

SOCIAL WORK Graduate Studies Programme



National code	621L50004
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Social Work
Study programme	Social Work
Study cycle	Master's degree
Type of study programme	Scientific (research)
Mode of studies and duration (in years)	Full-time (2 years)
Volume of study programme in ECTS credits	120
Degree/professional qualification to be awarded	Master of Social Work
Minimum educational background	Bachelor or equivalent

Purpose of the Programme

The aim of the Social Work study programme is to prepare highly qualified social workers who are able to work innovatively in different professional or academic areas of social work and to apply theories based on the findings of international research and innovative methods of social work practice. They will be familiar with interventions and be able to assess them in a professional context. Graduates will also be able to initiate and implement the research of social work and innovative social programmes, to develop services and affect national and international social policy. Upon the completion of studies, they will be awarded a Master of Social Work qualifying degree.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the Social Work graduate studies programme, students will be able to:

1. Systemise the theoretical approaches on changing and perspectives of social work theories in particular taking account of critical and social constructionism paradigms; to substantiate the application of innovative methods and interventions of social work practice in different professional contexts as well as the development of new social services and programmes.
2. To design and perform applied and comparative scientific studies of social work practice and its context; to substantiate decisions with evidence, to create conditions for the introduction and management of innovations on the micro-, mezzo- and macro levels, and to implement human rights and social equity.
3. To implement research projects (analytical studies) revealing the prospects for service beneficiaries, encompassing the creation of qualitative methods of research and knowledge of the sphere of social work and adequate employment of methods and interventions of professional activities.
4. To substantiate the appropriateness (fitness for purpose) and effectiveness of intervention while building an ethical interaction between the social worker and customer that promotes change, using special methods for working with an individual, family and/or group in unpredictable complex situations with consideration to the resources and possibilities.

5. To initiate the establishment and development of projects, programmes and/or organisations of innovative social services integrating empowering and innovative principles and methods of organisation management and interdisciplinary cooperation, providing for (using) local, national and international financial, human and structural resources.
6. To summarise the findings of analysis of the links between policy, resources and social structures when preparing recommendations for the improvement of social policy, development of the social service system and sustainable social development from the side of comparative social policy.
7. To link and reasonably convey professional information when communicating and cooperating with social work specialists, service recipients and representatives of other professions; to present actual issues of professional and academic domains of social work in an ethical and responsible manner.
8. To critically assess one's own further self-sufficient learning and application of innovative professional knowledge and research methods of social work; to reflect on one's own professional and learning experience and its impact on social welfare.

Career opportunities

Graduates of the Social Work graduate studies programme organise and run social work activities, carry out social work research, implement prevention programmes, administer, develop and implement national and international projects and programmes, initiate new social services, participate in preparation and qualification programmes of social workers, and plan, implement and assess intervention processes for working with an individual, family, group or community in the following institutions:

- Ministry of Social Security and Labour and its divisions; social welfare divisions of municipalities; residential and non-residential establishments providing social services (social service centres, foster homes, special care institutions, day centres and community centres etc.);
- Institutions of the education system: universities, non-university higher schools, institutions of vocational and other training;

- Institutions of the health care system: outpatient and inpatient health care institutions (including mental health) of primary, secondary and tertiary level, addiction centres and public health care institutions;
- Law enforcement institutions: institutions subordinate to the Prison Department;
- National and international non-governmental organisations.

Graduates of the study programme may continue their studies in doctoral study programmes in social work, sociology, educology and other study programmes of social sciences in universities in Lithuania and abroad.

Final assessment

The studies are concluded by preparing and defending a Master's thesis.

Admission requirements

Students are required to have a Bachelor's degree in Social Work. Individuals with a Bachelor's degree in other fields of social and humanitarian studies, those who have an equivalent university education in these fields or hold a Professional Bachelor's degree in Social Work are admitted only subject to the fulfilment of supplementary study requirements.

Supplementary studies

Individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree in fields other than Social Work must have studied the subjects of other social sciences (8 credits), humanitarian sciences (6 credits) and social work (8 credits) and performed Social Work practice of at least 10 credits. Those who have not studied Social Work subjects are proposed the following: Fundamentals of Social Work (4 credits) and Practice of Social Work Skills (4 credits). These subjects are to be studied together with Bachelor study students during the first two semesters of the Master study programme.

Those who have completed the programmes of Social Work field in colleges and acquired a Professional Bachelor's degree are offered a programme of supplementary studies (40 credits). This includes university subjects compulsory for everyone (6 credits), introductory subjects of various fields and areas (15 credits) and Social Work subjects (19 credits).

Curriculum of the Social Work study programme

Course title	Code	Credits	Course purpose
Compulsory subjects			
Theoretical models of social work	SOD5001	6	K
Methodology of social work practice	SOD5006	6	K
Group therapy in social work	SOD5009	6	K
Models for social work with families and their application	SOD6005	6	K
Comparative social welfare policy	SOD5016	6	K
Intercultural context of sociocultural problems	SOD5013	6	K
Paradigms of social work	SOD6012	6	K
Management of social work in the community	SOD6006	6	K
Theory and practice of supervision in social work	SOD6014	6	K
Optional subjects			
Field practice of social work	SOD6013	6	K
Experiential psychology	SOD5002	6	KK
Social gerontology	SOD5014	6	KK
Cultural anthropology	SOD5004	6	KK
Human resource management in organisations engaged in social work	SOD6011	6	K
Groups and teams in organisation	SOD5010	6	K
Management of social programmes and projects	SOD5003	6	KK
Social work in Europe	SOD5012	6	K
Research papers			
Methodology of qualitative research	SOD5007	6	K
Research in activities seeking for social equity in the global context	SOD5015	6	K
Designing social work research	SOD6010	6	K
Master's Thesis			
Master's Thesis in social work		30	K
Total:		120	

K – field subject; KK – subject of other fields

FEEDBACK FROM PROJECT PARTICIPANTS



From left: Professor of the Department of Social Work Jonas Ruškus, Professor of Loyola University Katherine Tyson McCrea and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Ivanauskienė.

Together with the lecturers of the Department of Social Work, Professor Katherine Tyson McCrea gives lectures on the international study subjects ‘Research of activities seeking for social equity in the global context’ and ‘Intercultural context of socio-cultural problems’ taught by way of video conferencing.





Professor of the Social Work Department at Vermont University (USA) Stanley L. Witkin worked together with the lecturers of social work on updating the subject 'Methodology of qualitative research'. Professor Witkin is Chairman of the Board at the Global Partnership for Transformative Social Work.

On the way to Vermont University (USA), from the left: Prof. Dr. Natalija Mažeikienė and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rasa Naujanienė (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania)

Prof. Dr. Natalija Mažeikienė:

Within the project, I took part in the Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development. At the conference, I built new international contacts, familiarised myself with a variety of scientific research projects and the perspectives applied. I will use the accumulated knowledge in lecturing the course 'Paradigms of Social Work' and supervising Master's Theses.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rasa Naujanienė:

While updating the graduate study programme, I had the unique opportunity of taking part in the annual meeting of lecturers, researchers, practitioners and theoreticians applying the social design perspective in their work organised by the Global Partnership for Transformative Social Work. Experience gained helped me to update the following study subjects: 'Methodology of social work practice', 'Methodology of qualitative research' and others.





Prof. Dr. Jonas Ruškus: *Participating in the Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development I experienced certain international approval and verification of points taught in the Social Work graduate study programme and study subjects 'Research of activities seeking for social equity in the global context' and 'Designing social work research'. Students reading those subjects will have an excellent opportunity to familiarise themselves with the topics of social work studies, research methods, variety of research problems and the international context of social work.*

From left: Prof. Philip Young P. Hong with Prof. Jonas Ruškus

Assoc. Prof. Dr Jorūnė Vyšniauskytė-Rimkienė: *Within the project, I took part in the 34th International Symposium 'Passion for Group Work: an International Conversation', which is organised by the Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups, and had the opportunity to interact with world-renowned professor Carolyn Knight, who shared her practical experiences and research.*



From left: Assoc. Prof. Jorūnė Vyšniauskytė-Rimkienė with colleague Katarzyna Olcon at Adelphi University, New York, USA



Assoc. Prof. Dr Daliya Snieškienė, who updated the study subject ‘Comparative social welfare policy’ of the programme in cooperation with Prof. Robert Gilligan (Trinity College), said: *Involvement in the project was very useful. It allowed expansion of the content and resources of the course ‘Comparative social welfare policy’ and enhancement of its internationality.*



Updating the study subject ‘Experiential psychology’, Dr Gedas Malinauskas (first from left) worked in cooperation with Professor Juha Perttula from the University of Lapland (Finland).



Trainings on experiential learning

The trainings were conducted and supervised by Bernd Jansen (Germany). Mr Jansen has extensive experience in consulting organisations. The informal learning programme was devoted to the professional improvement of lecturers teaching the Social Work graduate study programme. The abilities of lecturers to use the experiential learning method in the study process were being enhanced using supervision.



Trying out the updated programme – students of the Social Work graduate studies programme in the experiential workshop.



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