

# Doctor of Health and Social Care



## Programme Overview

The Doctor of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has been designed to meet the needs of social care professionals. You are likely to come from occupations within areas such housing, welfare support, residential care or supporting disabled children or adults. You should have several years of professional experience, perhaps at a senior level. You should desire to pursue an area of research related to, and drawing on, your professional work. Your research will create new evidence-based knowledge, practice and understanding that will bring benefits both to you and your wider professional community.

There is a strong emphasis on individualised learning and critical reflection. You will engage at an advanced level with varied academic and professional issues relevant to your own practice. You will develop the three key skills of independent learning, independent research, and sustained critical and self-reflexive analysis.

The programme is divided into two Phases. Phase One is the Taught Phase. You undertake three 'strands' of taught study, organised into six modules (20 credits each). You will also write substantial research Proposal (60 credits), during this Phase. The Proposal forms the foundation for Phase Two, the Research Phase. Here, you undertake a supervised thesis project, much like a traditional PhD student would.

## Why choose Liverpool Hope?

Many aspects of our research have been judged to be world-class. Our research activities take place across the range of disciplines - in humanities, sciences and social sciences, education, liberal arts and business. We currently have over 150 postgraduate research students conducting specialist research and collaborating with academic staff who are working at the frontiers of their subjects. We are committed to ensuring that the quality and relevance of our postgraduate research programmes are of the very highest level. We provide outstanding teaching as experienced by students on our successful BA (Hons) in Health and Social Care and BA (Hons) and MA in Disability Studies. Liverpool Hope has been awarded TEF Gold, for delivering consistently outstanding teaching, learning, and outcomes for its students. The teaching and learning is of the highest quality found in the UK. You will be taught by experienced academics who are active researchers.

## Key Information

**Award:** Doctor of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

**Study Mode:** Part-time.

**Duration:** Minimum 4 years, maximum 8 years.

**Intake:** October

**Entry Criteria:** Normally a First or Upper Second Class Bachelor's degree in relevant subject plus at least 3 years' professional experience. Masters preferred.

**Fees and Funding:** For fees and funding information please see [www.hope.ac.uk/postgraduate/feesandfunding](http://www.hope.ac.uk/postgraduate/feesandfunding)

**School:** School of Social Sciences.

### Contact Details:

Student Recruitment,  
[enquiry@hope.ac.uk](mailto:enquiry@hope.ac.uk)

*Disclaimer: Information is correct at time of print, however programme details can change.*



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## CONTACT

T: +44 (0)151 291 3111

E: [enquiry@hope.ac.uk](mailto:enquiry@hope.ac.uk)

[www.hope.ac.uk](http://www.hope.ac.uk)

# Curriculum

## PHASE ONE

Taught Modules to the Value of 120 credits, in three strands:

### Strand A: Engaging with Research:

This consists of two linked modules which explore philosophical and socio-political paradigms of knowledge, truth and values and the significance of these to research in professional domains.

### Strand B: Yourself as Researcher:

This strand is made up of two linked modules intended to support students in the development of their identity as 'researching professionals', considering (i) professional identity and values; (ii) practitioner research in context.

### Strand C: Research Skills and Methods:

The two modules that make up this strand provide students with a practical 'toolkit' to enable them to evaluate critically research and to design and conduct independent research of their own.

#### A. Supervised Research Proposal (60 credits)

This directly underpins the final doctoral Dissertation. You produce a substantial research proposal (10,000 words), delineating your research question and outlining your proposed research design.

Modules in Phase One cover carefully chosen and well-defined areas of particular relevance to you as a developing professional researcher, within which:

- particular strands of research interest and specialism can be explored giving insight into the nature of research in a range of professional and practitioner contexts. As noted, School specialisms include international social work, participation of children and young people social work methods, disability studies and
- skills in a range of research methods are developed;
- insight into the social, political and policy contexts of research in professional practice is fostered;
- you are encouraged to engage in self-reflexive learning, relating material studied to your own professional contexts and interests.

- an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of particular research paradigms is fostered.

The focus is on developing your skills and identity as a highly competent and self-reflexive practitioner-researcher. The three taught strands integrate with and support each other as you develop your expertise as a researcher in your professional field. You will also need to sustain a substantial commitment to independent reading and research related to the modules and your research interests.

Assessments are designed to offer opportunities for you to build your skills towards the point where you are able to successfully to conceptualize, design and implement a rigorous and original research project leading to the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding in an educational field. They are also designed to foster a critical integration of academic and professional knowledge and values. Critical reflection on your own practice is thus a sustained element of the assessments. Assignments will include seminar papers, research assignments, a small-scale research inquiry, reflective portfolios, textual analysis, reflections on current policy or practice relevant to the student's professional context, data analysis, research methods exercises, research proposal production and the final Dissertation. We provide timely, formative and detailed feedback on your work.

## PHASE TWO

In Phase Two you will undertake a rigorous, original and significant piece of doctoral-level research. It will be based on the Research Proposal completed in Phase One, and related to your professional practice. This phase lasts a minimum of twenty-four months. The outcome is a 50-60,000 word doctoral dissertation (thesis) which makes an original contribution to both theory and/or practice. You will be allocated a supervisory team who will provide guidance on the preparation of your Research Proposal and normally form part of the supervisory team for Phase Two.

## Teaching and Research

Research is a central part of Liverpool Hope University's academic life and vision. The School of Social Sciences is a global hub for research and teaching in Sociology, Criminology, Disability Studies and Health and Social Care. We particularly encourage applications from students whose research interests fall within our school expertise such as social determinants of health, critical analysis of social problems, and children's lives and participation, along with our two Research Centres; Centre for Culture and Disability Studies and Socio-Economic and Applied Research for Change.

## Future Career Opportunities

DHSC students are usually experienced professionals. They come with a range of experience from a variety of occupations. Students may have worked within mental health, dementia care, education or housing and addiction services. All will be expected to reflect on their experience and the wider working environment.

The DHSC focuses on enabling our graduates to become researching professionals. For some, this means a move into Higher Education, but for many others, it is about taking a critical, evidence-informed perspective at a level within their professional setting, often with a view to promotion and advancing professional practice and knowledge in their area.

