

Prifysgol Wreccsam Wrexham University

Module specification

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Module Code	SWK702
Module Title	Legal Knowledge within Social Work Contexts
Level	7
Credit value	30
Faculty	Social and Life Sciences
HECoS Code	100503
Cost Code	GASW
Pre-requisite module	None

Programmes in which module to be offered

Programme title	Core/Optional/Standalone
MA Social Work (Qualified status)	Core

Breakdown of module hours

Learning and teaching hours	31 hrs
Placement tutor support hours	0 hrs
Supervised learning hours e.g. practical classes, workshops	0 hrs
Project supervision hours	0 hrs
Active learning and teaching hours total	31 hrs
Placement hours	0 hrs
Guided independent study hours	269 hrs
Module duration (Total hours)	300 hrs

Module aims

To examine how social workers interact with and contribute to legal frameworks in their work with individuals, families and communities. This requires the acquisition of knowledge and skills in working within legal and policy frameworks that relate to social work provision in Wales. The module will critically examine the conflicting imperatives that arise when practicing ethical social work within the perimeters of legalisation and policy.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the end of this module, students will be able to:

1	Identify and critically analyse the impact of legal frameworks and their accompanying guidance on individuals, families and carers with a specific emphasis on social work practice in Wales.
2	Identify and critically analyse current case law, and its practice implications, and consider its effect on those needing care and support.
3	Critically analyse how the interaction of law and social work practice can create conflicting personal and professional imperatives
4	Critically analyse how to apply legal framework processes in a co-productive and anti-oppressive manner
5	Demonstrate accountability through module engagement

Assessment

Indicative Assessment Tasks:

Assessment 1: 5,000-word case study assignment which critically analyses legal frameworks used for individuals in crisis and how longer-term packages of care and support can be implemented to promote wellbeing, utilising the co-production of law within a context of anti-oppressive practice in Wales.

Assessment 2: Attendance requirement

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Duration/Word Count	Weighting (%)	Alternative assessment, if applicable
1	1,2,3,4	Written Assignment	4,000	100%	N/A
2	5	Attendance	N/A	Pass/fail	N/A

Derogations

N/A

Learning and Teaching Strategies

The module will use a variety of methods for teaching & learning, including lectures, groupwork, discussion, links to resources, lecture notes, etc. Practitioner and Outside In participation will be a feature, including use of materials (e.g. written accounts etc.) and visiting speakers. Practice examples will be used in the form of case studies, drawing on students' own experience and talks/workshops delivered by social workers and social care practitioners. The module will adhere to the ALF framework to provide a student centred learning experience whereby a range of materials and learning opportunities will be made available on Moodle to meet their individual needs.

Welsh Elements

Students can present their work, access forms, resources, email correspondence, placement support and personal tutorials in Welsh.

Indicative Syllabus Outline

- The legislative context for Wales and the ways in which it complements legislation used in the broader context of the UK.
- Social work and related primary legislation.
- Case law with a particular focus on the safeguarding of people, mental health, mental capacity and the Deprivation of Liberties.
- The policy frameworks and accompanying guidance from Welsh Government to support approaches to social work with children and adults.
- A critical analysis of human rights frameworks and anti- discriminatory practice within the context of using law in practice.
- A critical exploration of how different legal frameworks can interact to create potentially conflicting outcomes for those individuals, carers, families, communities, and organisations engaged in the legal process.

Indicative Bibliography

Please note the essential reads and other indicative reading are subject to annual review and update.

Essential Reads:

Brammer, A. (2020), *Social Work Law*. 5th ed. Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.

Livingston, W., Redcliffe, J and Quinn Aziz, A. (eds.) (2023), *Social Work in Wales*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Other indicative reading:

Abbott, S. (2022), 'Decision Making by Practitioners in the Social Professions Involved in Compulsory Admission to Mental Health Hospital: A Scoping Review'. *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 52, pp. 1916–1933.

<https://academic.oup.com/bjsw/article/52/4/1916/6333773?login=true>

Bernard, C. (2022), *Intersectionality for Social Workers: A Practical Introduction to Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge.

Braye, S. & Preston-Shoot, M. (2016), *Practising Social Work Law*. 4th ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Brown, R., Martin, D., Hickman, N. and Barber, P. (2023), *Mental health law in England & Wales: A guide for mental health professionals*. 5th ed. London: Learning Matters.

Carr, H. and Goosey, D. (2021), *Law for Social Workers*. 16th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chisnell, C. and Kelly, C. (2019), *Safeguarding in Social Work practice; A Lifespan Approach*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications.

Johns, R. (2023), *Using the Law in Social Work*. 9th ed. London: Learning Matters.

Mental Health Act 1983. [online]. Available from:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/20/section/7>. [Accessed 26th February 2026].

Mental Health Wales Measure 2010. [online]. Available from:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2010/7/contents>. [Accessed 26th February, 2026.]

Reamer, F. (2018), *Social Work Values and Ethics*. 5th ed. New York: Columbia University Press.

Sabbagh, M., and Korgaonkar, G. (2022), *Social Work Law, Ethics & Social Policy*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Thompson, N. (2020), *Anti-Discriminatory Practice: Equality, Diversity and Social Justice*. 7th ed. London: Macmillan Education.

Administrative Information

For office use only	
Initial approval date	March 2026
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