new professional world, absorbed numerous theories and practice skills and been asked to examine your own values and experiences. At this point it is important for you to reflect on what you have discovered about your approach to learning, and the support systems you will need throughout year 2.

Year 2 of the Frontline programme consists of one 60-credit module (FLSW904 – Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families). Upon successful completion of the FLSW904 module, you will have achieved the 180 academic credits that are required to obtain the MSc in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families. You are already two thirds of the way there!

Along with this, you will also be completing your Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) (see [section 8.1](#_8.1_Assessed_and)). Upon completion of your Year 2, you will become a member of the Fellowship, our Frontline alumni.

## 1.2 Regulatory commitments

The Frontline Programme is a professional programme that complies with the following regulations and standards:

* The [Professional Capabilities Framework](https://www.basw.co.uk/resources/student-pcf-level-descriptors-pre-qualifying-levels-and-asye) (BASW 2018)
* The Quality Assurance Agency’s [Subject Benchmark Statement Social Work](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-social-work.pdf?%20sfvrsn=5c35c881_6) (QAA 2019)
* The [Professional Standards](https://socialworkengland.org.uk/professional-standards/) (SWE)
* The [Education a](https://socialworkengland.org.uk/education-and-training-standards/)nd Training Standards (SWE 2021)

As an employee of your local authority, you will also be expected to adhere to your local authority’s policies and procedures.

## 1.3 Frontline team

The Year 2 Frontline programme team comprises a module teaching team (module leaders, practice tutors, dissertation supervisors) and other key contacts that you will liaise with regularly. Please see [Annex 2](#_Annex_2:_) for more information on these key staff and contact details.

# **Module Information: Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families (FLSW904)**

## 2.1 Aims

As you will now be aware, social workers need to be perceptive, ethical, self-aware, adaptable, knowledgeable, and skilled to offer effective support to families. These attributes require constant iteration and development throughout your social work career.

The FLSW904 module aims to support you in developing the required skills to **critically examine practice** in your immediate context, **identify required changes** and then **implement and evaluate these adaptations**. We believe that the best way to learn how to do this is through practice, with guidance, support, and the opportunity to learn from mistakes. Therefore, teaching and learning in this module focuses on supporting you to conduct research into your own practice, using an action research approach. You will explore the contexts which inform and sustain your current practice and then evaluate any adaptations made, as well as thinking about how to share this learning with others. We hope that by supporting you to develop these research and evaluation skills, you will be well equipped to refine and improve your social work practice both now and throughout your career.

The central question this module seeks to address is: How can practitioners harness professional, family and community resources to formulate and deliver ethically sound and evidence-informed interventions to vulnerable families within shifting contexts that shape risk?

This module particularly focuses on the development of your abilities in the following areas:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Enquiry** | Participants will identify, plan and execute an independent research project, to learn about and adapt their practice in relation to a practice dilemma |
| **Contextual understanding** | The process of identifying and researching a practice dilemma enables participants to examine in great depth the multiple contexts which influence their thinking, feelings and behaviours in-situ with families. This includes identifying personal, family, professional and public policy discourses that shape what social workers do in the relative privacy of practice with vulnerable groups |
| **Ethics** | Participants will deepen their knowledge and understanding of how to critically apply professional and research focused ethics to decision-making. More specifically, the module will consider how to make ethical decisions in planning and undertaking a research project and participants will be required to obtain ethical approval from both the Frontline and their local authority for their project. Drawing on Social Work England’s Professional Standards and the BASW Code of Ethics, participants will be assessed on their ability to conduct an ethically sound research project and to reflect on the influence of their own values on their professional practice |
| **Collaboration** | As part of the data gathering element of their project, where appropriate, participants will seek feedback from families, colleagues and an MSc peer reflexive group. They will also offer observations and support to others in their reflexive group, as they undertake studies of their own practice. |
| **Enterprise** | Participants are encouraged to identify a practice issue of importance to them, taking into consideration the practicability and feasibility of the scope of their research project. They will be encouraged to disseminate learning with confidence in the relevance and importance of practice-based evidence to the wider field of child and family social work. |
| **Current Research and Knowledge** | The assessed tasks will investigate and critically evaluate relevant knowledge in social work and related fields. Participants will demonstrate a confident understanding of knowledge that informs their social work practice |

## 2.2 Learning and teaching strategy

This final module of the Frontline programme places a greater obligation on you as participants to direct your own learning and development. Core content will be delivered through a combination of interactive lectures and workshops which take place during **8** **Teaching Days**. You will also be supported through **supervisory meetings** **with your dissertation supervisor**. The module comprises a blend of face to face and online teaching, which will be supplemented with directed reading of key texts.

Over the course of the year, you will develop and execute your **research project** using an action research method. Peer-led **reflexive groups,** organised by you, will meet regularly and provide an opportunity for you to extend your skills in self-reflexivity and research mindedness as you examine episodes of practice in depth.

This module contributes to the MSc in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families. It is a 60-credit module, representing a total of 600 hours in a combination of teaching and self-directed learning.

This module runs from November 2023 to August 2024. Please see table below for a breakdown of indicative learning hours - please note that these times are approximate and may vary subject to participant needs.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicative Learning Hours** | | | |
| **Teaching Days** | **Tutorials with dissertation supervisor** (NB. this does not include informal contact e.g. emails) | **Reflexive Groups** | **Independent Study**  (to include completion of academic assignment & research activities) |
| 52 hours | 10 hours (approx.) | 10 hours (approx.) | 528 hours (approx.) |

## 2.3 Intended learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, you will be able to evidence the following:

*Subject Specific: Knowledge, understanding and skills*

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of multiple contexts that shape and maintain your current practice.
2. Demonstrate the ability to identify, contextualise, synthesise and critically evaluate literature relevant to your practice from a range of sources.
3. Integrate reviewed literature with own ideas within work showing insight and understanding of alternative points of view.
4. Critically evaluate own practice by demonstrating breadth and depth of understanding of issues at the forefront of social work practice, including relevant Frontline Practice models.
5. Recognise, analyse and respond to the complexity of legal and ethical issues relevant to your practice.
6. Independently devise and undertake an action research project, addressing the complex issues underlying your identified practice pattern and informed by relevant, current information.
7. Demonstrate the ability to reflect on and critically evaluate strengths and limitations of research conducted and identifying potential areas for further development or critical exploration.

*General: Knowledge, understanding and skills*

1. Demonstrate the independent learning ability required for ongoing professional skills and development.
2. Evidence advanced academic skills, including reading, critical analysis and research-mindedness.
3. Evidence your skills as autonomous and reflexive learners.
4. Identify, select, plan, use and evaluate chosen research methodology to enable the achievement of aims and desired outcomes.
5. Communicate information clearly, supported by valid and evaluated evidence to an appropriate standard.

You will be assessed against these learning outcomes within your dissertation submission.

## 2.4 Syllabus

This module explores the following:

- Critical evaluation and application of evidence-based interventions in practice, including the Frontline practice models.

- Situating practice within a value-based and ethical framework.

- Developing reflexivity by undertaking research into one’s own practice patterns and implementing evidence-based changes.

- Working collaboratively with others (peers, colleagues and families) to reflect on and critically evaluate own practice.

- Developing a critical awareness of research methods and research mindedness.

- Synthesising and applying learning from literature review to enhance practice.

- Professional authority and relational social work.

## 2.5 Module bibliography

[Annex 3](#_Annex_3:_) provides to participants a concise bibliography for this module. This list is not exhaustive, and participants are advised to review the reading list for this module and conduct independent reading, in addition to completing Teaching Day reading.

## 2.6. Year at a Glance

Please see table below for an outline of how learning activities should be scheduled throughout the year. This table combines learning activities for which dates are fixed (teaching days, submission deadlines) and others for which the dates are advisory only: it offers a suggested schedule for completion of these learning activities throughout the year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Teaching Day** | **Reflexive Group** | **Supervisory Meeting with Dissertation Supervisor** | **Advised Independent Learning** | **Submissions** | **Coaching (optional)** |
| **November 2023** | **1** | **Focus:** Exploring practice patterns/dilemmas  **Task**: Agree future meeting dates | **Suggested focus**: Initial discussion around research aims, objectives and methodology.  Discuss Ethical Approval documentation  **Task:** Complete Dissertation Supervision Contract ([see Annex 5 for proforma](#_Annex_5_–)) | Teaching Day reading lists and independent reading  Ethical Approval application  Reflexive journal entries |  | 1x 30-minute introductory session plus 6 coaching sessions undertaken throughout the year |
| **2** |
| **3** |
| **December 2023** |  |
| **January 2024** | **4** | **Focus:** Ethical approval process and documentation  And/or  Further exploration of practice pattern and findings from independent learning | **Suggested focus:** Ethical approval documentation  Planning workload/research schedule  Discuss literature review/findings  **Task:** Complete Dissertation Supervision Record with agreed tasks/timescales ([see Annex 6 for proforma](#_Annex_6:_Dissertation)) | Teaching Day reading lists and independent reading  Reflexive journal entries  Literature review  Identify research participants for data collection – discuss consent | **Ethical Approval application to be submitted by Wednesday**  **24th January 2024 at 10am** |
| **February 2024** | **5** |  |
| **March 2024** |  | **Focus:** Progress update  1-2 participants present episode of practice/data | **Suggested focus:** Research methodology  Review of agreed timescales/tasks  Discussion of literature findings  **Task:** Complete Dissertation Supervision Record with agreed tasks/timescales | Teaching Day reading lists and independent reading  Methodology section  Reflexive journal entries  Data collection |  |  |
| **April 2024** | **6** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **May 2024** | **7** | **Focus**: Progress update  1-2 participants present episode of practice/data | **Suggested focus:** Discuss data collection analysis  Review of agreed timescales/tasks  Discussion of literature findings  **Task:** Complete Dissertation Supervision Record with agreed tasks/timescales | Teaching Day reading lists and independent reading  Draft dissertation chapter/s  Reflexive journal entries  Data collection  Data analysis |  |  |
| **June 2024** | **8** |  |  |
| **July 2024** |  | **Focus**: Dissertation writing – share learning and strategies  1-2 participants present episode of practice/data | **Suggested focus:** Discuss write up of dissertation  Review of agreed timescales/tasks  **Task:** Complete Dissertation Supervision Record with agreed tasks/timescales | Teaching Day reading lists and independent reading  Reflexive journal entries  Data analysis  Writing up dissertation |  |  |
| **August 2024** |  |  |  |  | **Dissertation Submission: Wednesday 21st August 2024 by 10am** |  |

## 2.7 Delivery dates and format

Recall days are delivered both online and in-person. Where recall days are online, these are delivered to the whole cohort, so there is only one delivery date for all participants. There will be three in-person recall days. Where recall days are in-person, they will be delivered in each of our key regions: London, Midlands, North West, North East and South West.

Please therefore ensure you check your region’s in-person delivery dates as shown, as you will be expected to attend these. Where a planned Recall Day date or delivery-mode changes, we will always also communicate this to you additionally via an announcement on Moodle.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Topic** | **Delivery mode** | **London** | **South West** | **Midlands** | **North West** | **North East** |
| **1** | Relational Practice and Action Research | Online | Wednesday 1st November 2023 | | | | |
| **2** | Becoming an ethical researcher: practice and values | In person | Thurs 16th Nov 2023\* | Thurs 16th Nov 2023\* | Thurs 16th Nov 2023\* | Thurs 16th Nov 2023\* | Thurs 16th Nov 2023\*\* |
| **3** | Developing your researcher identity: approaches to literature and ethical processes | Online | Wednesday 29th November 2023 | | | | |
| **4** | Becoming a reflexive researcher: applying systemic approaches | Online | Wednesday 31st January 2024 | | | | |
| **5** | Taking action: collaborative approaches to data collection | In person | Tues 27th Feb 2024 | Tues 27th Feb 2024 | Tues 27th Feb 2024 | Weds 28th Feb 2024 | Thurs 29th Feb 2024 |
| **6** | Making sense of research data: systemic and collaborative approaches to analysis | Online | Wednesday 17th April 2024 | | | | |
| **7** | Pulling it all together: writing up your dissertation | Online | Wednesday 29th May 2024 | | | | |
| **8** | Next Steps: Sharing Learning and Introduction to the Fellowship | In person | Tues 25th June 2024 | Tues 25th June 2024 | Tues 25th June 2024 | Weds 26th June 2024 | Thurs 27th June 2024 |

*\*Delivery dates that fall on a different day to normal due to bank holidays/key religious dates of observance/Internal Frontline staff events.*

## 2.8 Reflexive Groups

Reflexive groups are peer led meetings (usually 4-6 participants) in which participants are given the opportunity to share an ‘episode’ of practice, related to their research topic, with their peers for reflection. Participants are responsible for setting up their reflexive groups and arranging **at least** 5 group meetings across the year (suggested dates are included in [section 2.6](#_2.6._Year_at)). Reflexive group meetings usually last between 1.5 - 2.5 hours.

Reflexive groups can be helpful in inviting different perspectives on your chosen practice pattern or dilemma and provide useful data/information for subsequent inclusion in your dissertation. There are many similarities with the ‘Unit Meeting’ model in that they encourage practitioners to remain curious about behaviours, whilst offering useful guidance pointers. Reflexive groups are also a peer-support mechanism, which is a valuable resource as your responsibilities and expectations shift throughout the year.

In our most recent bi-annual survey (September 2022 – Jan 2023) 86% of year 2 respondents found that reflexive groups were a helpful contribution for their learning.

Reflexive group members and meeting dates should be confirmed on Day 1 of teaching on Year 2 and there will be some time dedicated to this during the day. Each participant will be required to ‘present’ on a minimum of two occasions throughout the year and it is helpful to devise a rota for presenting, to enable you to plan ahead and identify a suitable ‘practice episode.’

Dissertation supervisors should be sent a schedule of your reflexive group dates within one week of the first Teaching Day and will aim to attend at least one reflexive group, dependent on availability.

Time for reflexive practice groups are part of the Local Authority partnership agreement with Frontline. They should be prioritised as you would a teaching day. If there are any difficulties with this, please speak with your dissertation supervisor in the first instance. Guidance on running a reflexive group can be found in [Annex 7](#_Annex_7:_Running).

## 2.9 Supervisory Meetings with dissertation supervisor

Wherever possible, the same practice tutor that has supported you through Year 1 of the programme will continue to support you through Year 2 as your dissertation supervisor. Their role is to guide you through the research process, offering advice and providing encouragement at each stage.

**Participants are entitled to 5 supervisory meetings throughout the year and are responsible for arranging these with their dissertation supervisor**. Supervisory meetings can be held online or in person.

**The responsibilities of the supervisor are as follows:**

* + To approve the initial choice of topic
  + To discuss and guide the participant on their dissertation plan
  + To discuss and guide the participant on research ethics
  + To support/advise the participant with any difficulties which arise in preparing the dissertation
  + To read and comment on a chapter/plan of work (no more than 1500 words) – Feedback will be provided within a supervisory meeting and timing of submission and feedback must be agreed with supervisor in advance
  + Supervisors do not read full drafts of dissertations

The supervisor does not, however, have any responsibility for the preparation of the dissertation itself, for the ideas and material that it includes, or for the standard that it attains. The dissertation must be entirely your own work.

**The participant’s responsibilities and how to make the most of your supervisory meetings:**

* To initiate and maintain contact with your supervisor
* To keep a record of what has been agreed at each supervisory meeting
* To make the most of their supervision, participants should submit material for discussion in advance of each meeting. This could be agreed with the supervisor at the end of each supervisory meeting.
* Participants should set the agenda and inform the supervisor of what they wish to discuss. Supervisory meetings are for your benefit. It is, therefore, to your advantage if you take the lead on how to plan each supervisory meeting.

Please note, engagement with your Dissertation Supervisor is an important part of your academic study. Participants who utilise this support effectively are likely to be better prepared for completion of their dissertation due to the increased focus on planning, discussion of ideas and troubleshooting any concerns related to their research project. **You are strongly advised to be proactive in arranging and attending all five of your supervisory meetings** and to contact your Dissertation Supervisor via email if you have any queries that need to be addressed outside of these meetings.

## 2.10 Independent Learning

Your independent learning hours should be used to undertake and write up your action research project as your dissertation and will include any reading that you will use to inform your research. Important information about how to complete your research project will be provided during Teaching Days; therefore, it is imperative that you attend these and complete the essential reading for each day.

## 2.11 Ethical Issues and Good Research Practice

All participants are required to obtain ethical approval before starting their research. **You will require approval from both Frontline and your local authority and it is your responsibility to obtain these in a timely fashion**. Frontline will assess the ethical suitability of your study and the local authority is responsible for approving research being undertaken in the work setting.

You should carefully consider any ethical issues arising from the dissertation in all cases. Work on sensitive topics in particular must be discussed with your dissertation supervisor in order to ensure high ethical standards in research activities.

**Frontline participants are required to adhere to Lancaster University’s code of ethical practice, which you must read carefully before preparing your ethical approval documentation**. If there is anything you do not understand, please speak to your dissertation supervisor. Please note, participants will be provided with information regarding research ethics during Teaching Days 2 and 3, in addition to receiving support from their dissertation supervisor.

* You can find the Code of Practice at this link: [Code of Practice](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/res/research-governance--ethics/Ethics-code-of-practice_July2021.pdf).
* A quick reference document to the Code of Practice is also available using this link: [Quick Reference Document](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/res/research-governance--ethics/Ethicscodequickreferenceguide.pdf).
* You are also required to read and adhere to Frontline’s ‘Data protection, confidentiality and consent requirements for Year 2 participants’, which will be made available on Moodle and Frontline’s ‘Research Privacy Notice’ at this link: [Research Privacy Notice](https://thefrontline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Research-Privacy-Notice.pdf)

## 2.12 How to Apply for Ethical Approval – Frontline

**Submission**

Applications for ethical approval from Frontline should be submitted via the designated Moodle submission link **no later** than **Wednesday 24 January 2024** at **10am**. Please note, you are encouraged to submit your ethics application earlier than this date if it is ready. The deadline for submission should be adhered to strictly in order to ensure all applications can be considered in a timely fashion. Ethics applications submitted after this date may be subject to significant delay in obtaining approval and consequently this is likely to impede your ability to start your research.

If you are unable to submit your ethical approval form by the above date, we strongly encourage participants to let us know by submitting an extension request via our [online form](https://thefrontline.tfaforms.net/4767931). Although the ethical approval form is not an assessment element, and the formal policy on Exceptional Circumstances therefore does not apply, using the online form to notify us when you need an extension enables us to provide any support you need and to ensure the later ethical approval does not delay your research unduly. You can contact [academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk) if you need any support or advice about this.

You are required to discuss the content of your ethical approval application with your dissertation supervisor prior to submission, to ensure it is appropriate and feasible.

Applications will not be considered unless they include:

* Completed Frontline Ethics Form (Proforma can be found on the FLSW904 Moodle page)
* Copy of the Participant Information Sheet (examples can be found on the FLSW904 Moodle page)
* Copy of unsigned Consent Form (examples can be found on the FLSW904 Moodle page)
* Signature from your dissertation supervisor

**Review**

Your ethical approval application will be reviewed by the Frontline Ethics Committee. Applications that were submitted by the deadline will receive notification of the committee’s decision no later than **Monday 4th March 2024** at **5pm**. The decision of the committee will be uploaded on Moodle, and you are advised to check back regularly to see if your application has been reviewed before this date.

The length of time required for each review is related to the complexity of ethical issues raised by your planned study. Furthermore, it depends on the quality of your application e.g., have you explained clearly and in lay terms what the project aims to do.

Outcomes of the review include the following options:

* Approval
* Further information and/or revisions required
* Not approved: the application is seriously flawed and requires major revisions before it can be considered; applicants in this category should prepare a new application.

Participants have no right of appeal against the committee’s decision.

**Once you receive outcome of the Frontline Ethics Committee**

* **If you received approval for your ethical approval application:** You should now seek formal approval from your local authority before commencing research activities. Please refer to [Section 2.13](#_2.13_Ethical_Approval) for further information on local authority approval.
* **If you have been advised that further information or revisions are required:** It is common for applications to be returned for further revisions or information. You should carefully consider the feedback provided for your initial submission to ensure that these have been addressed within your resubmission. Your dissertation supervisor will need to sign amended documentation prior to submission. Your amended ethics application will be resubmitted via Moodle.
* **If your application has not been approved:** You are advised to discuss the feedback with your Dissertation supervisor as a priority as significant issues will have been identified with your proposed project. You will need to amend the scope, aims or methods or your research to ensure it meets ethical standards. Your dissertation supervisor will need to sign amended documentation prior to submission. Your amended ethics application will be resubmitted via Moodle.

**A diagram of the Frontline ethical approval process is included below for ease of reference:**A picture containing text, diagram, line, font

Description automatically generated

## 2.13 Ethical Approval – Local Authority

As stated above, it is imperative that you receive ethical approval from **both** Frontline and your local authority before commencing research activities. It is up to the local authority whether they require ethics applications to go through its own full formal ethics procedures or whether management sign off is sufficient. You are strongly advised to discuss this with your manager at your earliest opportunity to clarify what the process is within your local authority. Procedures and timescales regarding ethical approval can vary significantly between local authorities and you will need to take this into consideration when planning your research project.

Local authorities will usually require sight of Frontline approval before granting permission to conduct your research in the local authority. It may also be helpful to share the [Lancaster University Research Code of Practice](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/res/research-governance--ethics/Ethics-code-of-practice_July2021.pdf) with them to illustrate the standards you will be adhering to.

Please note that you will be required to evidence your local authority ethical approval in the appendices of your dissertation, so ensure that you keep written confirmation stored safely.

## 2.14 Management of Research Data

You may be required to handle sensitive or personal data in the course of your research activities. **Data** **must** **be kept confidential and handled in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and GDPR.**  You must also read and adhere to Frontline’s ‘Data protection, confidentiality and consent requirements for Year 2 participants’ document, which is available on Moodle.

You must keep all empirical materials such as interview transcripts and signed consent forms until after you have been awarded your degree. You will all have access to a Microsoft 365 and cloud-based storage through your Lancaster University account and should use this to store any empirical materials that will not be stored securely on your local authority systems (see [Section 4.4](#_4.4._Office_365)).

**Data retention requirements are as follows:**

a) Participants who have their awards ratified and are not going to appeal - data to be deleted within a reasonable period (i.e., 6 months following confirmation of award).

b) Participants who have failed or do not agree with their grade and plan to appeal - data to be deleted once the re-assessment and appeals process is finalised, including completion of any involvement of the Office of Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

Since the dissertation is substantially longer than an essay, it is particularly important for you to take notes accurately and file them carefully, in order to keep a record of your work. You should back up your work and use the University's cloud-based storage wherever possible to do so.

Lancaster University’s website has a wealth of information about how to store data safely, as follows:

* Information about storing data on the University Cloud (including required levels of encryption) is available at this link: <https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/ask/cloud-storage/>
* Information about data security (including to classifications of information, precautions needed for sharing and storing information and disposal of information) is available at this link: <https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/ask/data-security/>
* Information about file storage (including a FAQ section and training e.g. managing files within Microsoft OneDrive) is available at this link: <https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/ask/file-storage/>
* Further information about required levels of encryption is available at this link: <https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/ask/digital/security/encryption/>

**The relevant Data Protection and GDPR policies are linked below for reference:**

* The Lancaster University **Data Protection Policy**, available at this link: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/strategic-planning--governance/publication-scheme/5-our-policies-and-procedures/DataProtectionPolicy.pdf>;
* The Lancaster University **Information Security Policy and Procedures,** available at this link:

<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/strategic-planning--governance/publication-scheme/5-our-policies-and-procedures/Information-Security-Policy.pdf>

* The Lancaster University **'Information Classifications'** information page available at this link: https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/ask/Information-classifications

**Data Breaches**

If you are aware of any data breaches, they should be reported immediately to the Module Lead (contact details available in [Annex 2](#_Annex_2:_)), as well as your local authority information officer where relevant. Further details about Lancaster University’s Lancaster University **'Data Security Breach Procedure**’ is available using the following link: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/strategic-planning--governance/intranet-pages/information-governance/DataSecurityBreachProcedure.pdf>

## 2.15. Research Misconduct

Frontline takes concerns of research misconduct very seriously to ensure that the academic integrity and the value and basis of the awards are upheld. Therefore, if any concerns are raised in relation to research misconduct, Frontline reserves the right to investigate and progress the matter under the relevant policy.

# Assessment for FLSW904

The following section is only applicable to participants who are completing the 60-credit FLSW904 module.

## 3.1 Formative feedback and summative assessment

Reflection and reflexivity are an essential component of social work practice, as such [formative assessment and feedback](#_Annex_1:_) is woven throughout this module. A range of Frontline teaching staff and peers will provide **formative feedback** in this module using a variety of methods including, but not limited to, individual supervisory meetings and summary group feedback. Peer feedback and self-assessment will also be utilised to help you develop critical thinking, reflection, and reflexivity.

The purpose of [summative assessment](#_Annex_1:_) is to ensure that participants have met the module learning outcomes and that participant work is at the appropriate academic level.

There is **one** summative assessment element in this module, which is the dissertation(60 credits). To successfully complete the FLSW904 module, you **must** pass the dissertation. Listed below is the submission deadline, weighting, and feedback release date for this assessment.

You will be provided with developmental feedback on the summative assessment to aid your future learning and development.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Summative assessment element** | **Weighting** | **Submission deadline** | **Feedback release date  (NB. mark is provisional until ratified at Exam Board)** |
| 12,000 word action research dissertation | 100% | 10am – Wednesday 21 August 2024 | 5pm – Wednesday 2 October 2024 |

## 

## 3.2 Marking, moderation, and grade ratification process

All academic summative assessments will be marked against the Lancaster University Postgraduate Level Social Work marking matrix ([see Annex 4](#_Annex_4:_Assessment)), with the pass mark all for Level 7 assessment set at **50%. Please note that for the dissertation, an enhanced version of the marking criteria is used, which will be shared with you via Moodle.**

Each participant’s dissertation is marked by their dissertation supervisor where possible. It is also double marked by a second marker who does not see the mark assigned by the first marker beforehand. Moderation and discussion take place between the two markers to agree the final mark. If the grade difference is more than 10% and cannot be resolved in discussion, the submission is ‘third-marked’ by a different marker who will not see the marks assigned by the first and second marker beforehand.

Moderation Reports are shared with our External Examiners and the Lancaster University Director of Studies for Frontline. A sample of assessments is shared with our External Examiners for an additional, external check that the feedback and submitted work is at the required academic level. Further moderation is carried out by the Lancaster University Director of Studies for Frontline or their nominee. **All marks are provisional until they are ratified at the University Exam Board.**

## 3.3. Return of feedback

In Year 2, your **provisional** assessment results and feedback will be returned to you within 6 weeks of submission (excluding public holidays). As stated above, all marks are provisional until they are ratified at the University Exam Board.

In rare occurrences where your marker is unable to return your assessments within the agreed marking period due to an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., a prolonged period of sickness), you will be informed as soon as possible of a firm date by which you can expect the work to be returned.

## 3.4 Word limits

The penalty for over length assessments is that markers will stop marking work at 10% over the word limit. Word lengths of assessments are regarded as maximum lengths and work up to 10% over the maximum will be accepted. Abstracts, references and appendices should not be included in the word count. There will be no penalty for under length work, however it is important to note that work which is seriously under the prescribed length is likely to be awarded a lower mark on grounds of inadequate content.

If you experience problems with meeting the required word length, please speak in the first instance to your dissertation supervisor. Word lengths should be recorded by participants on the front page of each assignment when submitting your work.

## 3.5. Assessment marking criteria

Specific assessment guidance for the dissertation is provided on Moodle. The dissertation assessment guidance provides detailed information about what should be submitted in this assessment and the criteria it will be marked against, as well as suggested reading. **You must read this assessment guidance prior to starting the dissertation.**

## 3.6. Submission format

You will submit your dissertation electronically via Moodle as a word document (either .doc or .docx). You must include a coversheet. If you are a participant with an Inclusive Learning Support Plan and it has been agreed that you are eligible to submit a Specific Learning Disability Assessment Coversheet with your submissions this will be automatically uploaded with your submission unless you have opted out of this (please see [section 5.8](#_Toc72505739) for further information).

## 3.7 Anonymisation

To maintain the confidentiality of the children, carers and organisations cited within your academic work, please ensure that all references and identifiable data used are anonymised. Further detail is provided in the ‘Data protection, confidentiality, and consent requirements for Year 2 participants’ document, which you are required to read and adhere to (available on Moodle in Programme pages, Policies and Academic Regulations).

Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in a reduction of the grade awarded, and in the most serious and/or repeated cases, to failure and/or referral to Fitness to Practise procedures.

## 3.8 References

The purpose of adding references to an assessment is to show where you have obtained particular data or ideas, and to acknowledge the sources of quotations from other writings. The Frontline Programme uses Lancaster University’s version of the Harvard referencing system, details of which are available via the VLE and through the university’s main portal: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/library/how-to/reference/referencing-guides>.

## 3.9 Academic malpractice and plagiarism

Frontline uses plagiarism detection systems to check the integrity of assessed work. This searches the internet and an extensive database of reference material, including other participants’ work to identify any duplication with the work submitted. More information about Lancaster University’s plagiarism framework can be found at:

<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-and-education-services/exams-and-assessment/regulations/plagiarism/> whilst Frontline’s academic malpractice policy is [available here](https://thefrontline.org.uk/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/).

Plagiarism includes *“the commissioning or use of work by the participant which is not their own and representing it as if it were.”* This includes the use of text which has been generated by artificial intelligence systems such as Chat-GPT. Further information about the use of A.I. and how the academic malpractice policy applies can be found in this [Lancaster University news item](https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/intranet/news/article/artificial-intelligence-and-your-assessments).

Because of the dual nature of the social work course (i.e., it is a professional and academic award) and the SWE requirement that qualifying participants are deemed fit for registration as qualified social workers, plagiarism, cheating and the fabrication of information are taken particularly seriously. In the case of a proven academic offence, in addition to the academic malpractice process, fitness to practise procedures may be invoked.

## 3.10 Exceptional Circumstances

You are advised to complete and submit your work well in advance of the deadline to avoid last minute delays. However, Frontline acknowledges that sometimes you may experience a personal or significant event which is unexpected and unpreventable and has an adverse effect on your ability to complete an assessment within the usual timeframe. i.e., serious illness or a bereavement. In such instances, you may be able to receive additional time and/or consideration. The [Exceptional Circumstances Policy](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/) outlines the processes and parameters in full. You must use the Exceptional Circumstances process if you wish to request an extension to your dissertation submission deadline.

If you are unable to submit your ethical approval form by the above date, we strongly encourage participants to let us know by submitting an extension request via our [online form](https://thefrontline.tfaforms.net/4767931). Although the ethical approval form is not an assessment element, and the formal policy on Exceptional Circumstances therefore does not apply, using the online form to notify us when you need an extension enables us to provide any support you need and to ensure the later ethical approval does not delay your research unduly. You can contact [academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk) if you need any support or advice about this.

Advice on all matters relating to extensions and exceptional circumstances can be sought from Academic Registry via [exceptional.circumstances@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:exceptional.circumstances@thefrontline.org.uk).

We encourage you to raise issues as early as you can with your dissertation supervisor, and to be aware that if your circumstances do not meet the necessary criteria, as set out in [the Exceptional Circumstances policy](https://thefrontline.org.uk/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-hub/frontline-programme-policies/) that your application will be declined. The policy sets out areas in which the panel has discretion, including the consideration of applications beyond the usual deadlines.

You will receive a link to a personalised online form, which you can bookmark and submit (with evidence attached) each time you apply for exceptional circumstances. There is also a generic form, which is linked [here](https://thefrontline.tfaforms.net/4767931).

## 3.11 Penalties for late work

Work submitted up to three days late without an agreed extension will receive a penalty of 10 percentage points (for example, a mark of 62% would become 52%) and zero (non-submission) thereafter. Saturdays and Sundays are included as days in this regulation. However, where the third day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Bank Holiday, students will have until 10.00 a.m. on the first working day to hand in without receiving further penalty. Where the application of a late submission penalty results in a fail mark, the assessment will be treated according to the standard procedures for failed work.

## 3.12 Academic Regulations

The Frontline programme will follow Lancaster University’s [Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures (MARP)](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/academic-standards-and-quality/marp/), except in regard to variations which have been agreed and approved through the appropriate Lancaster University academic governance process, [which can be found here.](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/academic-standards-and-quality/collaborative-provision/frontline/)

MARP and Frontline’s agreed MARP variations are the definitive source of authority for all regulatory information and supersede all other documentation where a discrepancy is noted.

Please therefore ensure you have read and understood these [variations](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/academic-standards-and-quality/collaborative-provision/frontline/) outlined on Lancaster University’s website, as this is only summarised briefly in the below sections.

## 3.13 Criteria for awards

To gain the Master’s in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families, you will need to complete all four Frontline programme modules. You completed the first three modules in year 1 (totalling 120 Master’s level credits), and the final module is completed in year 2 (60 Master’s level credits).

At Lancaster University, the pass mark for taught Level 7 Master’s degrees is **50%**. All assessment elements must be passed in each module. A module cannot be passed on aggregation with a failed assessment element. Condonation of failed modules is not permitted on the programme.

For participants who have undertaken the whole of the Frontline programme and Master’s award with Lancaster University, your award classification will be based on the full 180 credits you will have completed within Years 1 and 2 of the programme.

There will be three classes of awards: distinction, merit and pass. Where the overall average, calculated to one decimal place, falls within one of the following ranges, the exam boards will recommend the award stated:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Percentage:** | **Award classification:** |
| 70.0%+ | Distinction |
| 60.0 - 69.9% | Merit |
| 50.0 - 59.9% | Pass |
| Below 50.0% | Fail |

Where the mean overall average falls within one of the following ‘borderline’ ranges:

**68.0-69.9% either distinction or merit;**

**58.0-59.9% either merit or pass;**

**48.0-49.9% either pass or fail;**

For all students who fall into a borderline range then the higher award should be given where half or more of the credits from across the programme are in the higher class.

The higher award should be given where half or more of the credits from across the programme are in the higher class.

## 3.14 Examination boards

The work that you submit for assessment will be reviewed and ratified by Lancaster University. The board of examiners includes internal examiners: members of Frontline and Lancaster university academic staff, and external examiners. The examination board for this module is held in October 2024. Reassessment submissions (following a fail) and submissions which have been delayed due to exceptional circumstances will be reviewed the following March.

Following on from the exam board, you will be notified about your ratified module result and your final award classification. Any marks shared prior to the exam board will be provisional until ratified by the exam board.

Following the formal publication of results, an examination board transparency report will be made available via Moodle which will provide information considered by the board when making decisions. This may include: average module marks; whether any scaling was undertaken (or proposed); any other contextual information specific to individual modules considered by the board. Additionally, you can ask for a results appraisal if you do not understand how your results were determined. If you would like to request a results appraisal, then please contact Frontline registry ([academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk)) and they will liaise with Lancaster University so that a results appraisal can be provided to you. A request for a results appraisal will not affect your right to submit an academic appeal.

## 3.15 Principles and parameters of reassessment

In this module, the assessment element is compulsory. This means that the assessment must be passed.

Therefore, reassessment is compulsory for any assessment mark below 50%. If you fail the assessment, you will have one opportunity for reassessment. Reassessment is not permitted where an assessment mark is a pass (mark of 50% or above).

Submission deadlines for reassessment are set by exam boards and you will usually receive a minimum of three weeks’ notice of the date.

You do not need to wait for notification of the submission deadline to start work on your resubmission. Should you pass the reassessment, if the module percentage mark after reassessment is an improvement on the original mark, the new percentage mark will count subject to a cap of 50%; otherwise the original percentage mark stands as your result for the module. The resulting percentage mark will count towards the overall average for the programme. You cannot pass the programme or be awarded the qualification (MSc) if you have failed this (or any module) after your one reassessment opportunity.

## 3.16 Exit Award

If you fail to meet the requirements of the programme having exhausted your reassessment opportunity, or you choose to withdraw from the academic module (FLSW904) prematurely, you will be awarded an exit award of Postgraduate Diploma for the 120 credits you passed in Year 1, and which permitted your progression into Year 2.

Exit awards are considered and confirmed by Lancaster University and must follow the formal process for confirmation and publication of ratified awards; this means that there may be several months delay between your decision to withdraw from the programme and the award of an exit qualification.

# 4. Learning Resources for FLSW904

The following section is only applicable to participants who are completing the 60-credit FLSW904 module. If you have withdrawn from this element of the Frontline programme, you will not be able to access the following learning resources.

## 4.1 Virtual Learning Environment: Moodle

Moodle is where you will find all key documentation and resources (e.g., teaching schedules, lecture slides, learning resources, policies, recordings of some taught days, assessment guidelines, hand-in dates etc.). It also is where you will be expected to submit your dissertation.

The module area on Moodle will be populated on an ongoing basis as we work through the module syllabus. It is important to regularly check your Lancaster email account and Moodle announcements as module staff (and others from Frontline) will contact you via email and Moodle with information and announcements etc.

If you experience issues with accessing/navigating elements of the Virtual Learning Environment (e.g. not being able to access Moodle content, assignment submission support) please contact our Digital Learning Team on [digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk).

For general IT queries (e.g., LU registration issues, queries around your LU email, library access) please refer to section 7.10 of the handbook ‘Lancaster University IT related support’ for further information on how to resolve issues with Moodle.

## 4.3 Lancaster University Library Resources and Services

You will have access to Lancaster University’s library via Moodle and physically on its campus. Prescribed and suggested reading lists will be provided by the Curriculum Team.

You can access Lancaster’s library via the following link: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/library/> Access is also available directly from the student portal on Moodle when logged in.

The library provides a wide range of resources to support your studies including eBooks, eJournals, databases and streaming video collections. A good place to start exploring the materials available is the subject guide for [Social Work](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flancaster.libguides.com%2Fsocialwork&data=02%7C01%7Cs.dickinson%40lancaster.ac.uk%7C024c058495764a9a6c9708d818253169%7C9c9bcd11977a4e9ca9a0bc734090164a%7C0%7C1%7C637285895308471173&sdata=vq8pzLJlXY0G2i7n%2FyLQgmdOjRTy4UKPN%2FyYD3i47N8%3D&reserved=0) with its focused information and content. Use the discovery tool [OneSearch](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fonesearch.lancaster-university.uk%2Fprimo-explore%2Fsearch%3Fvid%3DLUL_VU1%26lang%3Den_US%26sortby%3Drank&data=02%7C01%7Cs.dickinson%40lancaster.ac.uk%7C024c058495764a9a6c9708d818253169%7C9c9bcd11977a4e9ca9a0bc734090164a%7C0%7C1%7C637285895308481146&sdata=0826gDvdqclMgpmG8cL2D2dKZ8Ujq9Rk%2BIKhnlXit%2Bw%3D&reserved=0) to find and access the Library's  online collections.

If you need help with finding and using Library resources, get in touch with your Faculty Librarians, Ciara Murray and Paul Newnham, by email at [facultylibrarians@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:facultylibrarians@lancaster.ac.uk) or book an [online appointment](https://lancaster-uk.libcal.com/appointments/digital-appointment?g=1808). You can also use the Library [chat service](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/library/) for general enquiries and consult the [guide for distance learners](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/library/information-for/online-and-distance-learners/) for information about further tailored support.

## 4.3 SCONUL Access

SCONUL Access is a scheme which allows many university library users to access study spaces or books and journals at other libraries which belong to the scheme. Some library users may be able to borrow print books from other libraries too.

To obtain SCONUL access, you should apply online at <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/> This will prompt a verification process which will require Lancaster University’s library team to verify that you are a fully registered student with Lancaster University. All libraries in the scheme will have different requirements about what a student will need to do/demonstrate the first time they want to access their site, so this will differ between institutions.

## 4.4 Office 365 and Other Software

As a registered Lancaster University student, you will be able to access Office 365. Office 365 can be accessed online at [www.office.com](http://www.office.com). You will be redirected to the LU portal where you enter your personal LU institution email address. Alternatively, you can access Office 365 via the [LU Student Portal](https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/portal).

Additionally, as a minimum you will be able to access the following software:

* Nvivo: a qualitative data analysis computer software package, which can support qualitative researchers to organise and analyse data (e.g. interviews, open-ended survey responses, journal articles and web content).
* SAS: a Statistical Analysis Software suite for data management, advanced analytics, multivariate analysis, business intelligence and predictive analytics.
* Maple: a symbolic and numeric computing environment, as well as a multi-paradigm programming language. It covers several areas such as symbolic mathematics, numerical analysis, data processing, visualisation and others.
* Leximancer: a computer software that conducts quantitative content analysis using a machine learning technique.
* SPSS: a software package used for statistical analysis.
* SPSS Amos: a structural equation modelling software.
* OriginPro: a computer programme for interactive scientific graphing and data analysis.
* LibreOffice: an office productivity software suite.
* R & R Studio: a programming language and software environment for statistical computing and graphics, widely used among statisticians.
* Audacity: a digital audio editor and recording application software.
* Any open-source software available on AppsAnywhere (an ‘app store’ for accessing software).
* Participants should consult the [ISS information pages](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/iss/help-and-support/) for more information about how to access these.

Participants should consult the [ISS information pages](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/iss/help-and-support/) for more information about how to access these.

# 5.Support for participants completing FLSW904

The following section is only applicable to participants who are completing the 60-credit FLSW904 module. If you have withdrawn from this element of the Frontline programme, you will not be able to access the below support functions as they are provided by Lancaster University.

## 5.1 The emotional impact of the curriculum

Although incredibly rewarding, you will be aware that undertaking a professional qualifying social work course is emotionally and intellectually challenging. In completing the first year of the programme, you will have developed strategies and utilised your support network to help you deal with these challenges. Frontline’s integrated ‘emotional curriculum’ (Grant and Kinman: 2012), helps participants build emotional literacy and reflective abilities, so that they can be successful on the programme, develop skills required to manage the emotional demands of practice, and build the emotional resilience necessary for their future career, whilst acknowledging that sometimes it is ‘ok, not to be ok’.

We will, where appropriate, provide ‘content warnings’ to highlight topics that may be distressing. Please note these are not intended to censor teaching material or content. We recognise that it is not always possible to anticipate, and alert participants to, all potentially distressing material and recognise that on occasions participants may, because of a recent or historical personal event or experience, find particular scenarios or lectures distressing. You should inform the relevant teaching staff if you do not feel able to take part or possibly need to withdraw from an element of the teaching for personal reasons and seek support through your dissertation supervisor where necessary.

Year 2 of the programme will bring new challenges, both emotional and academic. For this reason, Frontline and Lancaster University offer a range of support structures, both formal and informal.  Please note that if you are a participant who has withdrawn from the 60-credit element of year 2, you will not have access to any of the support noted in section 5, except for sub-section 5.2.

## 5.2 Peer Support

Peer relationships are an important source of support on the Frontline programme model, and you are encouraged to support one another’s learning and development throughout Year 2. You may find it helpful to set up a communication channel with peers in your reflexive group using phone, email and/or MS Teams (which is available to you as part of your Lancaster University Office 365 access) to maintain regular contact and support one another when required.

## 5.3 Mental health and wellbeing

Frontline aims to foster independence, self-awareness, and personal responsibility among all participants. It is also important that participants take an active part in the process and take suitable action to manage their own health and wellbeing in order to fulfil their academic potential, as is outlined within Frontline’s [Fitness to Study](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/) policy. There may be times however where you require additional support.

Whilst registered on the Frontline programme and as a student of Lancaster University, you will have access to mental health and wellbeing support from Lancaster University, via the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

Where you have initial or emerging concerns about your wellbeing or mental health, participants are encouraged to seek advice from EAP, as well as directly from NHS services.

The EAP is a confidential service providing emotional and mental health support, assessments for counselling type support, as well as legal, financial and debt management support. It offers a 24/7 helpline, 365 days a year, as well as a range of self-help material on its website. The EAP service will speak to any Frontline participant.

This is an external service to both Lancaster University and Frontline, and details of how to access are provided on Moodle. You will be able to self-refer, or EAP may be signposted to you by a member of the Frontline team. Calls to the EAP helpline are triaged by clinicians and the appropriate support offered, which may include up to six counselling sessions either face-to-face or by telephone if this is deemed to be an appropriate intervention. The EAP’s British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Counsellors will provide emotional support and when assessing for suitability for counselling currently use a multi-functional approach which includes an in-depth assessment alongside clinically validated outcome measures to determine levels of depression and or/anxiety, this provides an indication of the level of intervention required. As a questionnaire is not always indicative of the overall picture of a person’s mental health, the outcome measures are combined with a dialogue-based assessment, which allows an individual to talk in detail about their presenting issues and the level of distress and functional impairment this is causing in their work and home life. It may be that following more in-depth conversations that the EAP support pathway (or type of support) alters to respond to additional information and/or a more in-depth understanding of a participant’s needs.

Counselling is a wellbeing intervention which is short-term and solution-focused, this can be very supportive for issues such as a bereavement, work stress, anger, relationship issues or an adjustment reaction to a life event. Where a diagnosable mental illness is present such as depression or anxiety, the EAP service follows National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines and would treat or facilitate a referral to the most appropriate and evidence-based service. Participants will not automatically be offered counselling, as counselling may not be deemed to be the most appropriate provision; this decision will be made by a BACP counsellor. If the form of support offered by EAP is not counselling (as it may not be in some cases), there may be other services or advice offered that can be helpful.

If an individual is presenting with issues that require treatment for depression or anxiety, EAP follows best practice NICE guidance to ensure an appropriate clinical intervention is offered. EAP can provide intervention to those with a mild/moderate depression or anxiety with Guided Self Help, a recommended treatment. Where an individual requires longer-term psychological support, the EAP offers a facilitated referral process to more specialist services. This includes support with a referral to the participant’s local Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service, an offer to provide participants or their GP with a letter supporting their assessment outcome, provide signposting information and encouragement to use of the wellbeing materials on MyEAP.

As availability to the EAP service is unique to Frontline participants (Lancaster University students do not normally receive access to EAP), it is important that when using the service, you avoid the language of 'participant' and 'student', as this has been known to cause confusion. When contacting the EAP service, therefore, please use the identifying details of:

Lancaster University, Frontline

If you experience any issues accessing the service, or you are told incorrectly that you do not have access to the service by an EAP member of staff, please let [suitabilitysupport@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:suitabilitysupport@thefrontline.org.uk) know so that they are able to resolve this for you. Please remember that because EAP is an external service, your use of it is unsupported by Frontline or Lancaster University; this means that EAP do not share information and unless you choose to inform Frontline and/or Lancaster University, we will have no knowledge of any health and wellbeing issues you may have.

## 5.4 Other professional support services available through EAP

Participants will also have access to the following support services through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):

* An **online EAP/health and wellbeing portal** designed to offer self-help and guided support.
* **Debt management support** **and a legal and information team** providing Citizens Advice Bureau type information.
* **Telephonic career coaching**. You can access x1 50-minute session per annum.

Participants will also have access to an online self-help programme, **Silvercloud**, which is based on cognitive behavioural therapy techniques. There are different programmes available coveringissues such asstress, anxiety, depression, and body image.

## 5.5 Academic support with disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

As a participant on the Frontline programme, completing their final 60-credits, you will have access to Lancaster University’s Disability Support service, who can provide study support to you within the following academic settings: Year 2 teaching days, returner days, and home/personal settings.

We will not provide adjustments unless you have explicitly disclosed to us that you require them, as well as providing the relevant medical evidence.

If you believe that you may have an undiagnosed disability and/or a support need, or your previous support needs have changed since year 1, you should contact the following Lancaster University’s Disabilities Service via their email address: [disability@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lancaster.ac.uk).

Where you disclose a disability, long-term condition and/or SpLD to a member of staff at your local authority who is not associated with Frontline, Lancaster University will not know about this and therefore will not be able to support you. It is therefore paramount that where you choose to disclose, you notify Lancaster University’s Disabilities Service: [disability@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lancaster.ac.uk). We advise you to also notify your dissertation supervisor of any issues that you are experiencing so that they can support you through this process, where required.

If you inform Lancaster University of a disability or long-term condition but later decide to decline support, you will be contacted to complete a ‘Non-Disclosure Form’ which states you did not wish to access disability support or reasonable adjustments. For more information about this you can email [disability@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lancaster.ac.uk).

Please note, that a full educational psychologist assessment will be required for you to get any study support as a result of an SpLD. If it is identified that you may require an assessment with an Educational Psychologist, Frontline will subsidise part of the cost of your assessment. If you decide you would like an assessment, please contact [disability@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lancaster.ac.uk) for details of current costs and booking procedures.

## 5.6 Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD) Student Coursework Coversheet

If it is noted within your Inclusive Learning Support Plan (ILSP) that you are eligible for a SpLD Student Coursework Coversheet alongside your assessments, this will be automatically added to all your submitted assessments on Moodle. If you do not wish your SpLD Student Coursework Coversheet to be automatically uploaded, then you can choose to opt out.

Please note that if you had an SpLD Student Coursework in Year 1 and chose to opt out then this decision will be carried over into Year 2.

If you change your mind either way you should contact Lancaster University’s Disability Service who will update your preferences.

The upload of your coversheet means that the academic marker of your work will take into consideration the marking guidelines for students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLDs), where this is appropriate (i.e., for issues outside of defined competence standards).

Please note that if you opt-out of having the coversheet automatically attached to your work, the marker will be unaware of your needs and submissions will not be remarked solely on the basis of absence of a cover sheet.

## 5.7 Disabled Students’ Allowance

Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA) is funding provided by the government for disabled students that can be applied for through Student Finance England (SFE). DSA may cover any extra study-related costs you incur due to your impairment, mental health condition, or learning difficulty. It is neither a benefit nor a loan, so it doesn’t need repaying. The amount you’ll receive depends on your individual needs not on your income, nor that of your parents or partner. DSAs are typically used for things such as software, hardware or human non-medical support/helpers.

If you are a participant who disclosed a disability/SpLD to us in Year 1, you will likely have also applied to [Disabled Students’ Allowance](https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/eligibility) (DSA) to receive extra funding for specialist equipment allowance, non-medical helper allowance and/or a general disability allowance.

We have been advised by SFE that participants are able to apply for and receive DSA funding during the first year of the programme. SFE are unclear about whether a year 2 participant can receive DSA. We suggest that if you require DSA support in year 2 you apply to SFE, but we cannot guarantee that your will receive the support for which you apply.

For further information on how you can apply for DSA and its eligibility requirements, please refer to the government’s [DSA guidance](https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas).

In instances where you were provided with equipment through DSA and/or Frontline last year, it would be expected that this equipment will have been retained and will continue to support you during year 2 of your studies. For non-medical help/human support, such as a Study Skills Tutor or a Mentor, please refer the information in the paragraph above about DSA support in year 2.

For more information about support applying for DSA, please see the [Lancaster University Disability and Inclusion Service webpage for Frontline participants.](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/disability-and-inclusion-services/programme-partners/frontline/)

If you have any specific questions in relation to your DSA application for the Frontline programme, then we would recommend that you speak to a Lancaster University Disability Advisor for more details about the application process. Please email [disability@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lancaster.ac.uk) if you have any queries.

If there are items that you no longer receive from DSA (e.g., non-medical helpers) that are vital to your study, please contact Lancaster University’s Disabilities Service ([disability@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lancaster.ac.uk)).

## 5.8 Learning Development Support

Frontline participants have access to a Learning Developer, who is part of the Learning Development Team at Lancaster University. Learning development aims to help participants reach their potential, regardless of current or previous attainment.

Learning development provision includes one-to-one tutorials, where participants and the Learning Developer meet to discuss strategies for developing writing, criticality and analysis. It is usually helpful if you can bring a piece of work with you to a tutorial, either something that you are currently working on or a previous piece assessment to use as an example.

Tutorials will be held via Microsoft Teams; however, if anyone is local to Lancaster and prefers to meet in-person, the Learning Developer can meet with you at the Lancaster University campus.

The Frontline Learning Developer provision is a finite resource (0.2FTE). Please bear in mind that your e-mail may not be responded to immediately and that the support may be fully booked, at times.

Please contact the Learning Developer (see contact details in Annex 2) for further information and to arrange a time to meet. This provision includes some daytime and some evening hours.

## 5.9 Additional Funding and Loans

If you are experiencing financial hardship during Year 2 of the programme, you are eligible to apply to two of Lancaster University’s funding support pools: [Lancaster’s Opportunity and Access Fund (LOAF)](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-and-education-services/money/funding/lancaster-opportunity-and-access-fund), and the [emergency loan](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-and-education-services/money/funding/emergency-loans).

Please ensure that prior to applying for extra financial support, please ensure that you read the supporting terms and conditions for each support option and be aware of the following:

* There is an expectation that all postgraduate students will have secured appropriate funding to cover their costs, for the duration of their programme, prior to commencing their study. The LOAF grant is only intended for those who experience significant and unexpected changes to their incomes stream /funding during their studies. As Frontline Participants receive a bursary/salary and do not pay tuition fees it is less likely that you will be eligible unless there is a sudden and unexpected change in circumstance.

In 2021 the Student Loans Company confirmed that Frontline participants are not eligible for a post-graduate loan.

Frontline cannot advise on whether individual Participants will be eligible for addition government support such as Universal Credit. Please visit <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit> for further information on what you are eligible for.

# 6. General participant support

For both participants completing the 60-credit FLSW904 module and participants who are completing the ASYE only (see 7.16 for information on this), you will have access to the following general support functions:

## 6.1 Access to Work and adjustments in the workplace

During your Assessed and Support Year in Employment (ASYE), you may be eligible to receive funding through the government’s [Access to Work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply) scheme if you have a disability or health condition.

Access to Work supports individuals in employment to get the help they need at work where it is not covered through their employer’s reasonable adjustments. Access to Work [applications](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply) are submitted via the Access to Work website.

Please note that Frontline cannot provide guidance around Access to Work, as this is an employment-related scheme. All queries therefore should be directed to Access to Work, your line manager or your employer, which in year 2 is your local authority.

## 6.2 Inclusion Passport

An Inclusion Passport is a working document that records and details the support you need, and agreements made with your line manage around how these supports will be achieved to enable you to meet the requirements of your role.

The inclusion passport is for all participants. The passport can be for disabled people or people with a long-term health condition. However, it may also be helpful for someone who requires adjustments to their working or learning environment as a result of other aspects of their identity such as language and communication support, or adaptations to the working environment to meet religious or gender needs.

The inclusion passport is designed to complement other forms of support you may have. As the passport does not require medical evidence, it is intended to act as a tool to generate conversations about need, embed discussing need and support as a strengths-based activity and expectation with regards to healthy work environments, as well as reduce stigma, shame and other barriers to seeking support in the work profession.

## 6.3 Peer Support

Peer relationships are an important source of support on the Frontline programme model, and you are encouraged to support one another’s learning and development throughout Year 2. You may find it helpful to set up a communication channel with peers in your reflexive group using phone, email and/or MS Teams (available to Lancaster University students as part of their Lancaster University Office 365 access) to maintain regular contact and support one another when required.

## 6.4 Support for participants from racialised minority backgrounds: promoting inclusion and countering exclusion

As part of Frontline’s Racial Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan we are committed to anti-racism and promoting and valuing racial diversity and inclusion. Frontline is committed to a diverse participant community on all of our programmes and all the benefits and value such diversity brings. In addition, we have a Frontline Participant Charter, which is underpinned by four key principles:​

1. **We treat one another with dignity and respect**​.
2. **We work together to secure Frontline’s vision of a safe and stable home for vulnerable children and families.**​
3. **We are open and inclusive to difference; to people, to ideas, to places and methods.**​
4. **We will inspire and enable our own learning and that of others**

If the conduct of a fellow participant falls below these conduct and behaviour expectations, you should report this in the first instance to your practice tutor (or another member of Frontline staff, as listed on the ‘Participant support’ page of Moodle), who will be able to refer it to the appropriate policy and offer you any support you need.

The programme offers a range of support structures, both formal and informal, to ensure you are enabled to be successful on the programme. However, we recognise it is crucial to align Frontline’s support offer with our diverse participant community and to recognise some of the additional barriers and challenges that participants from a racialised minority background face. So, in addition to our formal policies, processes, and support offer, we have also introduced several additional elements to promote racial diversity and inclusivity and counter exclusion. Of course, this list is not exhaustive, and we are open to feedback about how we can further and better support participants from racialised minority backgrounds.

### 6.4.1 Language

At Frontline, we prefer the terms “racialised minority group” or “from racialised minority backgrounds”, unless the person being addressed has communicated a preferred alternative.

We prefer this term because it offers that race is a social construct. This social construct has historically been used, and is still used today, to justify and perpetuate oppression and discrimination of people racialised as minority groups.

### 6.4.2 List of Frontline staff from racialised minority backgrounds as a point of contact

It is recognised that due to experiences of racialisation and discrimination for some participants, it might be difficult to raise and discuss instances of discrimination or racism on the programme with white staff members. If you would therefore prefer your point of contact to be a Frontline member of staff from a racialised minority group, please contact one of the below individuals:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Role | Email address |
| Anoshe Waheed | Head of People | [Anoshe.waheed@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Anoshe.waheed@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Eugene Ogbewele | Practice Tutor/dissertation supervisor (South) | [Eugene.ogbewele@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Eugene.ogbewele@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Lisa Zaranyika | Head of Diversity and Inclusion | [Lisa.zaranyia@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Lisa.zaranyia@thefrontline.org.uk) |

**6.4.3 Participant community spaces for participants from racialised minority backgrounds**

This is a principled community space where participants from racialised minority groups feel able to access and develop strong networks of support, a sense of belonging and find support to deal with racism and/ or discrimination in placements or on the programme. This will take place virtually and will be facilitated by Frontline members of staff.

## 6.5 Community spaces

### 6.5.1 Where you can find Frontline’s community spaces

To find out further information about all the community spaces we run, please visit the ‘Participant support page’ on Moodle, where you will find a link to our ‘community space and Frontline led affinity page’.

In previous years, we have run spaces for the following groups:

* Participants from racialised minority backgrounds
* LGBTQIA+
* Neurodivergence
* Lived experience of Social Work
* Disability
* Men in social work (Frontline led affinity group)

## 6.6 Coaching

During year 2 of the programme, you will be given the opportunity to engage in 6 voluntary coaching sessions with an independent coach to support you in developing leadership skills.

In our most recent year 2 bi-annual survey (Sept 2022 – Jan 2023) **84%** of respondents cited that coaching had helped to develop their practice leadership skills.

Coaching will be available to all year 2 participants, including those who decide to withdraw from the final 60-credit academic component and continue only with their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment.

Frontline’s [leadership statement](https://thefrontline.org.uk/frontline-programme/leadership-development/#:~:text=The%20Frontline%20leadership%20capabilities%20have,of%20resilience%20and%20self%2Dreflexivity.) articulates what it means to be a leader in social work. This is not about being a leader of people but a role model, leading by example in your social work practice. The statement only offers guidance and doesn’t restrict the coaching agenda in any way.

Here are some examples of the types of issues you might work on with your coach:

* managing yourself and your resilience as you adapt to the changes with Year 2;
* managing a heavy caseload and studying at the same time;
* navigating around the complexity of the system you operate in with your colleagues and senior managers;
* challenges and goals that you want to focus on to help you build confidence in your ability, court cases for example;
* knowing and using your strengths in work with families and other professionals;
* building relationships with others and influencing colleagues with a different approach;
* handling difficult conversations or conflict situations.

Watch this short coaching video to hear from coaches, fellows and Frontline staff the benefits and impact of coaching both for you and the families you will work with - [coaching video](https://vimeo.com/428498109)

“I don't think I'd have got this far through the programme without my coach! They have helped me think about ways to build my resilience, make important decisions, and find motivation in my role.” **Participant, 2018 cohort**

All participants will be contacted by the coaching team to confirm whether they would like to undertake the coaching sessions. There has typically been a very high uptake for this offer and participants have reported that this was a key factor in helping them to successfully manage their transition into qualified practice.

Please note, that your coach will not be able to provide participants with academic support relating to their dissertation.

For further information, participants should refer to the ‘Frontline Coaching Offer’ document will be emailed to all participants and will also be made available on Moodle. For any queries, please contact crystal.mctigue[@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:emma.lyons@thefrontline.org.uk) (coaching manager).

# 7. Additional information for participants completing FLSW904

The following section is only applicable to participants who are completing the 60-credit FLSW904 module.

## 7.1 Your Relationship with Lancaster University

Frontline is responsible for designing and delivering the academic content of the Frontline programme, whilst Lancaster University is the awarding body for the qualification and has approved that Frontline can deliver the academic content of the programme. As a participant of the Frontline programme completing the 60-credit Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families module, you will continue to be a student, and will be a registered student of Lancaster University on a full-time basis.

## 7.2 Relevant policies

The handbook should be read and used alongside [Frontline policies and procedures](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/). Where participants are enrolled as a student of Lancaster University and completing their 60-credit module in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families, they should also refer to [Lancaster University’s Manual of Academic Regulations](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/academic-standards-and-quality/marp/) (MARP) and the [Frontline supporting document](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/student-based-services/asq/collaborative-provision/Frontline-Variations.pdf) available to all participants on Moodle. These are the academic regulations in place for the Frontline programme.

## 7.3 Recall Days

We track participants’ attendance of the MSc teaching days and their engagement with the module so that we can provide early intervention and support to those not meeting the expected threshold. For further information on Frontline’s expectations surrounding attendance of taught elements, please refer to our [Attendance and Engagement](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/) policy.

### 7.3.1 In-person recall day venues

Please find below the venue information for each respective region.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Region | Venue | Address | Venue website |
| London | Resource for London | Resource for London 356 Holloway Road London N7 6PA | http://www.resourceforlondon.org.uk |
| Midlands | The Studio Birmingham | 7 Cannon St,  Birmingham  B2 5EP | <http://studiovenues.co.uk/venues/birmingham/map-directions/> |
| North East | York CVS Priory Street Centre | 15 Priory Street  York  YO1 6ET | [Conference Venue York | Priory Street Centre](https://www.priorystreetcentre.org.uk/) |
| North West | Friends Meeting House | 6 Mount Street  Manchester  M2 5NS | <https://meetinghousemanchester.co.uk> |
| South West | Future Inns | Future Inn Bristol  Bond Street South  Bristol  BS1 3EN | [http://www.futureinns.co.uk/bristol/](http://www.futureinns.co.uk/bristol/weddings) |

### 7.3.2 Recall day start and finish times

Both online and in-person Recall Days start at 10am and finish at 4:30pm. Please ensure you arrive on time, as we will start teaching promptly.

7.3.3 Testing positive for Covid-19  
You’re no longer legally required to self-isolate following a positive test for COVID-19, but we advise you to stay at home and avoid contact with other people until you feel well enough to resume normal activities and no longer have a high temperature. We recommend you stay at home for at least five days after your symptoms first appear.

If you test positive or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please **DO NOT** attend the recall day. Please contact your regional email to inform Frontline and contact your Practice Tutor to make them aware and catch up with content you may have missed.

### 7.3.4 Monitoring your academic attendance via QR code

Frontline requires that all Frontline programme participants must meet a minimum of 80% attendance for all academic elements during year 2 of the programme, with absence limited to circumstances that are exceptional and meet the expectations set out in our [attendance and engagement policy](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/).

For **online teaching days,** Frontline will export participants’ attendance via Zoom usage reports. We’ll be able to identify you through the details you log into zoom with (your full name and Lancaster University email address).

For **in-person teaching days**, Frontline will ask you to register your attendance via a QR code that will be provided and signposted to you. We will alter when this is shared with you during each Teaching Day, to ensure full attendance of the day.

To register your attendance, you will need to have a QR reader on your device. All android phones and devices running iOS 11 or later will have native, 'built-in' QR code readers in the phone camera. Open your camera app from your device's home screen, control centre or lock screen. Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the camera's view. Your device should recognise the QR code and provide a drop-down notification that will allow you to open an associated link, which you should then select. You will consequently be taken to Frontline's attendance form where you will submit your first and last name, along with your unique Lancaster University Student ID, and your attendance will automatically be updated on your student attendance record.

Where you do not have a QR code reader built into your device, you should download a free QR code reader app onto your phone, which will enable you to complete the attendance form as above.

### 7.3.5 Notifying us of an intended absence

All intended absences should be reported ahead of the day where practicable. An email should be sent to your Regional inbox for your regional coordinator ([southregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk) for London, home counties and the South West, and [northregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk) for the Midlands, North East and North West) and you should also notify your Practice Tutor. Where applicable, you may be asked to provide evidence alongside your absence request.

Should you be unwell on the day and not able to attend a planned recall day, please contact your Regional Coordinator by **9am** on the morning of the recall day so that your apologies can be passed on to the presenters.

If you are unable to attend one of your regional recall days, you may be able to attend that recall day in another region, something that we would strongly advise so that crucial elements of learning are not missed. This will however be subject to space and availability in the alternate region. Please speak to your Regional Coordinator directly if you are keen to attend an alternative recall day.

### 7.3.6 Catching up on missed learning

Where participants are at risk of falling under 80% attendance of teaching days, they must catch up on missed learning. They should do this via the resources available on Moodle, and through watching any video recordings of the missed day that are available, and, where available and where space allows, through attendance of teaching days in other regions.

Where participants catch up on a missed day of learning due to an absence, participants must contact their regional inbox ([southregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk) for London and the South West, or [northregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk) for the Midlands, North East and North West), otherwise their attendance record will not be updated.

### 7.3.7 Recall Day materials and recordings

Recall Day materials will normally be available on Moodle 1 week prior to the Recall Day. For in-person Recall Days, a recording will be made of the keynote lecture(s) and will be made available via Moodle no later than 72 hours post-recording.

Where you have not been able to attend a recall day due to an exceptional circumstance, you will be expected to catch up on learning retrospectively through the available keynote lecture and learning materials on Moodle.

### 7.3.8 Online engagement and camera usage

Both for you and the Frontline teaching team, it is important to be able to see each other’s faces when learning so as a result the expectation is that you keep your cameras on during teaching days. When teaching, non-verbal cues such as smiles, frowns, head nods, or even looks of confusion help us to evaluate teaching in real time and adjust accordingly to improve learning. For participants, it is also important that you can see one another on screen to help build trust and rapport with your workshop.

We appreciate however that there are always a range of reasons why someone may have their camera off, so if there is a reason why you are not able to have your camera on, please email the regional inbox ([northregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk) or [southregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk)) and copy in your dissertation supervisor.

## 7.4 Study leave

Your local authority has agreed to provide you with 10 study days to attend the Year 2 teaching days and study groups, dates of which have been provided in this handbook. Therefore, you can attend these formal taught sessions, reflexive peer groups, tutorials, and leadership coaching sessions without having to take annual leave. All other study activities will be in your own time.

You should consult the schedule for teaching days and **avoid** booking annual leave that coincides with these days.

Be prepared to do work in your own time to complete the research required on this programme. You will be expected to read extensively. You will need to put aside regular time in the evenings and/or weekends throughout the year to work on your research project.

## 7.5 Lancaster University graduation ceremony

As a student of Lancaster University, when you complete your Master’s degree you will be able to attend a graduation ceremony should you wish to. Postgraduates on taught courses (Masters (MA, MRes and MSc), PG Diplomas) are invited to attend Lancaster University’s Winter Graduation in the year they complete their degree. Your place at Graduation is subject to your degree being approved by the end of Year 2 exam board in October, and confirmed by Lancaster University’s Senate. Details about the dates of the graduation ceremonies and how to register to attend will be sent to you in the months before you are due to complete your academic programme of study. If you complete your qualification after October (either by passing your dissertation module, or by withdrawing from the dissertation module in order to be considered for an exit award (PG Diploma), you will be invited to the Winter Graduation ceremony in the year following the exam board at which this is ratified.

If you decide to withdraw from the Year 2 academic element (dissertation module), after completing Year 1 successfully, and follow the process set out in the Withdrawal Policy to do so formally, you will be eligible for a Post Graduate Diploma as an exit award (see Section 3.12 for details). Exit awards must be confirmed by an examination board before they can be awarded at a graduation ceremony, and there may be several months’ delay between you informing Frontline of your decision to withdraw and confirmation of the award. As Lancaster University graduation ceremonies are held only once a year, participants whose withdrawal request is received after 17th October 2024 will not be invited to a graduation ceremony until a full year later.

## 7.6 Changing your contact details

It is important that Lancaster and Frontline have an accurate record of your name, contact details, address and your next of kin. You will have provided these to Lancaster University when you registered with the University, and Frontline during the programme application process. Where changes to your contact details occur, you **must** notify Lancaster University and Frontline of this. Accuracy of this information is particularly important during Year 2, as the name with which you are registered at Lancaster University will be used on your award certification and award certification will be sent to the address you are registered under.

For updating your contact details with **Lancaster University**, you should do this via Lancaster University’s Student Portal.

On a bi-annual basis, Frontline will contact all active participants via email requesting for them to re-enter their contact and emergency contact details where these have changed. Where changes to your personal details occur in between these periods, you should contact your regional inbox via email ([southregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk) or [northregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk)).

## 7.7 Lancaster University Students’ Union (LUSU)

Your membership of Lancaster University Students’ Union (LUSU) will continue into Year 2 of the programme. Information about LUSU is available via the following link:<https://lancastersu.co.uk/>.

Information about how to seek advice from LUSU is available via the following link: <https://lancastersu.co.uk/advice>.

## 7.8 Lancaster University’s Graduate College

Lancaster University is proud to be one of only a handful of UK universities to have a collegiate system and as part of being a student of Lancaster University you will be a member of Graduate College. [Graduate College](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/graduate-college/) is the dedicated college for all postgraduate students.

Your membership with Lancaster University’s Graduate College will continue into Year 2 of the programme. The college’s role is to enhance your experience at Lancaster through academic-related, and non-academic activities and events. They can also help you to navigate your way through university life. There is a team of staff based at the College, also available remotely via phone, email and Teams. Find out who’s who on the college webpages: [College Staff](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/graduate-college/information-for-students/staff/).

Whilst College members usually pay a membership fee of £12, this is not charged to distance learners so you will not be expected to pay for your Graduate College membership.

## 7.9 VLE support

If you experience issues with accessing/navigating elements of the Virtual Learning Environment (e.g. not being able to access Moodle content, assignment submission support) please contact our Digital Learning Team on [digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk).

## 7.10 Lancaster University IT related support

For general IT queries (e.g., LU registration issues, queries around your LU email, library access) please refer Lancaster University’s Information Systems Services webpages: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/iss/>.

Information about IT help and support is available online: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/iss/help-and-support/>.

### 7.10.1 ~~A~~SK: (virtual) student information desk

Lancaster University have a team called ASK (Advice, Support and Knowledge) who provide specialist student support and advice helping students to access information and signposting them to other services where needed. You can contact them at [ask@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:ask@lancaster.ac.uk)

A virtual ‘Student Information Desk’ webpage offers live online chat for queries (9am-5pm Mon-Fri), links to Connect Lancaster and highlights key services such as [IT Support.](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/it-help)

Staff on the desk will also be able to direct students to Connect Lancaster to deal with queries that would normally be handled by their department/college.

## 7.11 National Railcards

Frontline participants under the age of 30 will be able to purchase either a 16-25 railcard or a 26-30 railcard independently. These railcards can be purchased online without any need for verification from Lancaster University. **For full instructions on this please see below.**

*16-25 Railcard:*

Participants **aged 25 and under** can apply online directly to national rail for a **16-25 railcard** <https://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/>.

If you’re between 16 and 25 years old, you’re eligible. In this case, you can buy your Railcard online using a valid debit or credit card, a valid UK driving license or international passport, and a digital passport-style photo for uploading. It will then be delivered free within 5 working days.

Your 16-25 Railcard gets you 1/3 off Standard Anytime and Off-Peak fares, as well as Standard Advance and First Class Advance fares. Please note that there is a £30 fee attached to purchasing a railcard for one year, or where eligible, you can apply for a three-year railcard at the cost of £70.

*26-30 Railcard:*

For the 26-30 Railcard, participants can apply online directly to national rail: <https://www.26-30railcard.co.uk/>. It is the first digital-only Railcard and it's available to buy online and will be downloaded to the Railcard app on a smartphone.

*16-25 Railcard for Mature Students:*

The 16-25 railcard can only be issued for a period of one year, and will only be available to mature students in year 1 of the programme in order to comply with the [terms and conditions](https://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/using-your-railcard/are-you-eligible) outlined by National Rail.

## 7.12 Transport for London (TfL) Student Oyster Photocard

Frontline participants are **not** able to apply for TfL’s Student Oyster photocard at this time due to TfL’s restrictions surrounding educational establishments outside of Greater London and their eligibility for the scheme.

Participants will however be able to link up their national railcards to their Oyster cards for a reduction on off-peak travel. For details on how to do this, please read TfL’s guidance on [National Railcard Discounts](https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel/national-railcard-discount#on-this-page-0).

## 7.13 Student Council Tax exemption

Although you are registered as a full-time student of Lancaster University, the module involves less than 21 hours per week study time, therefore you will not be eligible for student council tax exemption.

## 7.14 Student Discount

*UniDays:*   
To obtain UniDays membership (discount on a number of popular retail stores and food outlets), you can apply online at [www.myunidays.com](http://www.myunidays.com) once you have **provisionally** or **fully registered** with Lancaster University as a student and have a personal LU institution email address (you do not require your student ID card to confirm your student status). Signing up is optional, however the process is free to complete.

*NUS Totum card:*

To obtain a NUS Totum card, participant should apply online at [www.totum.com](http://www.totum.com). A student ID card is not required to submit an online application; however, you will require a personal LU institution email address. Signing up is optional and there is an attached cost to this membership, however you will be provided with a number of student discounts.

For information on costs and available brand discounts, please refer to the website [www.totum.com](http://www.totum.com).

## 7.15 Digital Lancaster University Student ID Cards

Lancaster University will provide LU Student ID cards for Frontline participants in a digital format via the iLancaster app. Information about the iLancaster app can be found at <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/iss/itpi/mobile>.The iLancaster app can be downloaded from the Apple/Android app stores and will require LU username and password to sign in. After signing in, the digital ID is accessed by clicking the person icon in the top left-hand corner of the app. Further guidance is available via Lancaster Answers webpage which gives advice on installing, customising and accessing app features (including the digital ID card).

In the event of any significant technical error with digital ID cards via the app, participants may request a physical ID card once they are fully registered on the programme. To request a physical ID card, students should email [frontlineparticipants@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:frontlineparticipants@lancaster.ac.uk) including their full name and Lancaster ID number. Participants should allow up to 30 days for a request for a physical card to be processed and posted to them.

Participants should be aware that the Lancaster Student ID card does not indicate a validity period and therefore may not be accepted by all retailers offering a student discount. Participants are advised to sign up to UniDays or NUS Totum if student ID is required for retail discount purposes.

## 7.16 Appeals

There are some circumstances in which you may wish to appeal an assessment decision through Lancaster University. The [University Appeals procedure](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-based-services/exams-and-assessment/student-appeals/) which relates to issues of assessment, and is detailed here: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-based-services/exams-and-assessment/student-appeals/>. Participants should be aware that academic appeal via Lancaster University is an option, if valid grounds exist, only after all opportunities for reassessment have been exhausted, and an exam board has ratified the decision that a participant has failed the programme and cannot continue. Before you make an appeal, you are strongly advised to refer to a copy of the Transparency Report from the exam board that considered your results (see 3.14 for further information on Transparency Reports).

Please note that appeals can take a number of weeks to resolve. Where academic appeals are upheld and further opportunities for reassessment are awarded later in the year, Frontline and Lancaster University will aim to consider your reassessment at the earliest opportunity.

## 7.17 Time away from studies

Circumstances may arise which lead to you wishing to interrupt your studies and join the subsequent cohort, meaning that you will cease to participate in the programme for that period. For further information about the parameters and implications of time away from studies on your studies, please refer to Frontline’s intercalation policy or pregnancy and parenting policy (available on [Frontline’s website](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/)).

As stated in Frontline’s [Intercalation Policy](https://thefrontline.org.uk/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/) ([available](https://thefrontline.org.uk/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/%22%20HYPERLINK%20%22https:/thefrontline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Intercalation-transfer-and-withdrawal-policy.pdf) on Frontline’s website); time away from studies via intercalation will normally be for both the practice and academic elements of the programme, therefore in Year 2 the request for intercalation must be agreed by the Local Authority as well as Frontline. Due to the practice focus of this module, you will not be able to continue with the academic element of the programme if you have intercalated the ASYE element of the programme.

## 7.18 Using your Lancaster University Email account

You can expect to be contacted via your Lancaster University email account. We also expect you to contact us via this email account throughout completion of the dissertation module.

We wish to stress the importance of regularly logging in to your Lancaster University email and Moodle account, as this is where you will receive important updates around areas such as programme changes, financial assistance and wellbeing,and key messagesfrom Frontline's senior leadership team. Lancaster University will also communicate to you via this email address.

## 7.19 Withdrawing from FLSW904

During year 2, a minority of participants decide that due to personal exceptional circumstances, they are no longer able to continue with the 60-credit FLSW904 module and they therefore consequently withdraw from this. They do however often wish to continue with their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE).

If you decide that you wish to withdraw from the 60-credit FLSW904 module, you will need to follow the process outlined within Frontline’s Withdrawal Policy (available on [Frontline’s website](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/)).

Please be aware, that where you withdraw from the academic element of the Year 2 programme, that you will no longer be classified as a university student, and you will therefore lose access to the items listed in sections 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 of this handbook.

Please note that where you are struggling with keeping up with the academic elements of the year 2 course, there are a number of support mechanisms and early intervention processes that can support you in completing. You therefore should notify your dissertation supervisor at the earliest opportunity if you are struggling, as we may be able to support your full completion of the course without you needing to withdraw.

## 7.20 Lancaster University Careers Service

As a student of Lancaster University, you will be able to access its Careers Service. We know you are doing the Frontline programme to start and build your career as a social worker and the careers team can help you with this. Once you have registered you will automatically get access to TARGETconnect, the careers system. This will give you access to the career appointment booking portal, events calendar and jobs board. Please see the careers webpages for more information: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/careers/>.

## 7.21 Registration on concurrent courses

As per the [Study Regulations](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/student-based-services/asq/marp/Study-Regs.pdf) found within Lancaster University’s [Manual of Academic Regulation and Procedures (MARP),](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/academic-standards-and-quality/regulations-policies-and-committees/manual-of-academic-regulations-and-procedures/) no student shall normally be allowed to register concurrently for more than the equivalent of one full-time higher or further education scheme of study.

# General Information

The section below should be read by both participants completing the 60-credit FLSW904 module and participants who are completing the ASYE only (see [7.19](#_7.19_Withdrawing_from) for information on this).

## 8.1 Getting in touch with Frontline

There are several ways you can get in touch with us at Frontline. Please refer to the below table to ensure you contact the right team:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | When you should contact: | Email address: |
| Dissertation supervisor | As your primary link between Frontline and the local authority, you dissertation supervisor will generally be your first point of contact for:   * Academic and work-based learning * Pastoral care/support * Progress reviews * Attendance and engagement | To be shared with you by region, normally at the start of your second programme year. |
| Principal Practice Tutor or Head of Delivery | High-level regional issues/queries that cannot be answered/resolved by your dissertation supervisor and/or through other channels listed | [southregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk)  [northregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Academic Registry Team | * Advice on academic procedures, regulations, and policy * Submission of appeals and complaints | [Academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Academic.support@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Exceptional Circumstances | * Your EC application * Your mitigating circumstances application | [Exceptional.circumstances@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Exceptional.circumstances@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Digital Learning Team | For queries relating to:   * Access to Zoom * Digital technology * Digital accessibility * Moodle * Technical issues uploading assignments | [Digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Digital.learning@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Suitability support Team | For queries relating to:   * DBS * Overseas checks * Suitability panels * Self-declaration forms * Occupational health * Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA) | [suitabilitysupport@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:suitabilitysupport@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Regional inbox | For queries relating to:   * Absences at recall days * General low-risk region-related queries * Hardship fund | [southregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk)  [northregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Frontline staff from racialised minority background | Due to experiences of racialisation and discrimination for some participants, it might be difficult to raise and discuss instances of discrimination or racism on the programme with white staff members. To contact a Frontline member of staff from a racialised minority group, please contact one of the following individuals: | [Anoshe.waheed@thefrontline.org.uk](http://Anoshe.Waheed@thefrontline.org.uk/) (Head of People at Frontline)  [Eugene.ogbewele@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Eugene.ogbewele@thefrontline.org.uk) (Practice Tutor [South])  [Lisa.zaranyika@thefrontline.org.uk](http://Lisa.zaranyika@thefrontline.org.uk/) (Head of diversity and inclusion at Frontline) |
| Whistleblowing | * Where you need to disclose a matter of serious concern or concern of public interest. For full definitions please refer to Frontline’s [whistleblowing policy](https://thefrontline.org.uk/policies/). | [whistleblowing@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Complaints | * Where concern or complaint is about any service provided by Frontline or provided by an organisation Frontline is in partnership with, including Lancaster University. * Where informal resolution is not appropriate or has been unsuccessful | [complaints@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:complaints@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Bi-annual surveys | * Opportunity to provide feedback through Frontline’s bi-annual surveys | Emailed directly to you twice a year |
| Participant representatives | * Where you wish to feed in your thoughts to our participant rep meetings that happen on a quarterly basis | Participant representatives’ Lancaster University email addresses will be shared with individuals within their region to contact where required. |

## 8.2 Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE)

The ASYE is a programme that gives newly qualified social workers extra support during their first year of employment. The programme aims to develop their skills, knowledge, and professional confidence.

Frontline is not involved directly in your ASYE programme, as this is arranged within your local authority, however, you may find that where you are completing the 60-credit Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families module, some of the work that you complete can also be used as evidence for your ASYE**.** Your progress in evidencing the ASYE standards will be assessed by your LA during the year. A mapping document will be made available via Moodle, which outlines how the academic components of year 2 can be used to complete your ASYE critical reflection log.

## 8.3 Progression to Year 2

Progression to Year 2 is dependent on the successful completion of all modules in Year 1 and registration with the statutory regulator, Social Work England (SWE). Once you have received confirmation of passing Year 1, you will be eligible to apply to register as a social worker with SWE and begin your Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) with your local authority. You can find out further information about registering with SWE on their website, accessible here: <https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/registration/join-the-register/>.

## 8.4 Year 2 employment status

Once you have successfully registered with SWE, you will be employed full-time as a newly qualified social worker (NQSW) within your local authority. As you will be receiving a salary from your placement local authority during Year 2 of the programme, you will not receive a bursary from Frontline.

## 8.5 Year 2 working patterns

Participants during year 2 of the programme will normally work full time at their local authority. However, participants are employees of the local authority in Year 2, and as such they may discuss their working patterns with the local authority.  
   
Where participants agree with their local authority to move to part time working during Year 2, the programme requirement to complete the equivalent of 24-months of full-time attendance in the local authority must still be fulfilled, and therefore takes longer to achieve.

Participants are normally expected to complete the academic element of Year 2 within the same expected timescales of a participant working full time in their local authority.

## 8.6 Holiday

You are an employee of your local authority in Year 2 and therefore all annual leave must be arranged in line with your local authority’s policies and procedures. You should avoid booking leave which clashes with Frontline Teaching Days.

## 8.7 Participant Feedback

Receiving feedback from our participants is integral to helping us assess the effectiveness of the programme and its many parts. The evaluation of this feedback enables ongoing reflection and improvement, which is vital for the continuing evolution of the programme. You will therefore be expected to provide Frontline with regular feedback throughout the programme, particularly through Frontline’s bi-annual participant surveys and your participant representatives, and in return Frontline will address key findings in a response to participants via Moodle.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Month: | Feedback and response point: |
| October | **Participant Rep Meeting:**   * Organised and facilitated by regional teams. Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into mid-year review. |
| January | **Participant Rep Meeting:**   * Organised and facilitated by regional teams. Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into mid-year review. |
| Start February | **Bi-annual survey released:**   * Survey to be completed by all participants about their experience of the programme. |
| End February | **Bi-annual survey closed:**   * It is crucial that participants complete this to offer a representative view. |
| March | **Mid-year review:**   * Frontline will review all feedback provided through first-half of the year to identify areas of strength and development. Not all feedback will be able to be addressed immediately and may feed into the following cohort’s experience. |
| April - May | **Response communicated to participants:**   * Summary of all feedback (first-half) with any changes or responses will be shared on Moodle. |
| April | **Participant Rep Meeting:**   * Organised and facilitated by regional teams. Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into end of year review. |
| July | **Participant Rep Meeting:**   * Organised and facilitated by regional teams. Urgent issues responded to locally. Long-term themes fed into end of year review. |
| Start September | **Bi-annual survey released:**   * Survey to be completed by all participants about their experience of the programme. |
| End September | **Bi-annual survey closed:**   * It is crucial that participants complete this to offer a representative view. |
| Start October | **End of year review:**   * Frontline will review all feedback provided to identify areas of strength and development. Not all feedback will be able to be addressed immediately and may feed into the following cohort’s experience. |
| November | **Response communicated to participants:**   * Summary of all feedback with any changes or responses will be shared via the Fellowship communication channels. |

## 8.8 Participant representatives

Participant representatives are normally elected regionally by fellow participants. The role of a participant representative is to collate feedback from their peers, and present this to their regions through quarterly meetings. The participant representatives are expected to provide feedback on the collective regional experience of the Frontline programme, and be informed in how this feedback has been used by the delivery, curriculum, and programme management teams to enhance the participant experience of the programme.

*Core responsibilities of a participant representative:*

* Seek out the views and opinions of all participants in their region on matters affecting their education and pastoral experiences, using a variety of different communication methods
* Liaise with other representatives to gain support and share thoughts and ideas
* Feedback and discuss issues raised at staff-participant meetings with their fellow participants.

Lancaster University Students’ Union will offer training to the Frontline participant representatives. The Student Union will work with participant representatives to ensure they are aware of the steps needed to ensure that are supported and are able to get the views of the wider participant population and have the tools and knowledge on how to present feedback to their peers.

If you are a participant who previously was a participant representative during Year 1 of the programme, you can re-apply for the participant representative role where interested.

## 8.9 Becoming a Fellow

You will join the Frontline Fellowship once you have graduated from the Frontline programme. If you choose to withdraw from the programme at any stage prior to completion of the two-year programme, you will not be eligible to join the Frontline Fellowship.

Where you withdraw from the final 60-credit MSc element of Year 2, but you (1) remain in employment in the local authority (ASYE year) which you completed your practice learning experience (or in another local authority partnered with Frontline where this transfer has been granted by Frontline), and (2) uphold your employment obligations, you will still be eligible to become a Frontline Fellow.

## 8.10 Frontline End of Programme Celebration

The Frontline end of programme celebration comes at the end of the two-year programme. To qualify for Frontline end of programme celebration, you will have met all of the following criteria:

A participant is eligible to attend Frontline’s end of programme celebration if they have:

* successfully **passed** the first year of the programme and **achieved at least 80% attendance across the academic taught elements** (Summer Institute and Recall Days).
* successfully **registered as a social worker** with the social work regulator as expediently as possible.
* **remained in employment** in the local authority (ASYE year) in which they completed their practice learning experience (or in another local authority partnered with Frontline where this transfer has been granted by Frontline) and **upheld their employment obligations** with the local authority.
* **remained a registered social worker** with the social work regulator during the final 12-months of their commitment.

Typically, Frontline’s end of programme celebration occurs following the two-year anniversary of the commencement of participants’ Practice Learning Experiences. In extraordinary circumstances (such as due to intercalation of studies) the end of programme celebration may take place after, however the conditions for graduating will remain the same. Please note that this is not a formal Lancaster University graduation ceremony (please see Section 7.5 ‘Lancaster University graduation ceremony’ for further information).

## 8.11 Changing your contact details

It is important that Frontline have an accurate record of your contact details and address. You will provide these to Frontline during the programme application process. Where changes to your contact details occur, you **must** notify Frontline of this. On a bi-annual basis, Frontline will contact all active participants via email requesting for them to re-enter their contact and emergency contact details where these have changed. Where changes to your personal details occur in between these periods, you should contact your regional inbox via email ([[southregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk)](mailto:southregion@thefrontline.org.uk) or [[northregion@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk)](mailto:northregion@thefrontline.org.uk)).

Participants completing the final module are registered as students of Lancaster University and will therefore also need to notify them of any changes to your contact details (see Section 7.6)

## 8.12 Social Media

You must be mindful of the use of social media whilst on the programme. Given that you will be representing the Frontline programme, your local authority, and the profession itself as a registered Social Worker, you must act professionally and respectfully at all times, and in accordance with the Social Work England Professional Standards. Where concerns about your professionalism online are raised, these may be brought to the attention of SWE.

It is essential that you are familiar with the expectations relating to conduct in the public domain, acting professionally and respectfully at all times, and in accordance with the BASW [Professional Capabilities Framework](https://www.basw.co.uk/social-work-training/professional-capabilities-framework-pcf) and SWE [Professional Standards](https://socialworkengland.org.uk/professional-standards/). Please see the Frontline Participant discipline policy [available here](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/), for further guidance on the use of social media.

You can find further social media guidance in the Frontline Participant discipline policy, [found on the Frontline website.](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/)

## 8.13 Complaints

Frontline has a robust approach to dealing with complaints, detailed in the Complaints Policy & Procedure, which can be [found here](https://thefrontline.org.uk/our-programmes/frontline-programme/frontline-programme-policies/).

## 8.14 Professional Indemnity Insurance

In Year 2, as a qualified social worker and employee of your local authority, you are likely to receive what is known as professional indemnity insurance. This covers you for costs you might face if your work, service, or advice causes a (client/service user) to suffer a loss. This can take the form of:

* **Professional negligence**: If you give incorrect advice or make a mistake
* **Defamation**: If you produce or support untrue and harmful statements about your client
* **Breach of confidence**: If you share sensitive information without permission
* **Breach of copyright**: If you infringe on copyrights, trademarks or intellectual property
* **Lost** **or damaged documents**: If you lose or damage documents while they’re in your care

Please note that research activities undertaken by Year 2 participants are additionally covered by Lancaster University’s research insurance. If you would like further information about this, then please speak to your dissertation supervisor in the first instance.

## 8.15 Whistleblowing and Safeguarding

Please note that if you have a safeguarding concern in relation to a case you are handling as part of your practice learning experience or subsequent employment by the local authority, you should follow your local authority’s policies and procedures on whistleblowing normally instead of Frontline’s policies and procedures. You should also familiarise yourself with Frontline’s Safeguarding policy.

If you wish to disclose a serious concern or matter of public interest related to the actions of Frontline or Lancaster University then you should follow the steps outlined in either Frontline’s Whistleblowing Policy (available on Moodle) or [Lancaster University’s Whistleblowing policy](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/strategic-planning--governance/publication-scheme/5-our-policies-and-procedures/Raising-Serious-Concerns-and-Disclosing-Public-Interest-Matters-Whistleblowing.pdf). If you are uncertain whether the matter should be disclosed to Frontline or Lancaster University, then you should make the disclosure to Frontline in the first instance.

# Annexure

# Annex 1: Definitions

**Academic module:** The teaching and assessment of year two of the programme has one academic module. Information about this module is included within this handbook.

**Aggregate:** This is the process where the percentage marks for module elements are combined together according to their percentage weighting to produce the overall module percentage mark.

**Assessment:** Assessments are set pieces of work that must be completed as part of the academic modules. These will be both academic and practice focused pieces of work and will be graded.

**ASYE**: the assessed and supported year in employment is undertaken by all newly qualified social workers in a local authority. On the Frontline programme this is undertaken in year 2.

**Moodle**: The Virtual Learning environment (VLE) that Frontline use is Moodle. This is where all the resources are housed that will support your learning and development on the Programme.

**Condonation**: This is where a failed module can be ‘excused’ or condoned by an assessment board in confirming an award. Condonation of failed elements or modules is not permitted within the assessment regulations for the Frontline programme.

**Dissertation:** Your dissertation is an action research dissertation which requires to undertake a literature review and undertake ethically sound research on an element of your practice with families, service users and practitioners, to evaluate this practice and disseminate it amongst your organisation including the participants and the wider organisational structure.

**Formative assessment/feedback:** Is an integrated and ongoing method of assessing individuals whilst learning is happening, rather than at the end of a module or sequence of learning. Formative assessment and feedback provide opportunities for you and teaching staff to assess your current level of understanding against the module learning outcomes and help provide guidance on how to close the gap between current and desired performance.

**Fully registered participant:** An individual who has successfully met all the necessary pre-programme admissions and suitability checks, completed Lancaster University’s online pre-registration process, and for whom Lancaster University has officially registered on the programme and confirmed student status.

**Intercalation:** Means an extended break from the programme, only one request can be granted which will be for a maximum of one academic year.

**Local Authority (LA):** Practice learning will take place predominantly within a local authority.All local authorities’ practice learning opportunities are audited and continually monitored by Frontline to ensure that they are of a high standard, consistently across authorities.

**The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)**: The PCF is a framework established to support learning, progression and development of all social workers. It setscapability statements of what is to be expected for all stages of a social worker’s career from entry into training to the most advanced level of a social work practitioner. Through the Frontline programme, participants will be expected to show how they meet the relevant level of the PCF, according to the stage they are at in the programme.

**Provisionally Registered participant:** An individual who is still undergoing or has outstanding pre-programme admissions and/or suitability checks, but who has commenced study on the Frontline programme and completed Lancaster University’s online pre-registration process. Full registration and confirmation of student status with Lancaster University will only be confirmed subject to the individual completing their outstanding checks and meeting the necessary admissions and/or suitability criteria.

**Summative Assessment:** A measure of cumulative learning over a programme. Summative assessments are formal, in that they determine the grade you are awarded for the module.

**Social Work England:** the statutory regulator which protects the professional title ‘social worker’ in England. SWE:

* Regulates initial social work qualifying education and training by setting **Education and Training Standards,** which social work education and training course providers must meet These standards ensure that students who successfully complete a social work course can meet SWE’s professional standards and can apply to be registered with Social Work England.
* Sets the **Professional Standards** which describe what a social worker should “know, understand and be able to do after completing their social education or work training”. You must demonstrate these standards in order to pass the programme, and subsequently to register with the regulator.

**Reflexive Group:** Reflexive groups are peer led meetings (usually 4-6 participants) in which participants are given the opportunity to share an ‘episode’ of practice, related to their research topic, with their peers for reflection.

# Annex 2: Year 2 key staff, teams, and roles

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Details** | **Contact information** |
| Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families (module FLSW904) | | |
| Module leaders | The module leaders are responsible for overseeing the teaching and assessment activities for this module. | Jenni McCabe:  [Jenni.McCabe@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Jenni.McCabe@thefrontline.org.uk)  Tessa Godfrey:  [Tessa.Godfrey@thefrontline.org.uk](mailto:Tessa.Godfrey@thefrontline.org.uk) |
| Teaching team for teaching days | This module is delivered by a range of lecturers and facilitators, including practice tutors, guest speakers, curriculum team leads and experts by experience. | Teaching staff will be present on Teaching Days. If you want to contact a member of the teaching team directly then you should go through your dissertation supervisor to get their contact details. |
| Dissertation supervisor | Where possible, the practice tutor that was allocated to your unit in Year 1 will continue to supervise you in Year 2.  Dissertation supervisors are your first point of contact for all matters relating to teaching and assessments in Year 2 and can be contacted via email. | If you are not sure who your Dissertation Supervisor is or how to contact them, please contact your regional coordinator. |
| Other points of contact | | |
| Independent coaches | All Year 2 participants have the opportunity to engage in independent coaching sessions to support their personal and professional development. | For further information on coaching, please refer to the Coaching Handbook, available on Moodle. |
| Lancaster University Staff | | |
| Director of studies | The Director of Studies is the academic lead for the programme and partnership within Lancaster University. They have responsibility for ensuring that the academic standards of the Frontline programme continue to meet Lancaster University’s benchmark and relevant processes are monitored effectively. | |
| Disability adviser | To provide support and specialist advice on disability, wellbeing, and mental health matters | |
| Frontline programme administrator | To provide administrative support in updating and maintaining Frontline participants’ student and academic records. | |
| Frontline Learning Developer | To provide learning development support for Frontline participants. Aims to help participants achieve their full potential by supporting effective study and good academic writing practices.  Please contact the Learning Developer, Harriet Newnes via learningdevelopmentfl@lancaster.ac.uk | |

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# Annex 3: FLSW904 module bibliography

**This module is supported by the following core primary texts:**

Hedges, F. (2010) Reflexivity in therapeutic practice. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

McNiff, J. (2017) Action research: All you need to know. London: Sage Publications.

**This module is supported by the following core secondary texts:**

Aveyard, H. (2019). Doing a Literature Review in Health and Social Care: A Practical Guide. London: Open University Press.

Coghlan, D. (2013) What Will I Do? Toward an Existential Ethics for First Person Action Research Practice. International Journal of Action Research, 9(3), 333–352.

Corbett, A., Francis, K. & Chapman, Y. (2007). Feminist-informed participatory action research: A methodology of choice for examining critical nursing issues. International Journal of Nursing Practice, 13, 81-88.

Coy, M. (2006) This Morning I’m A Researcher, This Afternoon I’m An Outreach Worker: Ethical Dilemmas in Practitioner Research. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 9(5), 419–431.

Dickens, J., Taylor, J., Cook, L., Cossar, J., Garstang, J., Hallett, N., . . . Wade, R. (2022). *Learning for the future: Final analysis of serious case reviews, 2017-2019.* London: Department of Education.

Etherington, K. (2004). Becoming a Reflexive Researcher: Using Our Selves in Research. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Featherstone, B., White, S., Morris, K. & White, S. (2014) Re-imagining child protection: Towards humane social work with families. Bristol: Policy Press.

Featherstone, B., Gupta, A., Morris, K., & White, S. (2018). Protecting Children: A Social Model. Bristol: Policy Press.

Ferguson, H., Disney, T., Warwick, L., Leigh, J., Cooner, T. S., & Beddoe, L. (2021). Hostile relationships in social work practice: anxiety, hate and conflict in long-term work with involuntary service users. Journal of Social Work Practice, 19-37.

Flaskas, C., Mason, B. & Perlesz, A. (eds.) (2005) The Space Between: Experience, Context, and Process in the Therapeutic Relationship. London: Karnac Books Ltd.

Hingley-Jones, H., & Ruch, G. (2016). Stumbling through: Relationship-based social work in austere times. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 235-248.

Holian, R. & Coghlan, D. (2013) Ethical Issues and Role Duality in Insider Action Research: Challenges for Action Research Degree Programmes. Systemic Practice & Action Research, 26(5), 399–415.

Locke, T., Alcorn, N. & O’Neill, J. (2013) Ethical Issues in Collaborative Action Research. Educational Action Research, 21(1), 107–123.

Marshall, J. (2016). Integrating Action Research, Systemic Thinking and Attention to Issues of Power. In J. Marshall, *First Person Action Research: Living Life as Inquiry* (pp. 3-30). London: Sage.

Phelan, S. K., & Kinsella, E. A. (2013). Picture this: Safety, Dignity and Voice: Ethical Research with Children: Practical Considerations for Reflexive Researchers. *Qualitative Enquiry*, 81-90.

Rogers, J. (2012) Anti-Oppressive Social Work Research: Reflections on Power in the Creation of Knowledge, Social Work Education, 31(7), 866–879.

Roni, S. (2007) Anti-Oppressive Research in Social Work: A Preliminary Definition. The British Journal of Social Work, 37(5), 857.

Salami, M. (2020) Sensuous Knowledge. Zed Books, London.

Smith, L. (ed.) (2016) Clinical Practice at the Edge of Care. Developments in working with at-risk children and their families. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

The European-American Collaborative Challenging Whiteness. (2005). When first-person inquiry is not enough: Challenging whiteness through first and second-person inquiry. *Action Research*, 245-261.

Walker, S. (2015). Literature Reviews: Generative and Transformative Textual Conversations. Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 1-13.

All students will be required to be familiar with the Professional Capabilities Framework (BASW, 2018) as these relate to their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE).

# Annex 4: Assessment and marking guidance 2023/4

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Module code and name: | FLSW904 Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families |
| Assessment number and title: | Assessment 1 – 12,000-word action research dissertation |
| Submission deadline and time: | Wednesday 21 August 2024 by 10:00 hours |
| Feedback date: | Wednesday 2 October 2024 by 17:00 hours |
| Weighting of assessment: | 100% |
| Format:  E.g. written essay, presentation | Written dissertation |
| Word count: | 12,000 words +/- 10% (minimum 10,800 words, maximum 13,200 words)  Please note:   * Abstracts, contents tables, appendices, diagrams, acknowledgements, title/front page and references are not included in word count. * The penalty for over length assessments is that markers will stop marking work at 10% over the word limit. * There will be no penalty for under length work, however it is important to note that work which is seriously under the prescribed length is likely to be awarded a lower mark on grounds of inadequate content. * Word lengths should be recorded by participants on the front page of your assessment when submitting your work. * Appendices should be limited to 15 pages maximum. Markers are not required to consider any appendices beyond this limit. * A signed anonymity and confidentiality statement must be included with your submission and will not be included in word count. |
| Assessed module learning outcomes: | 1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of multiple contexts that shape and maintain their current practice. 2. Critically evaluate own practice by demonstrating breadth and depth of understanding of issues at the forefront of social work practice, including relevant Frontline Practice models. 3. Recognise, analyse and respond to the complexity of legal and ethical issues relevant to their practice. 4. Identify, select, plan, use and evaluate chosen research methodology to enable the achievement of aims and desired outcomes. 5. Independently devise and undertake an action research project, addressing the complex issues underlying their identified practice pattern and informed by relevant, current information 6. Demonstrate the ability to identify, contextualise, synthesise and critically evaluate literature relevant to their practice from a range of sources. 7. Integrate reviewed literature with own ideas within work showing insight and understanding of alternative points of view. 8. Demonstrate the ability to reflect on and critically evaluate strengths and limitations of research conducted and identifying potential areas for further development or critical exploration. 9. Demonstrate the independent learning ability required for ongoing professional skills and development. 10. Evidence advanced academic skills, including reading, critical analysis and research mindedness. 11. Evidence skills as an autonomous and reflexive learner. 12. Communicate information clearly, supported by valid and evaluated evidence to an appropriate standard. |
| Assessment task  *What am I required to do in this assessment?* | |
| You are required to write a dissertation reporting on your independent action research project in which you have explored, adapted and evaluated an emerging pattern/dilemma within your practice. This section covers the content and (suggested) structure of your dissertation.  Your dissertation should include the following content:  Identification of a research issue, practice pattern or dilemma   * What informed your choice of practice pattern/dilemma? What was going well and what needed to change? How does your choice relate to your social work values? * What impact have your social graces, experiences, organisational and professional context had on your practice pattern/ dilemma? * How did your ideas about your practice pattern/dilemma change during the course of your research? Were there any ethical implications from these changes that you needed to address? If so, how did you address them?   Exploration of your practice pattern/dilemma   * What steps did you undertake to better understand the practice pattern/dilemma? Please note this is not about ‘resolving’ your practice pattern/dilemma, but rather identifying what research and literature have to say on the topic. * You must relate your practice pattern/dilemma to at least one of the Frontline practice models in your exploration.   Your research question, aims and objectives   * State your research question * Aims: what did you set out to achieve with this research? * Objectives: What steps did you plan to achieve your aims?   Literature Review   * Outline your strategy for searching for literature * How did you select and analyse literature? * What does literature and research say about your practice pattern/dilemma? * What literature and research can you draw on to address your practice pattern/dilemma?   Methodology   * Demonstrate your robust critical understanding of action research methodology. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this methodology, including in the context of your research? * Identify issues around reliability, validity and generalisability of your research. * What were the key ethical issues you had to address prior to and during your research? * Describe and critically evaluate your approach to data collection. * How did you go about changing your practice and seeking feedback? * How did your self-reflexivity contribute to every stage of your research process? * How did your reflexive group influence your thinking? * What adjustments did you make, based on the feedback you received, your reflections and the feedback from your reflexive group? * How will you analyse the data including critique?   Data could include (but are not limited to):   * Recording or notes of face to face or remotely held interactions * Reflective logs and diary notes, correspondence, text messages * Verbal or written feedback from your research participants * Meeting notes * Observations of your practice from peers/colleagues.   Analysis and interpretation of research data   * Demonstrate how you have made sense of the data and explore its meaning for your practice/research question. * Acknowledge and explain which approach you have adopted when analysing data (thematic, content, narrative analysis etc). * Demonstrate a deep level analytical perspective, which involves engaging in multiple levels of reflection, reflexivity and further interpretation.   Evaluate your practice   * Critically evaluate your research findings. This could include (but is not limited to): * Your own interpretation of the strengths and limitations of your findings * Feedback from reflective groups, research participants and critical friends. * Your overall evaluation needs to demonstrate the quality of your plan, the quality of your practice and research, and the quality of your knowledge claims.   Make claims to knowledge   * The potential significance of your action research for yourself, others and the field of knowledge in general * Significance within the research community   Next steps  Explore possible implications for future practice and behaviour as a result of your research findings. This could include:   * An indication of how your practice has/may develop in light of the research findings * State how you will contribute to the body of knowledge by sharing your research findings with others (e.g. colleagues, peers and members of the professional and academic community)   Suggested structure for your dissertation  This is a suggested dissertation structure. It is your choice whether you follow this structure, but please ensure that you discuss any significant deviations from this with your dissertation supervisor. You are encouraged to use headings within your dissertation and use appendices sparingly to evidence key points.   * Cover sheet/front page * Signed confidentiality and anonymity statement - template available on Moodle * Abstract * Introduction * Context for the research * Literature review * Methodology * Research findings * Discussion * Conclusions and next steps * References * Appendices – Appendices must include confirmation of ethical approval letter/email from your local authority.   Confidentiality  Adherence to academic and ethical conventions in regard to confidentiality and anonymity is essential, as such these have been incorporated into the marking criteria. You must use pseudonyms and make sure that families and colleagues are not identifiable in your assessments. Failure to do so may be dealt with under the Academic Malpractice Policy and may lead to a reduced mark in line with the marking criteria. Please note:   * Participants are not required to submit copies of their consent and information forms as appendices. * Signed consent forms should not be submitted with the dissertation as this would compromise the anonymity of research participants. All empirical data (including signed consent forms) should be stored securely on the university servers until final dissertation grade has been ratified at the university exam board. | |
| Practical considerations | |
| * Participants are not permitted to commence data collection for their research project until they have received written confirmation of ethical approval from both Frontline and their local authority. Therefore, applying for, and gaining ethical approval from Frontline and the relevant local authority representative in a timely fashion will enable participants maximum time needed for completion of action research and writing up of the dissertation. Please notify your dissertation supervisor immediately if you are experiencing delays in obtaining ethical approval from your local authority. * Attending each teaching day and taking part in all activities will give you best chance to successfully complete this assessment task. * Please note, engagement with your dissertation supervisor is an important part of your academic study. You are strongly advised to be proactive in arranging and attending all five of your supervisory meetings and to contact your dissertation supervisor via email if you have any queries that need to be addressed outside of these meetings. * You are required to act in accordance with Lancaster University’s research ‘[Code of Practice](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/res/research-governance--ethics/Ethics-code-of-practice_July2021.pdf)’ in all aspects of your research activities.   Formatting Guidance   * Use Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial font, with minimum 12-point main text size and 11-point footnotes. * You are advised to use clear section headings and include a table of contents for ease of reference. * Have margins of at least 2.5 cm at the top, bottom, left and right of the page. * Lay out your document in portrait mode, unless you have specific elements (e.g. large tables) that are easier to read in landscape. * Number all the pages. * The main text should be 1.5 or double-spaced; acknowledgments, references and footnotes can be single-spaced. * Text can be either left-aligned or justified. * Use footnotes rather than endnotes. * Do not use footnotes to reference – instead include a reference list at the end of the document * Use Harvard referencing style. Guidance on Harvard referencing can be accessed using this [link](https://lancaster.libguides.com/harvard). | |
| Key reading and other resources | |
| Please refer to the relevant reading lists for each of the 8 teaching days, as well as the module reading list. Reading lists are available on Moodle. | |
| Related teaching days: | All teaching days (1-8) are critical to understanding of the action research approach and writing up of the dissertation. If you are not able to attend one of the teaching days, then you are strongly advised to familiarise yourself with the learning resources and reading list (available via Moodle) for that day. |
| Assessment briefing and support | * All teaching days will cover different aspects of the assessment task, including research methodologies, ethical research, data collection and analysis and reviewing literature. * If you have any questions, please speak with your Dissertation Supervisor in the first instance. |

Your assessment will be marked according to the University of Lancaster Postgraduate Social Work marking criteria, which have been supplemented with additional specific marking descriptors for this assessment. You can use these to self-evaluate your work before you submit it.

**Lancaster University Postgraduate Marking Matrix for Social Work**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Distinction 80+** | | | |
| **LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:** | | | |
| **Exemplary range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes, secured by discriminating command of a comprehensive range of relevant materials and analyses, and by deployment of considered judgement relating to key issues, concepts and procedures.** | | | |
| **Social Work amplified descriptors:** | | | |
| **A piece of written work in the 80+ signals that it is a piece of outstanding quality, requiring an exceptionally high level of conceptual ability (for Master’s level work) and an extremely thorough and conscientious approach to study. Work in this range will be of publishable quality and undoubtedly demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree. It is distinguished by:** | | | |
| ***Argument*** | ***Understanding*** | **Style** | ***Marks within this classification may vary du****e* ***to-*** |
| *•*A very clearly expressed and convincing argument which is used to develop a highly coherent, original and logical framework within which to answer the question or address the topic.  •A thorough grounding of the above in existing theory and research  •A reasoned conclusion fully supported by the foregoing material.  •A capacity to relate the theoretical and empirical material consistently to the conceptual framework.  •Substantial evidence of independent research.  •The absence of irrelevant or extraneous material. | A thorough understanding of action research, the chosen practice pattern/dilemma and its implications for social work practice.  •A very clear and consistent focus on the issues raised by the research question, including ethical issues.  •Insightful understanding of theoretical literature, including the ability to identify points upon which to build as well as grasp and limitations  • An insightful argument showing signs of originality in ideas, argument and empirical research | •Excellent grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.  •Thorough and consistent use of conventions in referring to other people’s work.   * Excellent adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity | *•*An original capacity to develop arguments, ideas and apply self- reflexivity  •the extent to which empirical research has been conducted  •The depth and sophistication of the conceptual argument.  •The level of command of the theoretical and research literature. |
| **Distinction (70-79)** | | | |
| **LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:** | | | |
| **Exemplary range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes, secured by discriminating**  **command of a comprehensive range of relevant materials and analyses, and by deployment of considered judgement relating to key issues, concepts and procedures.** | | | |
| **Social Work amplified descriptors:** | | | |
| **A piece of written work in the 70+ range is one of exceptional quality, requiring a high level of conceptual ability and an extremely thorough and conscientious approach to study. Work in this range will clearly demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree.**  **It is distinguished by:** | | | |
| ***Argument*** | ***Understanding*** | **Style** | ***Marks within this classification may vary due to-*** |
| *•*A clearly expressed and convincing argument which is used to develop a coherent and logical framework to answer the research question at the centre of the completed action research project. The research is well grounded in at least one of the Frontline practice models and leads to a reasoned conclusion fully supported by the data gathered.  •A capacity to consistently relate the theoretical and empirical material to the conceptual  framework.  •Strong evidence of independent research.  •The absence of irrelevant or extraneous material. | *•*A thorough understanding of action research, the chosen practice pattern/dilemma and its implications for social work practice.  •A clear and consistent focus on the issues raised by the research question, including ethical issues.  • An insightful argument showing signs of originality in ideas and argument. | • Good to very good grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.  • Thorough and consistent use of conventions of referring to other people’s work.   * Good and consistent adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity | •The capacity to develop arguments beyond those available in the literature including clear evidence of self-reflexivity.  •The depth and sophistication in conceptual argument.  •The level of command of the theoretical and research literature. |
| **Merit (60-69)** | | | |
| **LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:** | | | |
| **Conclusive attainment of virtually all intended learning outcomes, clearly grounded on a close familiarity with a wide range of supporting evidence, constructively utilised to reveal appreciable depth of understanding.** | | | |
| **Social Work amplified descriptors:** | | | |
| **A piece of written work in this marking range is of a good to very good standard and will show clarity of thought and expression. It will display an ability to handle the relevant literature in an analytical manner. It will be more than a good description of the various theories and/or studies relevant to the question – it will demonstrate a marshalling of relevant information by means of analysis and interpretation. It will not necessarily have a water-tight argument, but it will be clearly structured, and its conclusions will not take the reader by surprise. Such a piece of work will generally show less independence of thought and mastery of detail than is required for a mark of 70 or over. There may be some errors or misjudgements with regard to issues which are not central to the argument. Work in this range will normally demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree.**  **It is distinguished by:** | | | |
| ***Argument*** | ***Understanding*** | ***Style*** | ***Marks within this classification may vary due to–*** |
| A logical, coherent framework is used to answer the research question at the centre of action research completed. Consideration of one of the Frontline practice models is evident.  •An ability to organise the data in a way that provides a clear and logical answer to posed research question.  •A clearly expressed theme or argument developed from a critical consideration of relevant literature. | •A good understanding of the action research approach and identified practice pattern and implications for social work practice.  •A good to very good familiarity with the relevant literature and empirical data.  • A good command of theory and some analytical depth.  •The avoidance of irrelevant or extraneous material.  •Evaluation of competing arguments.  •Conclusion supported by the body of the argument and evidence.  •Some evidence of independent research.  •Avoidance of unsubstantiated assertions. | •Good grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.  •Good use of conventions of referring to other people’s work   * Good and consistent  **a**dherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity | •The clarity and cogency of the overall argument.  •The level of familiarity with the relevant literature and data.  •The depth and coherence of the answer and the level of self-reflexivity. |
| **Pass (50-59)** | | | |
| **LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:** | | | |
| **Clear attainment of most of the intended learning outcomes, some more securely grasped than others, resting on a circumscribed range of evidence and displaying a variable depth of understanding.** | | | |
| **Social Work amplified descriptors:** | | | |
| **A piece of written work in this marking range is of a moderate to good standard. It will be descriptively strong. It is distinguished from the 60-69 piece by the level of analysis displayed and by the coherence with which the material is organised. There may be some significant errors, misjudgements or omissions of important details. A mark in this range would not normally demonstrate the capacity to proceed to a higher research degree.**  **It is characterised by:** | | | |
| ***Argument*** | ***Understanding*** | ***Style*** | ***Marks within this classification may vary due to–*** |
| **•An attempt to answer the research question at the centre of action research completed.**  **•A conclusion not entirely supported by data gathered and analysed or relevant to the body of the essay.**  **•A failure to adequately organise an answer into a coherent whole.** | **•A reasonable understanding of action research approach and identified practice pattern and implications for social work practice.**  **•A level of empirical knowledge and relevant reading which demonstrates a conscientious attempt to tackle the question/topic.**  **•The use of some extraneous material.**  **•A failure to grasp at least some relevant points or address some relevant literature.**  **.** | **•Adequate grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.**  **•Referencing that is incomplete or fails to observe some conventions for referring to other people's work.**   * **Adequate adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity** | **•The level of empirical and theoretical knowledge displayed**  **•The seriousness with which an attempt has been made to answer the question or address the topic.**  **•The number of major points that have been covered.**  **•The coherence of the essay and level of self-reflexivity**  **•The degree of unsubstantiated assertions.**  **•Written style (grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence construction).** |
| **Marginal Fail (40-49)** | | | |
| **LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:** | | | |
| **Attainment deficient in respect of specific intended learning outcomes, with mixed evidence as to the**  **depth of knowledge and weak deployment of arguments or deficient manipulations.** | | | |
| **Social Work amplified descriptors:** | | | |
| **A piece of written work in this category shows signs of engagement with the question or topic, but has inadequacies at Master’s level. It signals a failure to give sufficient thought to the work in hand, displaying inconsistent argument, unsubstantiated assertions, and a patchy acquaintance with the relevant literature. It may lack a convincing conclusion and it is likely to include significant errors, omissions and misunderstandings.**  **It is characterised by:** | | | |
| ***Argument*** | ***Understanding*** | ***Style*** | ***Marks within this classification may vary due to–*** |
| **•A failure to order this material so as to provide an adequate answer to the research question at the centre of action research completed**  **•An ability to pick out some of the points required for a satisfactory answer.**  **•Inadequate conclusion that is either lacking or at odds with the rest of the**  **dissertation.** | **•Some knowledge of appropriate empirical material.**  **•The intrusion of irrelevant material.**  **•An inadequate familiarity with relevant literature.** | **•Sub-standard grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.**  **•Inadequate use of conventions of referring to other people’s work**   * **Inadequate adherence to conventions of confidentiality and anonymity** | **•The level of empirical knowledge and self-reflexivity**  **•The extent to which an effort has been made to answer the question or address the topic.**  **•Evidence of conscientious effort.**  **•The degree of unsubstantiated assertion.**  **•Written style (grammar, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction).** |
| **Fail (30-39)** | | | |
| **LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:** | | | |
| **Attainment of intended learning outcomes appreciably deficient in critical respects, lacking secure basis in relevant factual and analytical dimensions.** | | | |
| **Social Work amplified descriptors:** | | | |
| **Marks in the 30 - 39 range indicate that the piece of written work is inadequate in every respect with pronounced errors and misunderstandings. It is characterised by:**  **•Some empirical knowledge.**  **•Some evidence of study in the area concerned.**  **•An inability to develop any but the flimsiest answer to the question.**  **•Problematic conclusion.** | | | |
| **Poor Fail (20-29)** | | | |
| **LU primary verbal descriptors for attainment of intended learning outcomes:** | | | |
| **Attainment of intended learning outcomes appreciably deficient in respect of nearly all intended learning outcomes, with irrelevant use of materials and incomplete and flawed explanation.** | | | |

# Annex 5: Dissertation Supervision Contract

**Dissertation supervision Contract**

Participants may find it helpful to know what they can expect from their dissertation supervisor. This contract summarises the expectations for both the supervisor and the participant. The general principle is that the participant is responsible for planning, completing the ethical approval from Frontline and the Local Authority and for carrying out the dissertation and the role of the supervisor is to advise.

**Participants are entitled to 5 supervisory meetings throughout the year and are responsible for arranging these with their Dissertation Supervisor**. Supervisory meetings can be held online or in person and it is best to arrange these in advance to account for annual leave and work commitments. These meetings can be backed up by email and ‘phone support.

**The responsibilities of the supervisor are as follows:**

* + To approve the initial choice of topic
  + To discuss and guide the participant on their dissertation plan
  + To discuss and guide the participant on research ethics
  + To support/advise the participant with any difficulties which arise in preparing the dissertation
  + To read and comment on a chapter/plan of work (no more than 1500 words) – Feedback will be provided within a supervisory meeting and timing of submission and feedback must be agreed with supervisor in advance.
  + Supervisors do not read full drafts of dissertations or edit/proof read your work

The supervisor does not, however, have any responsibility for the preparation of the dissertation itself, for the ideas and material that it includes, or for the standard that it attains. The dissertation must be entirely your own work, and the help given by the supervisor must necessarily be limited.

**The participant’s responsibilities and how to make the most of your supervisions:**

* To initiate and maintain contact with your supervisor
* To summarise each supervision meeting using the supervision record form
* To make the most of their supervision, participants should submit material for discussion in advance of each meeting. This could be agreed with the supervisor at the end of each supervision.
* Participants should set the agenda and inform the supervisor of what they wish to discuss. Supervisions are for your benefit; it is therefore to your advantage if you take the lead on how to plan each supervision meeting.

Key topics for discussion with your supervisor during the year usually include:

* Your original proposal and its feasibility
* Ethics, research design, methodology and analysis
* Relevant literature on the topic
* Progress
* Chapter plans and writing up

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Areas to consider | |
| Is there anything specific you (the participant) want your dissertation supervisor to know about how you wish to be supported? |  |
| Has a joint meeting been arranged with the line manager/coach to discuss support needs |  |
| What date will you (the participant) send over your scheduled dates for reflexive groups? |  |
| How will you work together to get back on track if a deadline has been missed? |  |
| How will you let your dissertation supervisor know if you are struggling and/or need additional support? |  |
| How often will you have contact with your dissertation supervisor (and how?) |  |
| Any other info: |  |

Participant’s signature:

Dissertation supervisor’s signature:

Date:

# Annex 6: Running a Reflexive Group

Before the session

An anonymised genogram or ecomap of the relational ‘system’ concerned e.g. professional network, family, organisation, should be provided to the group before the session. The role of peers is to enquire about the ethical positions, intentions, actions and effects of the social worker to enable reflexivity, research mindedness and continual development in the efficacy of their practice.

The ‘presenter’ should identify a 4-5 min excerpt from a recent episode of practice. Presenters are able to play a recording or share transcripts if the appropriate consent has been obtained from those involved.

The presenter should then identify a dilemma related to their own practice, which is illustrated by the practice excerpt.

What is a practice dilemma?

A ‘practice dilemma’ is any intervention, behaviour, patterned interaction or outcome that you wish to explore in further detail. The dilemma relates to your own actions and beliefs. It is focused on what you are doing and how you are developing your practice, rather than a case dilemma (which usually use family interactions as a starting point for consultation). Some examples are included below for your consideration:

* *You may notice that you dilute or minimise concerns when explaining these to a parent. Perhaps you become uncomfortable, anxious or hesitant in the conversation. You may offer lots of praise to a parent and then follow with a very big ‘BUT’, negating earlier comments. You may avoid raising concerns altogether and present a transcript showing an opportunity to do so that you subtly or too quickly diverted to another less challenging topic.*
* *You may find the voice of one agency is dominant, and you are unsure how to use your professional authority to invite in other perspectives.*
* *You find that you often privilege parent needs within your assessments and would like to explore how to bring in the voice of the child more effectively.*
* *You struggle to have difficult conversations with your manager or colleagues and would like to investigate ways of doing this more effectively.*
* *You are unsure how to move beyond empathy when upsetting or distressing information is shared by a family member (history of abuse as a child, loss associated with caring for a child with a disability approaching adulthood, isolation, depression and poverty which seem to have no resolution).*

During the consultation

Each consultation usually lasts no more than 35-40 minutes. You have 5 mins to introduce the dilemma in your practice and your initial ideas about how you find yourself in this position and any ideas you have about how to go forward. Brief your colleagues about the genogram/ecomap and your position in the system. Peers have 5 mins to read the transcript and ask clarifying questions.

Your colleagues will discuss the dilemma for 5-7 mins, offering hypothesis about your position and considering circular and reflexive questions to test their hypotheses with the aim of supporting you to construct new meanings about the practice dilemma. This discussion should be appreciative, curious and empathetic of each person’s position. Research and theory should be used to inform their hypotheses about your dilemma.

A colleague will then interview you for 10 mins, informed by the discussion with a view to widening your understanding of the dilemma and choices for action. The other participants are observers. This should not be a group interview. Observers and interviewer should be mindful of the relational contribution to the usefulness of the interview – respectful, trusting and boundaried. Observers may wish to turn away from the interviewing pair to create a boundary and take up a listening position.

This is followed by a 5 min reflecting conversation by the observers, which is followed by thoughts from you about how the consultation has been useful, any impact on your thinking about the practice dilemma and what you might do differently as a result.

Summary of structure

* + Introduction (by Participant/’You’) – 5 min
  + Reading and Clarifying Questions (peers) – 5 min
  + Hypotheses and Interviewing Planning (peers only) – 5-7 min
  + Interview (You interviewed by 1 peer) – 10 min
  + Reflecting Conversation (observers only) – 5 min
  + Debrief (You only) - 3 min