

Module specification

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Module Code	SWK705
Module Title	Safeguarding and Social Work Practice with Children, Families and Adults
Level	7
Credit value	30 Credits
Faculty	FSLS
HECoS Code	100503
Cost Code	GASW
Pre-requisite module	N/A

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

This module provides students with comprehensive knowledge and a critical understanding of contemporary social work safeguarding practice with children, young people, families and adults who may be at risk of harm within the Welsh context. It integrates theory, policy, law, and evidence-informed practice to support the development of safe, ethical, anti-oppressive and effective safeguarding practice across the life course.

Drawing on the historical development of safeguarding policy and legislation, the module explores how professional judgement has evolved and how accountability, and professional

boundaries shape safeguarding practice. The module critically examines early intervention, prevention and wellbeing promotion alongside statutory safeguarding responsibilities, exploring the tensions that arise between promoting wellbeing and responding to risk. Students will also consider how risk is constructed and influenced by public concern, organisational pressures and multi-agency contexts, developing the capacity for complex, ethically informed safeguarding decision-making.

Aims

- To develop critical understanding of safeguarding practice with children, young people, families and adults.
- To explore structural, social and personal difficulties that affect adults, children and families, and which may lead to the need for social work intervention.
- To enable students to apply theory, law, policy and research to complex practice situations.
- To develop skills in assessment, intervention, partnership working, emotional intelligence, communication, voice and control and professional decision-making.
- To promote anti-oppressive, rights-based and strengths-based social work practice.
- Encouraging students to develop the ability to critically evaluate theories, policies, legal and statutory requirements, systems and practice.
- Exploring contemporary policy developments in devolved Wales and considering research and good practice in Wales and beyond that can be used to inform, influence and shape service provision and social work practice.

Module Learning Outcomes

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

1	Critically analyse historical, policy, and practice developments shaping safeguarding in Wales, and evaluate their implications for protecting children, young people, families, and adults.
2	Critically analyse and appraise sources of evidence that underpin safeguarding practice in Wales.
3	Critically evaluate safeguarding and early intervention practice, using theory, research, and evidence to support wellbeing and prevent harm.
4	Analyse how risk is constructed and influences safeguarding decisions in practice.
5	Identify and address ethical dilemmas in safeguarding practice, and partnership working across multi-agency contexts.

Assessment

Indicative Assessment Tasks: Coursework which critically analyses the safeguarding processes with children, families and adults.

This assignment requires you to produce coursework examining safeguarding practice across the lifespan in Wales. Using one child safeguarding case scenario and one adult safeguarding case scenario (provided by the module team or selected from approved sources), you will critically analyse safeguarding processes with children, young people, families, and adults at risk



of harm. Students are expected to produce a critical analysis of safeguarding practice, evaluation of risk, and ethical decision-making across children, families, and adults.

As part of your work, you will create a single fictional newspaper headline that frames the angle of your article. The headline should illustrate how risk may be constructed across public, organisational, and professional discourses, and serve as a lens through which you critically analyse the case scenarios.

Assessment 1: Coursework – Article

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

Derogations

N/A

Learning and Teaching Strategies

The module is aligned with the University Teaching and Learning Strategy (Active Learning Framework), combining student-centred seminars, workshops, and practical exercises. Through embodied and experiential activities, students develop communication, emotional intelligence, and self-awareness, applying theory and evidence to complex safeguarding scenarios while fostering professional judgement and multi-agency collaboration.

- Interactive lectures and seminars
- Online pre-work or reflective activities before seminars
- Case study analysis and group discussions
- Applied workshops and scenario exercises
- Directed reading and reflective practice tasks
- Roll play – Embodied pedagogies
- Interactive webinars or workshops
- Digital resources (videos, readings, quizzes) to support deeper engagement
- Active classroom discussions

Welsh Elements

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



Indicative Syllabus Outline

- Key reports, scandals, and legislative milestones shaping safeguarding in Wales
- Evolution of Welsh safeguarding policy and practice
- Principles of early intervention and wellbeing promotion
- Integrated Family Support Services and similar initiatives
- Co-production with children, young people, adults, and families
- Ethical considerations in participatory practice
- Pressures of law, media, public concern, and organisational change
- Conflicts these pressures create for social work practice
- Understanding how risk and professional judgement is constructed
- The interplay between public concern, organisational pressures, and professional judgement
- Safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk
- Application of assessment frameworks and risk management tools
- Roles and responsibilities within safeguarding systems
- Collaboration, communication, and partnership working
- Common ethical challenges in safeguarding practice
- Building professional resilience while maintaining ethical, accountable, person-centred practice
- Critical appraisal of research underpinning safeguarding practice in Wales
- Applying theory to complex, real-world safeguarding scenarios
- Exploring the role of professional curiosity and emotional intelligence in practice

Indicative Bibliography

Essential Reads:

Douglas, H. and Barlow, H. (2023), 'A Joint Children and Adult Approach to Safeguarding' in Livingston, W., Redcliffe, J. and Quinn Aziz, A. (eds.) *Social Work in Wales*. Bristol: Policy Press. pp. 101-112.

Other indicative reading:

Bernard, C. and Harris, P. (eds.) (2016), *Safeguarding Black Children- Good practice in Child Protection*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

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

Coates, D. (2017), 'Working with families with parental mental health and/or drug and alcohol issues where there are child protection concerns: inter-agency collaboration', *Child & Family Social Work*, Vol.22, No.4, pp. 1-10.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/cfs.12238>

Ferguson, H. (2025) *Making Child Protection Work*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

Keeling, J. and Goosey, D. (eds.) (2021), *Safeguarding Across the Life Span*. London: Sage.

Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010. [online]. Available from:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2010/7/contents> [Accessed 26th April, 2023].

Munro, E. (2011). The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report - A Child-Centred System. Department for Education.

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7b455ee5274a34770ea939/Munro-Review.pdf>

Phillips, C. (2016), 'Wales' safeguarding policy and practice: a critical analysis', *The Journal of Adult Protection*, Vol.18, No.1, pp.14–27.

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2858185456/fulltextPDF?accountid=12838&sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals>

Pithouse, A. and Crowley, A. (2016), 'Tackling child neglect: key developments in Wales', *Research, Policy and Planning*, Vol.32, No.1, pp.25–37.

<https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/id/eprint/96151/1/NEGPitCROW.pdf>

Social Care Wales (n.d.), *Wales Safeguarding Procedures*. Available from:

<https://www.safeguarding.wales/en/> [Accessed 26th April, 2023].

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. [online]. Available from:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/contents> [Accessed 26th April, 2023].

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. [online]. Available from:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/2/contents/enacted> [Accessed 26th April, 2023].

Welsh Government (2014), *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 - Working Together to Safeguard People Volume I – Introduction and Overview*. Available from:

<https://www.gov.wales/safeguarding-people-introduction> [Accessed 26th April, 2023].

Journals:

Journal of Social Work – available via Resource Finder (RF)

British Journal of Social Work – available via RF

Child and Family Social Work - available via RF

Child Abuse Review – available via RF

Journal of Adult Protection – available via RF

International Social Work – available via RF

Administrative Information

For office use only	
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