



**BIRMINGHAM CITY**  
School of Education  
and Social Work

## **Celebrating 50 Years of Social Work Education**

**1970 – 2020**

**Our History**



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## Introduction and Acknowledgements

This is a short incomplete history of social work education (SWE) at Birmingham City University (BCU) and its predecessor institutions, University of Central England (UCE) and City of Birmingham Polytechnic (BP). This version begins in September 1970. Social work education is still strong and growing at BCU today. This brief account is written within the wider contexts of the developments in social work education and practice in the UK during this period, alongside the ongoing changes, developments and expansion of the wider University.

This publication is part of many activities and events that took place in academic year 2021/22 to celebrate, commemorate and remember our 50 years of Social Work Education at BP/UCE/BCU between 1970 and 2020.

It was officially launched as part of our History and Exhibition Event on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022. In addition to the lived experiences, observations and verbal contributions of people involved in and closely connected to social work education over time at the University, this account is also based on documentary and pictorial evidence. As an 'unofficial history', it is contestable and with some information missing, it is incomplete. Edited by Albert Moylan who worked as a Senior Lecturer within our Social Work Education Department between 2007 and 2020, sections can be contested by offering up different perspectives or providing additional information.

Many people were provided with an open, no pressure opportunity to contribute to the contents. Some did not take up the opportunity, whilst others embraced it with various levels of passion, commitment and contribution. It would not have been possible to write this short incomplete account without the facts, insights and perspectives, provided by many colleagues including; Julia Tanner, Linda Evans, Victoria Coker, Colin Fishwick, Martin Willis, Steve Stephenson, Val Sylvester, Jane Dooley, Winfield Belgrave, Reshma Patel, Dorothy Boatswain, Albert Moylan, Sally Parker, Mark Doel, Mark Lynes, Chandi Patel, Helen Gorman, Annette Gurney, Liz Bullock, Peter Hay, Ann Stairmand-Jackson, Chris Hands and Clair Zawada.

A special thanks to **David Childs** for commissioning this publication.

Our history is dedicated to all social work educators and social work practitioners who have done good work but have never been officially honoured or acclaimed. There is an old saying; *"it's not what you do that matters, but with how much love you do it"*. The people on the receiving end of your 'service' will not forget how you made them feel.

We thank current and former staff who worked in the social work education teams at BP, UCE and BCU. We acknowledge current and

former students, practitioners, practice educators, external examiners, colleagues in other departments, employers and experts by experience. To all who have helped in any way, with contributions to our history; thank you very much.

**1970 – May 1992**  
**Social Work Education at the City of Birmingham Polytechnic**

In **1968 the Seebohm Committee** recommended that the specialist areas of local authority social work should be fused to provide a single community-based response to the range of needs that individuals, families and communities presented. Whilst in England and Wales probation work was not brought into the local authority services, it continued to be part of the new generic social work programmes that were designed to meet the workforce requirements of Social Service Departments (SSDs).

**The 1970 Local Authority Social Services Act**, following the recommendations in the 1968 Seebohm Report, brought children's, welfare and mental health departments together into one social services department within each local authority in England and Wales. Segregated and separate workers in each of the former services were now badged as social workers rather than childcare officers, welfare officers, and mental welfare officers. The intention was that this would provide a community-based service more accessible to individuals and families. One social worker would provide assistance in addressing the range of difficulties which might be experienced. It was a service which was to be led by social workers and where it would be able to argue for increased funding, as it would now be a major local government responsibility and have a more powerful profile. The new social services departments were tasked with implementing the Children and Young Persons Act 1969, with its emphasis on providing help to children and young people within their families and communities, and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, which promoted – indeed required – that more assistance and resources should be available to 'disabled' and older people within their own homes and neighbourhoods.

At the same time the organisational base of the profession was transformed. In **1970 the British Association of Social Workers (BASW)** replaced the seven previous social work associations.

The Council for Training in Social Work (CTSW) was established in 1962. In **1971 it was renamed the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW)**. On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1971 CCETSW replaced six separate UK training councils and took responsibility for the education and training of social workers. It replaced the Central Training Council in Child Care, the Council for Training in Social Work, and the Recruitment and Training Committee of the Advisory Council for

Probation and After-Care. The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work was, from 1971 to 2001, the statutory authority charged with promoting education and training in social work, recognising courses and awarding qualifications throughout the United Kingdom.

Through CCETSW, two professional awards were made available to social work students - the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) and the Certificate in Social Services (CSS) for social care staff.

### **The Formation of City of Birmingham Polytechnic**

In the 1960s, changes were made to the higher education system in England creating an expansion of polytechnics as a more vocationally orientated alternative to the typical university.

In 1967, The City of Birmingham Education Committee was invited to submit a scheme for the establishment of a polytechnic bringing together a number of different colleges in the city. **The City of Birmingham Polytechnic was designated in 1971** by then Education Secretary Margaret Thatcher. Five Colleges were brought together to become City of Birmingham Polytechnic.

The five colleges were.

**Birmingham College of Art** has its roots back in October 1843, when the Birmingham Society of Artists opened the Birmingham Government School of Design. In 1884 the School evolved into Birmingham College of Art, moving to a beautiful purpose-built Venetian Gothic building on Margaret Street designed by John Chamberlain. Today Margaret Street, which still houses our Department of Art, is a Grade 1 Listed Building.

In 1888 Birmingham School of Jewellery, which was based in Ellen Street, became a branch of the College of Art. Two years later a new building was opened in Vittoria Street which has been the School's home ever since.

The School of Architecture was established within the College of Art in 1909 and won Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) recognition in 1923 and 1930 to become one of the UK's major schools of architecture. On entry into the Polytechnic, the School became a leading department of the Faculty of the Built Environment.

**Birmingham School of Music** developed as a department of the Birmingham and Midland Institute around 1859. After the school had been a member of the European Association of Music Conservatoires for some time, this was renamed Birmingham Conservatoire in 1989.

**Birmingham College of Commerce** was established in the early 20th century and became a branch of Birmingham Central Technical College (CTC) with its main teaching centre in Edmund Street. A new CTC at Gosta Green was formally opened by HM The Queen in 1955 and the College of Commerce moved to the site in the early 1960s. In 1961, the CTC's technology divisions became the UK's first College of Advanced Technology which, in 1966, became Aston University in Birmingham. The College of Commerce remained separate, however, before becoming part of the Polytechnic.

**South Birmingham Technical College** opened in 1961 on Bristol Road. In the early 1970s, the College's departments moved to new buildings in Perry Barr and the South Birmingham site was later occupied by Bournville College of Further Education until 2011.

**North Birmingham Technical College** was created in 1966 when Aston Technical College moved to new premises at Perry Barr.

In 1975 a further three colleges were incorporated into the Polytechnic – Anstey College of Physical Education, Bordesley College of Education, and City of Birmingham College of Education.



**Early Prospectuses showing the original Logo of  
City of Birmingham Polytechnic.**

There are 5 blocks each representing one of the five colleges that came together.

## Early Social Work Courses and Students

Aspects of social work and social work-related courses were taught through disciplines such as sociology and psychology prior to 1970 in departments that were not specifically social work education departments. CCETSW records make reference to a Birmingham Polytechnic Diploma in Community Work and a Birmingham Polytechnic Combined 2-year CCO/CSW Course, Sep 1970 – Nov 1971.

**CCETSW records also indicate, our first intake of students studying the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) took place in September 1970.**

Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work Records

Name of education provider of historical programme	Name of programme (including different award levels e.g. MSc and Pg Dip)	Qualifying Award	Mode of study	Date of first intake for historical programme	Date of last intake for historical programme	Date of last graduation for historical programme	Explanation of required evidence to support application to the Register with a historical qualification
City of Birmingham Polytechnic	Certificate of Qualification in Social Work	Certificate of Qualification in Social Work		01/09/1970	01/09/1989	31/07/1993	Professional Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) Certificate issued by CCETSW

City of Birmingham Polytechnic Certificate of Qualification in Social Work Certificate of Qualification in Social Work 01/09/1970 01/09/1989 31/12/1991 Professional Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) Certificate issued by CCETSW featuring CCETSW logo, seal and education provider name.

The cohort (in September 1970) studying the CQSW were taught at **Birmingham College of Commerce in Gosta Green**, at the junction of Aston Street and Woodcock Street, Birmingham B4. At this time **Cyril Spector** was head of the Department of Economics and Social Sciences, with **Marjorie Ward** the course leader for social work. The College was linked to but separate from what was then named Aston University in Birmingham. We have seen above that Birmingham College of Commerce was one of the five colleges which came together to form City of Birmingham Polytechnic in 1971.

**Gosta Green Aston B4** in the late 1960s showing the 11-storey tower block building where social work education was taught in the early 1970s



Here is the same building (slightly lower section, in the middle) from a different view.



Birmingham Polytechnic was part of Birmingham City Council education provision. Also, in **1971, Birmingham Social Services Department was established**. At the time it was the largest SSD, serving the needs of approximately one Million people.

**Julia Tanner** attended Birmingham Polytechnic from **1972 to 1974** and completed a CQSW. By the time she had completed her qualification the social work course including probation students had moved to **South Birmingham Polytechnic and was located on Bristol Road South, Selly Oak**. This was the original location of one of the 5 colleges - South Birmingham Technical College.

*She shared she was the second youngest of that intake (at 22 years old) and there were 35 in her cohort. Citing that 'she was too young for social work' the first County Borough she applied to be seconded through, said no, but she did not give up. The second Borough she applied to, said yes! During her long career Julia worked for Barnardos as a children's service manager in fostering and adoption.*

In **1973**, there was a **national and international oil and economic crisis**. This started a retrenchment from an earlier commitment to increase funding for public services including social services.

**The killing by her stepfather of seven-year-old Maria Colwell in East Sussex in 1974**, led to a public inquiry. The public inquiry was accompanied by media-generated condemnation of the social worker and provoked public threat and vilification. It was followed by political action and legislation which encouraged and enabled the removal of more children from their families. The first iteration of what were to become increasingly broad and bulky child protection procedures were introduced.

The 1970s was also a period of, limited but helpful, legal advancement in recognising the persistence of core discrimination and oppression and furthering our continuous quest for a more equal and socially just society.

**The Equal Pay Act 1970**, fully implemented from 1975, began providing for equal pay and other contractual terms where women performed the same or broadly similar work to that performed by men.

**The Sex Discrimination Act 1975** marked the beginning of protections covering sex and married person's discrimination.

**The Race Relations Act 1976** began legal protections against racism, making unlawful, discrimination on the grounds of 'race' i.e., colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

**Linda Evans remembers;**

*"I studied social work at South Birmingham Polytechnic, Bristol Rd South. Bournville Campus from **September 1975 to July 1977.**"*



The CQSW (a two-year HEI Diploma) was taught here in the mid-1970s.

*"I was part of a cohort of 94 students starting a 2-year full-time HEI Diploma/CQSW in September 1975. **The cohort included people training for social work and people training for probation.** The admissions requirements included 'A' Level or equivalent, with a heavy emphasis on Social Work experience. A large number of the cohort were already working in statutory local authority services as unqualified Social Workers or similar occupations.*

*There were no black students in my cohort, and this was also reflected in the teaching staff who were all white and mostly male. Colin Fishwick was course leader.*

*Other members of staff included Pam Houghton, Ian McArdle, David Collins, David Cox, Sue Lane, Harry Tunnicliffe and Chris Adams.*

*There were 170 practice placement days – 70 in year 1 and 100 in year 2. I also did 30 days in a residential care setting over the summer. Most students were seconded by their agencies and most placements were in Local Authority settings. Ian Dyson was placement coordinator.*

*We were at University five days a week when not on placement – 9.30/10am start and finish between 4pm/5pm. The format was a morning lecture (mostly didactic) followed by seminars/workshops with the staff Team and also Practitioners, regular Group Tutorials after teaching day and individual Tutorials each term. First placement included an extensive Community/Group Work Project of 5000 words. For Final placement there was a heavy emphasis on Theory to Practice Case Studies - one of which had a 5000 words requirement”.*

During her extensive career as a social worker in Birmingham City Council (BCC), Linda completed the Practice Teaching Award to become a qualified Practice Teacher and assisted many students. After joining Learning and Development in BCC she led the Student Support Team from a number of locations including the now closed Chamberlain House in Moseley. She supported all the local universities including UCE/BCU, with their social work courses and offered high quality student placements across the city, including off-site practice educators.

When she retired from BCC in 2011, Linda took up a role as a visiting tutor at BCU and contributed to admissions, marking, employability viva's, and teaching and learning on the undergraduate degree. She also taught on the stage 1 and stage 2 practice educator training courses and performed the role of Designated Practice Educator (DPE). The DPE role involves mentoring and assessing practice educators in training and determining if they have met the practice requirements of the Practice Educator Professional Standards. At our inaugural practice learning celebration day on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017, Linda won the award for person who had made the most significant contribution to practice learning at BCU over the past 5 to 10 Years - **see picture on page 164.**

**In 1979, the conservative party under Margaret Thatcher come into government** promising, to reduce the power of trade unions, and decrease the size of the public sector. This resulted in a decrease in spending on social services, partly by concentrating on people identified as 'most' in need, and more private sector provision of services.

## Colin Fishwick

### Head of Social Work at Birmingham Polytechnic 1979 - 1992

Colin began his professional career as a School teacher in 1961 before taking up a new role as Probation Officer in 1963.

In 1971, the UK Home Secretary Roy Jenkins announced a rapid expansion of the Probation Service with more probation officers to be trained at the 'new Polytechnics' in London, Manchester, Huddersfield and Birmingham.

Colin informs us.

*"I joined City of Birmingham Polytechnic in **1971** as a Senior Lecturer in Probation work, to develop and launch the new probation officer training course. **We were initially based in an 11-storey tower block linked to Aston University at Gosta Green.** This was the location of the former Birmingham College of Commerce. At this time, as its main structure, the Polytechnic was based on a series of Departments.*

*Our department was named Economics and Social Sciences with **Cyril Spector** as Head of Department. Within this department a number of courses were running, including probation, social work and health visiting. **Marjorie Ward** (principal lecturer in social work) was leading the social work course.*

*Our probation course was initially developed as a one-year course following home office guidelines. In order to enter training each probation student had to be approved and funded by the Home Office. After one-year, successful graduates obtained the Certificate of Training in Probation from the Home Office. We were one of the first of the new probation courses in the country to achieve the expected number of home office sponsored graduates. Initially there were some tensions and difficulties in integrating the probation and social work courses. For example, Social Work regulated through CCETSW was a two-year course. In time, the Home Office and CCEWTSW agreed that (in order to also obtain the CQSW) following their initial qualification probation officers had to continue their education and training (for a second year) during the first year of their employment.*

*In the early 1970s, we moved to buildings on **Bristol Road South, Selly Oak.** This location, named South Birmingham Polytechnic, included a new faculty structure with **Paul Waddington** taking over as Head of Department. I remained in the role of Senior Lecturer Probation, until 1974, before becoming principal lecturer in Social Work. Award ceremonies were held in the Town Hall, in the 1970s.*

*In the late 1970s, we moved to a City of Birmingham Polytechnic Building on **Stratford Road** (now called the Bordesley Centre).*

*I was appointed Head of the School of Social Work in 1979 and carried on teaching with a major concentration on Legal Studies”.*

In addition to Probation practice, Colin’s principal teaching subject was Law for social workers. He wrote articles that were published in the journal ‘Probation’ in the 1960s and 70s and in ‘Social Work Today’ in the 1970s and 1980s. Colin was interested in factors conducive to durability in working class marriage and wrote about ‘ethical issues in marital research’ (with Jill Heisler) in the publication ‘Marriage Guidance’ in 1981. He had a number of books published through Pepar Publications located in Harborne, most notably Court Work 1984 and 1989, General Law for Social Workers 1988, and Community Care and Control 1992. Learning Social Care Law, written in partnership with Ashok Chand and Helen Gorman, was published in 2001.

Colin confirms; *“I moved to a new role of **Assistant Dean** (Staff Development and Learning Resources) at UCE in 1992. I was awarded a **Professorship** in 1995 and made **Emeritus Professor** on my retirement in 2000. I had many happy memories of teaching at the University and continued to be very active in the private, independent and voluntary sector. I have attended the social work award ceremonies at the Convention Centre until recent years”.*

Colin has held many governance roles in the voluntary sector including Family First, Barnardo’s, Relate, Parentline, South Staffordshire Family Mediation Service and Birmingham Settlement. He served in the statutory sector as a member and chair of West Midlands Probation Committee and on its successor Probation Board until 2007.

Colin’s additional contributions to the development of social work education and probation education during the 1980s and 1990s when he was based at Cox Building Perry Barr Campus is integrated into our developing history below.



**Above is Colin Fishwick (second from left) in a photo taken in 2003.** It also includes John Irvine (first person on the left), Robert Dolton (with light brown suit in the centre), Pam Houghton (on the right, wearing black), and **Linda Evans** - in the background, extreme right, when she was working with Birmingham City Council.

### **Victoria Coker reflects.**

*"I was part of a group of 15 students who started studying social work (DipHE/CQSW) at City of Birmingham Polytechnic in **September 1979 and successfully completed in July 1981.** Although I met two other black people and one of Asian ethnicity who had applied and attended the interview process, I was the only black person who received a place in my cohort. The course was challenging, but I remember enjoying the debates in class, especially those about equality. Radical Social Work was a hot topic!*

*We had open-book Law Examinations. My placements were at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and also with National Childrens Home (NCH) Fostering and Adoption in Ladywood. Most of the NCH are now closed. I was relatively young and recall a tutor laughing when I said, 'I visited an old lady aged 40'. Rose Gordon was Director of Field Studies (now renamed practice learning lead).*

*In my first year (1979) we were taught at this building in the city.*



The Bordesley Centre, Stratford Road Birmingham B11 1AR. Social work was taught here in the late 1970s.

***We moved to Cox Building Perry Barr Campus in 1980 for our second Year.***

*After completing my initial qualification, I went back to City of Birmingham Polytechnic to do the degree. Later, from 1995 to 1997 (as a qualified social worker) I completed a two-year Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Collaborative Community Care at University of Central England in Birmingham. Helen Gorman was responsible for this course with Annette Gurney”.*

As a qualified social worker in Birmingham City Council, and especially after completing the CCETSW **Practice Teaching Award** in 1993, Victoria had many UCE and BCU Social Work students as a **Team Manager** and as **Operational Manager**. She supported a team of practice educators and supervisors and often organised practice educator and supervisor training days. She was one of a small group that led the setting up of the **first Student Unit in BCC Adult Services**.



***Above (on the left) is Victoria Coker in the role of Practice Educator. This photo has become a consistent part of our recent Promotional Materials.***

Before retiring from social work practice in November 2014, after nearly 40 years of service, Victoria was – **Lead Practitioner** for Older People, Students, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, (DoLS) and Dementia – reporting directly to Tapshum Pattni - then, Assistant Director of Adult Social Services Birmingham.

However, she never left BCU and as a Visiting Lecturer is still helping with admissions days, and skills and readiness for practice, on the BSc (Hons) Course. She is also engaged in teaching practice learning and assessing practice educators in training as a visiting lecturer and Designated Practice Educator on both our Stage 1 and Stage 2 Practice Educator Training courses. She remains a very strong advocate for the promotion and achievement of all forms of equality including racial equality.

## **Radical Social Work**

The late 1960s, through the 1970s and into the 1980s was a period of global radical political action. This had an influence on social work education and practice. Radical social work involves understanding inequality, discrimination and oppression in the context of powerful social, political, legal and economic structures and systems as the root and underlying causes - rather than affixing the economic and social problems experienced by people to the individuals who are affected. Radical social work is about challenging, and changing unjust societal institutions and systems, and taken-for-granted unhelpful norms, rather than the disadvantaged individuals and groups. Radical social work texts

emerged analysing the structural and political positions of social work 'clients' and critiquing social casework as the dominant method of practice.

*Case Con*, 'the revolutionary magazine for social workers', first appeared in 1970. The magazine was a quarterly magazine and as an aspiring organisation of radical social workers, it complemented and/or competed with *Radical social work* in the development of radical social work in Britain in the 1970s. The magazine reflected a potent mixture of theory and activism. A fairly continuous theme was homelessness, with squatters supported when they resisted the bailiffs, and on occasions, families were sheltered in social-work offices to prevent their children being received into care.

*Radical Social Work and Practice* written by Michael Brake and Roy Bailey, was first published by Hodder and Staunton in 1975. The essays in this book posed questions and raised issues with the intention say the editors, to 'at least make the practitioners of social work uncomfortable'. These wide-ranging essays sweep back and forth across a vast canvas from student education and training (an elegant essay by Geoffrey Pearson) to problems of counselling homosexuals (Don Milligan in a perceptive piece); from the theoretical bases of radical practice (Peter Leonard) to political and sociological manifestoes for social action (Stanley Cohen's critique of deviancy theory and Marxism) and on the sham of community development programmes (Marjorie Mayo).

**As far back as 1971, Birmingham had the largest SSD in the UK.**

Serving the needs of a population of almost 1 million, it employed social workers with generic caseloads serving an increasingly ethnically diverse population. Offices were located in local communities and there was an emphasis on building community-based services for all.

However, the growing resources which had been targeted at the development of SSDs dried up as the economic problems of the mid 1970s onwards saw a rise in unemployment and cut-backs in social welfare expenditure. A succession of governments with a declared opposition to public sector welfare, sustained these budgetary constraints.

It was within this rapidly changing and challenging context that plans began for building an education institution in **Perry Barr**.



**In the early 1970s, the Perry Barr Campus was the site of building work** (pictured above) for what later became the centrepiece of the new polytechnic, the Attwood and Baker buildings.

Below is an architect model of the new campus for **North Birmingham Technical College** which later became Attwood Building (lower building on the right) and Baker building (high building in the centre) of Perry Barr Campus.



Later in the 1970s, the campus was increased in size with the building of what became the Cox, Dawson, Edge, Feeney and Galton buildings.

Here is an overhead view of the Perry Barr campus from the late 1970s. Attwood and Baker have been joined by Cox, Dawson, Edge, Feeney and Galton.



Social Work was taught at Cox Building from 1980.

**In early 1981 the 'official opening' of social work education at Cox building was performed by Dame Eileen Younghusband DBE.**

In 1955 she chaired a Ministry of Health working party on the provision of training for social workers, a rapidly expanding profession but with little opportunity for formal training. The subsequent Younghusband Report, which was published in May 1959, led to the establishment of the Council for Training in Social Work. This council was responsible for validating courses at polytechnics and further education institutions primarily for entrants to local authority health and welfare departments, issuing a Certificate in Social Work to those successfully completing the course. During the 1960s, Eileen served as a Committee Member of the Council for Training in Social Work. She was internationally known for

her research and teaching in the field of social work. Sadly, she died in a car crash in the United States on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1981.



Other, buildings were subsequently constructed, at the Perry Barr site, including the **Kenrick Library** (pictured above) and the estate eventually became known as the City North Campus.

**The Library was named after William Kenrick who was the first chairman of City of Birmingham Polytechnic in 1971.** He was a former chairman of the College of Art & Design and had a key role in the formation of the City of Birmingham Polytechnic.

William Kenrick was killed in a road accident in June 20th 1981 and was immortalised when the new library of the polytechnic opened in 1981/82 was named the William Kenrick Library. It continued with that name until at least 1991 or 1992 when the name became "just" Kenrick. It became the nerve centre of the university with the university's Directorate housed there as well as the main library and CICT facilities.

The 1980s witnessed unemployment levels reaching 3 million and new approaches to the provision of welfare services designed to break up the established patterns of state welfare provision.

### **Val Sylvester recollects.**

*“After obtaining experience working with vulnerable homeless people as a Housing Advice Worker with Shelter (1977-81), I studied Social Work full time (DipHE – CQSW) from **1981 to 1983** at City of Birmingham Polytechnic, Cox Building, Perry Barr Campus. **Colin Fishwick** was Head of School and the Course Leader was **Pam Houghton**.*



*The Cohort Size was approximately 90 (including students studying probation). The whole class was divided into Groups A, B and C, with these groups being maintained throughout the course. **Sudershna Aggarwall** - a long-time supporter of social work education at the university mainly as a qualified practice teacher (now deceased) was in Group A, I was in group B and **Jan Clare** (who also went on to teach social work at the university) was in Group C”.*

Val Sylvester is in the unique position of being among a small group of people who has had a ‘significant relationship’ with all three institutions starting with City of Birmingham Polytechnic in 1981 (as a student), University of Central England (as an Academic Teacher from 1995) and Birmingham City University (as a Course Leader from 2007 to date). These additional stages of her journey are captured later as our history unfolds.



*City of Birmingham Polytechnic at Perry Barr Campus Circa 1980*

Following the **Barclay Committee Report in 1982** the government signalled that the future for local authority social services were as regulators and purchasers of care rather than as sole providers.

**The 1983 Mental Health Act** replaced the 1959 Act. The 1983 Act defined Mental Disorder and aimed to provide informal treatment for the majority of people experiencing mental disorders, whilst providing a legal framework such that, such people could, if necessary, be detained in hospital against their will. **Approved Social Workers (ASWs)** were mental health social workers trained to enact elements of the Mental Health Act 1983. A section 12 approved doctor was a medically qualified doctor who has been recognised under section 12(2) of the Act. They had specific expertise in mental disorder and had additionally received training in the application of the Act. A period of Assessment or Treatment in hospital could take place following an assessment under the act by two doctors and an ASW. The second doctor must either have had previous acquaintance with the person under assessment, or also be a Section 12 approved doctor. A Mental Health Act assessment can take place anywhere, but commonly occurred in a hospital, at a police station, or in a person's home. If the two doctors agree that the person is experiencing a mental disorder, and that this is of a nature or to a degree that, despite their refusal to go to hospital, they ought to be detained in hospital in the interest of their own health, their safety, or for the protection of others, they completed a medical recommendation form and gave this to the ASW. If the ASW agreed that there was no viable alternative to detaining the person in hospital, they completed an application form requesting that the hospital managers detain the person. They would then be transported to hospital and the period of assessment or treatment would begin.

## Equalities including Anti-racist Practice in the 1980s

There were significant developments in legislating for, seeking and teaching about sex, 'race' and ability equality in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. This generated significant debate and social upheaval, perhaps the most polarised and contentious area at the time being the ongoing quest for racial equality in all its forms.

The following is a direct copy of pages 13, 14 and 15 of a historical account published by Birmingham Race Action Partnership (BRAP) in March 2015 named '**From Benign Neglect to Citizen Khan: 30 Years of Equalities Practice in Birmingham**'. It gives key insights into the issue of 'race' and racial equality in Birmingham in the 1980s

### 1980s BIG BROTHER AND BLEEDING HEARTS

The 1980s saw the establishment of three equality units within the city council: a women's unit in 1981, followed by 'race' and disability units later in the decade. In this section we use the **race unit** as a case study to explore the drivers, constraints, and activities of these new departments.

The 1981 Census didn't ask about people's ethnicity, but it did ask about their country of birth. While this would include any Brummie from a BME background now over the age of 33, it's still worth noting that 86% of the city's population were UK-born. About 4% were Irish, 2.5% Pakistani, 2% Indian, and 2% Caribbean. It was against this backdrop in the 1980s that the city council formulated its first race equality policies.

What, other than a 140,000-strong immigrant population, brought about this change? Perhaps unsurprisingly, it's difficult to pinpoint a single coherent reason. Different people provide different accounts. It's safe to say, though, that the following all played some part:

- **inequality** was becoming harder to ignore and some elected members – especially Labour councillors amongst the intake of the new 1984 administration – were voicing growing concern at the marked structural inequalities faced by BME communities<sup>15</sup>

- **riots in Handsworth in 1981 and again in 1985** violently brought the issue of race and inequality to the fore. Although Lord Scarman dismissed the 1981 Handsworth riot as a 'copycat' of events in Brixton a few weeks before, a survey of young people at the time found more substantial causes – for example, 40% had been stopped and searched in the preceding 12 months under bitterly controversial SUS (stop and search) laws of the time<sup>16</sup>

• **Birmingham – like all local authorities – was subject to national laws mandating action on race equality issues.** The Local Government Act 1966 was particularly important for providing additional funding to local authorities who had to make ‘special provision’ for ‘substantial numbers of immigrants from the Commonwealth whose language or customs differ from those of the community’. However, it was the **Race Relations Act 1976** that really persuaded councils to take action on equalities issues. It placed a duty on them to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.

**In response to these issues, then, the council created a Race Relations Unit in 1984** and established the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee to oversee it (this was soon reformed as the Personnel and Equal Opportunities Committee, marking an association between equality and human resources which has continued to the present day). The aims of the Race Relations Unit were to:

1. address issues of institutional racism and discrimination, both within the council and the wider community
2. improve BME access to council services
3. advise on the development of corporate strategies and policies to assist in achieving the above.

To achieve these aims, the unit worked in four broad areas:

- research and policy development
- community development
- co-ordination of race discrimination complaints against the council
- collection and dissemination of information on race relations issues

**By 1989, the unit had 31 staff in post, including race relations advisers in housing, social services, and education.** A study of the Unit by Candappa and Joly (where all the preceding information comes from) notes that Birmingham was the only local authority where the head of the race unit was Assistant Chief Executive grade – although the position was only upgraded after the 1985 Handsworth riots forced the council to acknowledge that race relations needed a higher profile. It’s also worth noting that during its life the unit had a number of different heads and was accountable to a number of departments and people. At one stage, for example, the unit was responsible to the Chief Executive of the council on policy issues, but line managed by the Executive Director of Personnel and Management in relation to its day-to-day running. Some have suggested this dual approach allowed additional controls to be placed on the Unit’s work or was indicative of the Executive’s unwillingness to get involved in the implementation of race policies. Whatever the reason, this is a clear example of how equalities have always had a location problem: whose responsibility does it come under? Is it an issue of policy or practice? Should it be mainstreamed across departments or centralised under HR? This confusion, it appears, was something organisations faced right from the start. We’ve talked about the establishment of the Race Relations Unit to highlight some trends in equalities practice down the ages – particularly how the unit was formed in a time of crisis and political pressure.

It is also useful to take a step back and look at some of the specific work the unit did. We're focusing on **1989: the year of the Poll Tax, the Rushdie affair, and Black Box's Ride on Time.**

Throughout that period, the **Race Relations Unit** was also responsible for:

**SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY:** Translation services formed a formidable part of the council's armoury. The unit translated policies relating to social services and housing, and produced 130,000 leaflets on the Poll Tax in eight different languages.

- **OUTREACH EVENTS:** The unit organised a ten-day multicultural festival to promote the heritage of the city's BME communities. In addition, a number of seminars and conferences were organised in conjunction with community groups to discuss and disseminate good practice in relation to race equality.

- **RACE EQUALITY POLICIES:** The unit, through the placement of race equality advisors in specific departments, helped devise equality policies in relation to education, housing, and social services.

- **MONITORING:** The unit established early forms of monitoring. For example, the housing department analysed annual lettings and racial harassment cases.

- **TRAINING:** Given how important this was to become, there is perhaps surprisingly little mention of training. However, the housing department reports providing training to staff on the needs of black and minority ethnic clients. In addition, the education department offered training to minority ethnic staff to ensure they were 'effectively trained' and ready for future career progression.

- **CRISIS MANAGEMENT:** The unit also played a role in managing tensions arising from events of significant public concern, such as the backlash against the Satanic Verses. In relation to this incident, the unit reported producing a leaflet explaining why the book was offensive to Muslims, conducting an assessment of the book's impact on race relations, and exploring safeguards against 'any future attacks on religious and ethnic minorities'.

Although we've focused on the Race Relations Unit to highlight key points relating to the council's equalities practice, it's important not to forget work being undertaken in relation to other marginalised groups. For example, the 1980s was a period of great activism in Birmingham's disabled community. With the formation of the Birmingham Disability Rights Group in 1985 there was a vehicle through which committed activists could lobby Parliament, appear on television debates, and – importantly – engage with the council around support for disabled people. One of the Group's key victories was the creation of **Birmingham Disability Resource Centre**. Although BDRC actually opened in 1992, it was during the 1980s that the council pledged its support and resources, and funding were found.

**Martin Willis taught on the CQSW course at City of Birmingham Polytechnic between 1983 and 1990. He was course director from 1985 to 1989 and his account must be partly understood by having the above context for racial equalities in mind.**

**Martin remembers:**

*“We were located on the second floor of Cox Building, Perry Barr campus and enrolled 90 CQSW students each year. Most of these students were training to become generic social workers, but 12 were preparing for the role of probation officer. All students completed 3 assessed practice placements during the 2-year full time programme, one of which had to be in a residential or day care setting.*

*College days started with a lecture followed by discussion and exercises in three base groups to which the students were allocated for the whole programme. Afternoon teaching focused on specialist courses and options including social work with children and families, mental health, older and disabled people, probation, community and group work. Each student was allocated a personal tutor with probation students having a tutor with experience in probation work.*

*Three significant developments occurred during the 1980’s at Birmingham Polytechnic which stand out in my memory.*

***Firstly**, the deaths of Jasmine Beckford and Tyra Henry in 1984 and the subsequent public inquiries (Jasmine Beckford, conducted by Louis Blom-Cooper in 1985 and Tyra Henry, chaired by Stephen Sedley QC for the London borough of Lambeth in 1987) became significant drivers of teaching content and critical discussion on the course.*

While recommending improved cooperation between social services and health, the Beckford inquiry also criticised the social workers for “regarding the parents of children in care as the clients rather than the children in their own right”.

That same year, 21-month-old Tyra Henry was murdered by her father Andrew Neil after white social workers from Lambeth Council, south London, were found to lack the confidence to challenge the family because they were black.

*My understanding of the importance of such inquiries goes back to my attending part of the Maria Colwell inquiry which took place in Brighton during the time when I was training to be a social worker. The detailed evidence of the consequences of repeated failures in inter-agency and inter-professional practice shook my naive idealism.*

The Colwell committee inquiry, chaired by Thomas Field-Fisher, QC, found poor communication and liaison between the agencies and a lack of co-ordination. Despite 50 official visits to the family from social workers, NSPCC inspectors, health visitors, police and housing officers, there was poor recording, a lack of information sharing, and a lack of any collation of case history.

Staff began to use the detailed material from the Beckford and Tyra Henry reports, including case conference reports, to ask students to consider and discuss how they would practise, and what support they would need, to ensure children's safety. This enabled us to explore how to connect social work theory with practice and develop students (and our own) ability and confidence to critically analyse and challenge practice.

**Secondly** – by far the most significant development was our work to create a positive emphasis on anti-racist thinking and anti-racist practice throughout the whole curriculum. When I first joined the teaching team in 1983, there were few Black and Asian - to use the language of the time – students on the course. One of the consequences of the work of the Birmingham City Council Race Relations Unit and Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee outlined above was their determination to increase the number of trainee Black and Asian social workers in the city. Birmingham Social Services Department (and others who followed their lead throughout the West Midlands) seconded their trainees to the polytechnic CQSW. As a result, Black and Asian students became a majority on the programme.

The partnership with Birmingham City Council included two staff joining our team to help with teaching anti-racist practice and to engage in Race Awareness Training. This progressive initiative was intellectually and emotionally challenging to staff and students. We had to work through polarised views about the agenda, purposes and approach taken. It was particularly tough for Black and Asian students who inevitably became the focus of this process. Their courage and energy ensured that staff had to explore how to address positive approaches to working with Black and Asian individuals and communities.

However, senior polytechnic staff became concerned about these developments and decided to set up an inquiry into the teaching of anti-racist practice on the CQSW programme. The inquiry team made up of external Black and Asian people, whilst supporting the intentions of the staff team, questioned aspects of our application. As a result, the emphasis on anti-racist practice was constrained. The great majority of students though continued to expect and welcome exploration of positive social and probation work with Black and Asian individuals, families and communities. A sea change had been achieved and there was no going back to 'colour-blind' teaching and practice.

**Thirdly**, in line with these two developments, we changed the way we assessed students from being predominantly concerned with academic theory, to becoming more focussed on the application of knowledge, skills and values in practice. For example, we created an assignment which required each student to write a critical account of an assessment they had undertaken during their practice placement. During their final practice placement students had to tape record a live assessment interview. Students then had to submit evidence of service users' consent and an analysis of the strengths and limitations of, and the learning they gained from, the interview process.

Some of these assessments were with people whose first language was not English by students who spoke the same language. Tutors with the necessary language

*skills assessed this work. We were aware that in Wales social work students could submit in Welsh. Imagine our surprise and disappointment when the University informed us that these tape-recorded submissions would have to be translated into English in order to be acceptable for professional assessment”.*

## **Steve Stephenson taught at Birmingham Polytechnic between 1987 and 1990.**

We learn from Hansib Publications (Hertford) where his book ‘Unbeaten Innings’ is available that - Steve Stephenson grew up in Kingston, Jamaica, and moved to the UK when he was eighteen years old. From his early years working on the assembly line at Chrysler to his role as a senior social worker and manager of the Malcolm X Centre in Bristol, Steve has dedicated his life to helping others. In addition to raising money for charitable organisations, his years as leader of the Starlight Youth Club in Luton are just one example of his outstanding commitment to the voluntary sector.

**‘Unbeaten Innings’** is the autobiographical account of the life of Steve Stephenson, MBE. It is a vivid insight into his love of sport, family life and career in local government; both as a social worker and as a prominent equality and human rights campaigner. It also highlights his dedication to tackling racism, both in his working environment and through a lifetime of voluntary work.

**Written mainly from a black perspective, Steve has provided an account written in his own words, of his experiences of entry into social work, including social work education and personal experiences as a black man working at Birmingham Polytechnic in the late 1980s as follows.**

*“I need to put my Social Work career into context in relation to my Youth Work career.*

*My specialty was working with Young People, but I was encouraged to train as a generic Social Worker to gain a broad experience.*

### **Luton**

*When I worked as a **Youth Worker**, I was invited to speak to Officers from Luton Probation Service, to discuss an issue that was identified by Officers. Question - It has been noted that the majority of Black Caribbean young men who came into contact with the Criminal Justice System were from one parent families, usually living with their mother with no male role model? This was a question about black families*

*and linked more to Social Work than Youth Work. I also wanted a degree and at the time the Youth and Community Courses were two-year courses.*

*Long before the Cantle report by Ted Cantle in December 2001 which created the concept of 'parallel lives' to describe communities that had little in common and had no contact with each other and the term community cohesion came in to being I have been involved in trying to develop an inclusive society as a youth and community worker and later as a social worker.*

*When I started volunteering at the **Starlight Youth Club** in the mid-70s many of the Black youths were alienated and marginalised, so I set up English and Maths classes and encouraged them to go back to college. Many of these young people had an identity crisis, so in response to this I set up the first resource Black library at the youth club and began to teach Black Studies.*

*During my 4-year social work degree course my thesis entitled "**Black Youth Unemployment Causes and Effect**" I asked the question "How is it that a group of young people who were born in the UK in the late 1960's come to be at the bottom of the pile of British society"?*

*This 1983 study was carried out partly on **Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham** and **Stone Bridge bus garage project in Harlesden** as well as taking into account my experience at the Starlight Youth Club in Luton.*

*Following the 1980 and 85 "uprisings" race and unfair treatment Black people had becoming a major issue in Britain.*

## **Birmingham**

*I moved to Birmingham in February 1986 to join the **fostering team in Newtown** and became the first black worker in the team. Due to my in-depth knowledge of the black community my manager Vivienne Meadows suggested that Race be added to my job description, hence my job title was social worker (Race). After the uprisings in September 1985 the white social workers in the team did not want to visit **Handsworth** to recruit Black and Asian foster carers. I took off my tie and went to the Black and White café in Handsworth. The work that me and my colleagues developed was seen as radical at the time but as far we were concern it was good Anti-racist practise.*

*BASW in Birmingham asked me and **Dr Carver Anderson** to carry out a presentation; we were then invited to Birmingham Polytechnic. I was a Tutor for four students as well as lecturing, in **Multi-Ethnic Studies**.*

*As a teacher, I specialised in Anti-racist and anti- Oppressive practice.*

- a) Black Youth in a Multi-Racial Society.*
- b) The Transracial Debate & Black & Cultural Identity Work.*
- c) Black People and Mental Health.*

d) *The needs of Black Elders.*

*At the time we had what was called the “trans-racial debate”, the placement of black children with white families which was for some a very emotive and controversial subject. Many Black children denied their blackness as part of the coping mechanism.*

***Dr Carver Anderson and I were two of the first black social workers to lecture and tutor at Birmingham Polytechnic; I set the first ever multi-ethnic questions for the course.***

### ***First Question***

***The first was about ‘black children and identity’ - All children are the same and colour doesn’t matter, discuss?***

*I developed guidelines for use in carrying out black and cultural identity work which at first some black social workers thought was overstepping the mark in relation to my role. However, on being told that my job title was senior social worker (Race) they accepted what I was trying to accomplish.*

*I felt that whilst they were taking an anti-racist stance, they never thought about developing such an information giving resource. However, I was of the view that if we were going to critically analyse the work of the white social workers and the department, we should offer solutions. People in the Black Caribbean community used to make comments like “you can spot some of the children who were in care, because their skin and hair is usually a mess.”*

*I approached all the barbers and shops that sold hair and skin products and asked their permission to put them in a directory. They all agreed to be included and were happy to do this as it would increase their profits. Some white social workers used to say the products are too expensive, but my replies were black people in the city also pay their rates and income tax. Our team became a team with majority of the workers were Black.*

***We were then labelled as too radical but what we used to say what they called radicalism we call ‘good practise’. It was no surprise that the work that we were doing became the norm.***

*In order to help with the Black identity work that I carried out with black children in care I commissioned a black shop in **Heathfield Road** to make some Rastafarian, Sikh and Hindu dolls. I also went to Harambee bookshop in Handsworth and ordered culturally appropriate books and set up a resource library for social workers. Later Carver Anderson and **Rajbir Baines** joined the social work team and fully supported my work.*

### ***Second Question***

***The second examination question was - Outline the development of Rastafarian movement from the 1920s to the present day? which came about because a***

disproportionate number of Rastafarian children were coming into the care system. It was recognised that Birmingham had one of the largest Jamaican and Caribbean populations in the country with a large population of Rastafarians.

Whilst our team was taking an **anti-racist approach**, we also had some issues of prejudice in our own community that needed to be addressed. A young Rastafarian mother was going into hospital for a few days and her two beautiful daughters aged 3 and 6 had to come into care. The mother arrived at one of our black foster carers' home, knocked on the door and the foster carer shouted, "Oh no, I am not taking these children with their dirty locks".

The young mother was quite distraught. I visited the carer and told her that her behaviour was quite insensitive and unacceptable. She turned to me and said, 'I don't mind you coming to my house; you are well groomed with your hair trimmed'. We struck this woman off our list of carers. If this was white foster carers, we would have said this was racism but unfortunately, we have people in our community who have been prejudiced against Rastafarians who are a minority within a minority. Some people are not conscious, and they require what I would call black awareness and black empowerment training.

### **Experiences at Birmingham Polytechnic**

I had another situation at Birmingham Polytechnic whilst there as a lecturer. I had set some examination questions and went to the reception to collect the papers for marking. A black woman came to the window and said, "You can't have the papers, we can't have mature students collecting examination papers". I was shocked and informed her that I am a senior social worker and lecturer.

She gave me a long stare and offered an apology saying "Sorry, I have never seen a black lecturer before". This woman had actually internalised the institutionalized racism of the polytechnic because as far as she was concerned all the lecturers were white.

Whilst lecturing at the Poly I was approached by the Editor of the prestigious **Adoption Journal**. I wrote an article in December 1987 entitled "West Indies, Historical Background of Afro Caribbean's in Britain". I consulted **Dr Clive Harris** who was lecturing at the Poly before publishing the article.

The article was aimed at white social worker and foster carers.

The Programme "**Subnormal: A British Scandal**" on BBC1 on Thursday 20 May 21, featured the story of Ann-Marie Simpson my Social Work colleague whom I have met socially in Birmingham several times. Ann-Marie sadly talked about being labelled ESN and also arriving in Britain, age 9 years old and having no relationship with her birth mother. This was a common issue for children coming from the Caribbean during this period.

In a part of my article in the Adoption Journal I made the following point.

In the 1960s and 1970s the reunion of children with their parents in Britain after long separation led to difficulties of adjustment not only to a new society in which they

were a very conspicuous minority but also to a new family situation with perhaps new stepparent, half siblings and no extended family to cushion the hardships. These were all significant stress factors (Stephenson 1987).

**In 1989 the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) made the following statement** which was never really implemented but discussed by social workers who were hoping for change. “Social Workers need to be able to work in a society which is multi-racial and multi-cultural. CCETSW will therefore seek to ensure that students are prepared not only for ethnically sensitive practice but also to challenge and confront institutional and other forms of racism” (Dip SW Regulation Paper 30 1989)

**Peter Fern in an article in Social Work Today 8 March 1990 entitled “Mobilising the Grassroots of Anti-Racism”** said ‘Attempts to tackle racism in social work training have met with little success. The most enduring and widespread response to racism on social work courses were apathy. It ranges from the crass “we don’t have any black people on our course so racism is not a problem”...to the sophisticated “we have got an equal opportunities policy statement and we have set up a working party, so it’s been dealt with”.

**Steve Stephenson MBE BA CQSW DM**

Prior to and during his time at Birmingham Polytechnic Steve Stephenson presented many **papers and lectures** including.

- 1) Black History Classes-Starlight Youth Club- Summer 1976.
- 2) Black Youth and the Criminal Justice System- Luton Probation Service. 1980.
- 3) Black Youth in Multi-Cultural Society-Luton Town Hall. Bedfordshire County Council Conference May 1985
- 4) Transracial Debate Seminar- Foleshill Family Centre- Coventry- 1987.
- 5) Recruiting Black Families Through the media- Shropshire Social Services for BAAF and Recruiting Black Families and Asian Families - British Agency for Social Work (BASW) Kent Street- Birmingham. 1987.
- 7) Multi-cultural Social Work Lectures (Part-Time Tutor) Birmingham Polytechnic-1987-90. a) *The Transracial Debate*, b) *Black Elders in Britain*, c) *Black Youth in Multi-Cultural Society*, d) *Black People and Mental Health*, e) *Black Youths and Rastafarianism*.
- 8) Multi-Ethnic Lectures- Selly Oak College- Birmingham 1988.
- 9) Fostering Campaign Interview, Central Television- Birmingham 1989.
- 10) Black Elders and Fostering and Adoption lectures- Nene Colleges. Northampton-1990.

**Colin Fishwick** continued to lead social work education at Birmingham Polytechnic during the 1980s. It is notable that in his **1984/85 annual report** there is a great deal of emphasis on staff development, securing funding for staff to attend conferences, ensuring academics had time to join with external statutory and voluntary agencies in project work and increasing research and writing within the school of social work.

**Law and Policy continued to shape developments in Citizens Lives,** and to influence Social Work Practice, Education and Organisational Structures.

A Report of the House of Commons Social Services Committee in 1985 criticized services for 'mentally disabled' people, many of whom were older people. It wholly supported community care but was concerned that people were leaving institutions at a growing rate when there were inadequate community support services. It recommended that no-one should leave an institution without a community care plan.

**The 1986 Disabled Persons Representation Act** attempted to give 'disabled' people more input into policymaking at local level. It placed a duty on local authorities to assess the needs of 'disabled' people for social services, take account of the needs and capacities of carers and inform disabled people about services. In the following year, the Audit Commission also criticized the slow, uneven progress of community care pointing out that hospital care was still more generously funded than domiciliary care, which put pressure on local authorities to raise charges and devolve services to the independent sector if they were to expand.

These concerns were reinforced by the **Griffiths Report 1988**, commissioned by the Secretary of State for Social Services, which concluded: 'community care is a poor relation: everybody's distant relative but nobody's baby.' It had always been under-funded and there was still poor co-ordination between health and social services. Sir Roy Griffiths recommended, among other things, a clear framework for coordination between health and social services.

**The 1989 White Paper, Caring for People**, acknowledged these problems, reaffirmed the commitment to high quality community care, but put greater weight than before on the independent sector. It stated, 'The Government will expect local authorities to make use whenever possible of services from voluntary, 'not for profit' and private providers

insofar as this represents a cost-effective care choice.’ 16 Local authorities were encouraged to identify areas of their own work which could be ‘floated off.’

In 1990 the Department of Health stated that it was ‘expected that local authorities will institute arrangements so that users of services of all types pay what they can reasonably afford towards their costs.’ These **charges** varied locally and were rising.

**The National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990** followed and attempted to implement these recommendations, without providing substantially increased funding, and, more vigorously than before, encouraged local authorities to become ‘**purchasing**’ (from independent agencies) rather than ‘**providing**’ authorities. It required social services departments to inspect services, establish complaints procedures and prepare Community Care Plans. Service users became entitled to a Community Care assessment of needs. Local authorities found it increasingly difficult to provide affordable care with the funding available to them.

The Griffiths Report on Community Care in 1988 recommended that local authorities should become brokers to a range of suppliers of care services. The National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 led to a greater emphasis on community rather than institutional care, needs-led social work, and provision of care by external private agencies.

**In 1989, a new Children Act** emphasised that the welfare of the child was paramount. Where possible their voice and views should be considered in decision making and there was a need to recognise and understand parental responsibility and for greater partnerships with families.

In this climate social workers employed by local authorities found themselves required in a situation of increasing demands and contracting resources to prioritise work with groups deemed by their agencies and the legal frameworks in which they worked, to be high risk. The focus on, and direct contact with communities which had been the hallmark of the 1970 changes was gradually replaced. **More distanced, formal contacts with people** using social work services that were shaped by

concerns with mental health problems and child abuse procedures, rationing resources, contracting out care, charging for care and reaching targets became part of the social work role. **Care management** was introduced.

It was towards the end of the 1980s and **Margaret Thatcher's period as prime minister** that there was the pivotal moment of starting to unwind the 1970s creation of integrated personal social services and of generic social work and social services teams. By the end of the 1980s generic social work approaches had been replaced by SSDs organised into teams working with children and families, and teams working with vulnerable Adults including older people and adults who were labelled as 'disabled'.

This pivotal moment was probably accidental rather than intended or planned, but the separate gestation and development of the Children Act 1989 and the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 set differing requirements for services for children and their families and services for disabled adults and older people.

The 1989 Children Act was based on partnership and co-operative working to assist 'children in need' and their families. In contrast, the 1990 HNS and Community Care Act required the separation of assessment and the arranging of assistance from the provision of services for 'disabled' adults and older people. The 1990 act's purchaser-provider split, with the thrust to promote **an increasingly privatised market within adult social care**, required quite different cultures, practice and management compared to the partnership working enshrined in the Children Act 1989.

The consequence, twenty years into the creation of social services departments, was that these departments developed separate divisions, and separate practitioners, for children's and adults' services.

## **The Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) 1989**

In the late 1980s there was a government review of social work education shaped by concerns about the need to establish standards required for a competent workforce. The review led to a new UK professional qualification for social work being introduced in 1989 - the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW). It replaced the CQSW and CSS and required University's to enter provider **partnerships with local sector employers** to deliver programme's which met national requirements.

Two-year DipSW courses began in 1989, with the first DipSWs awarded in 1991. The last DipSW admissions were in 2009 with the last awards in 2011. Alongside this development three post qualifying programmes for social workers were also established - in mental health, childcare and practice teaching.

### **CCETSW Rules and Requirements for the DipSW**

#### **What qualities and experience did one need as an applicant for the DipSW?**

All DipSW courses required applicants to have some relevant social work experience. This work can be either paid or voluntary. Selection panels would consider applicant's suitability for and commitment to social work. The length of work varied from one course to another. Pre-training experience could be gained with local social services and social work departments as paid unqualified assistants or unpaid volunteers, with voluntary organisations such as The Volunteer Centre UK Ltd and Community Service Volunteers (CSV), and with private agencies such as private nursing homes and residential homes.

In order to be a social worker, you will need to be open-minded and prepared to examine and even change your attitudes and possible prejudices. You may need to support service users to deal with racism and other forms of discrimination. Social workers require personal qualities such as patience, determination and the ability to help people face painful and distressing problems. Social work can be both physically and emotionally stressful.

#### **To qualify for the Award of the DipSW students had to provide evidence of:**

- integration of social work values in practice
- acquisition and application of the key areas of knowledge for social work
- reflection upon and critical analysis of practice
- transferability of knowledge, skills and values in practice
- meeting the practice requirements for the six core competences

**The six core competences to be met for the DipSW Award were:**

- Communicate and engage
- Promote and enable
- Assess and plan
- Intervene and provide services
- Work in organisations
- Develop professional competence

**In the meeting of the core competences, students must demonstrate achievement of the required values which were:**

- identify and question their own values and prejudices, and their implications for practice.
- respect and value uniqueness and diversity, and recognise and build on strengths
- promote people's rights to choice, privacy, confidentiality and protection, while recognising and addressing the complexities of competing rights and demands.
- assist people to increase control of and improve the quality of their lives, while recognising that control of behaviour will be required at times in order to protect children and adults from harm.
- identify, analyse and take action to counter discrimination, racism, disadvantage, inequality and injustice, using strategies appropriate to role and context.
- practise in a manner that does not stigmatise or disadvantage either individuals, groups or communities.

Thus, throughout practice, students must demonstrate that they have analysed the impact of oppression, disadvantage and discrimination. Planned intervention must take account of the identified issues in an integrated and explicit way.

**Practice Learning Requirements for the DipSW**

It was the responsibility of placement providers to secure assessed practice opportunities which were appropriate to students learning needs and to meeting the knowledge, values and practice requirements of the six core competencies. It was expected that programmes would normally spend half the programme on the learning of practice skills and half on the learning of theory and knowledge. It was required that students would have two periods of assessed practice learning one of 50 days and one of 80 days.

The students practice had to be directly observed on at least three occasions in relation to the six core competencies by an accredited Practice Teacher with or undertaking the Practice Teaching Award.

## Age Requirement

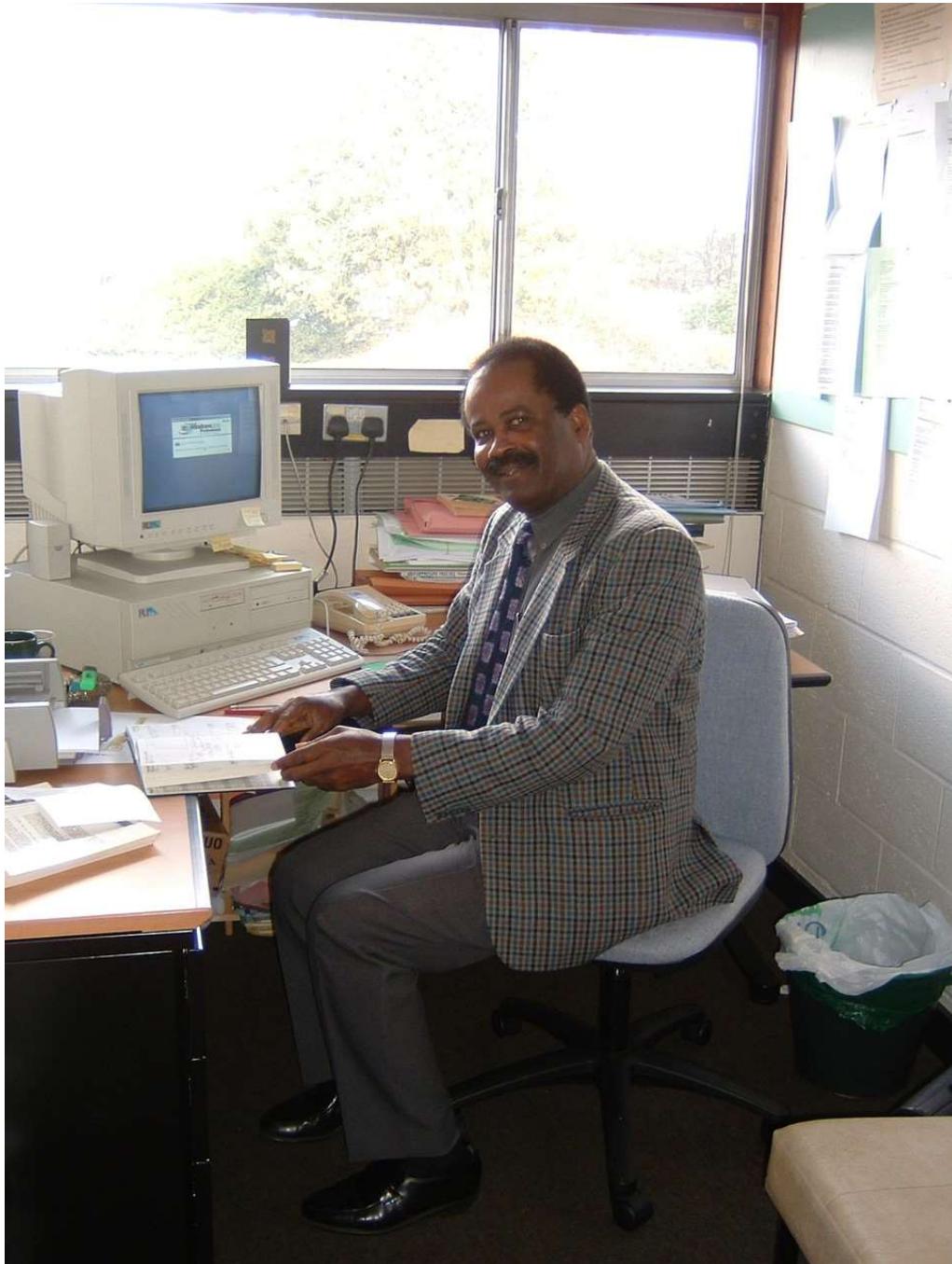
One of the CCETSW Rules was that in order to be awarded the DipSW a person has to have – ‘reached the age of 22 years’. This rule resulted in most courses accepting applications from people aged at least 21 years.



This is a picture of the social work education team at City of Birmingham Polytechnic, Perry Barr Campus, with names and key roles in the late 1980s – teaching ‘Britain’s most sought-after social work course’

**Winfield Belgrave recalls:**

*“I joined the teaching team at Birmingham Polytechnic from the commencement of my employment at the end of August/beginning of **September 1989**.”*



Winfield Belgrave, in his office at Cox Building Perry Barr Campus.

*The social work education department and its staff were based on the Second Floor, Cox Building, Perry Barr Campus. Colin Fishwick was Head of School at the time. Subsequently promoted to Dean, with Pam Houghton taking over as Head of School. Paul Waddington was also involved in the management and shaping of the then department of which the School of Social work was a part.*

*The courses taught during my early years as a teacher included the Diploma in Social Work. There were different pathways and specialisms from which students could choose to follow including full-time and part time routes.*

*I had previously worked in probation and further developed an existing **Probation Pathway** for students interested in pursuing a career in working with offenders. The probation Course focused on criminal justice issues e.g., structure of the courts, sentencing, custody, parole, probation orders, supervision, community supervision orders etc. Probation was always a smaller group of approximately 15 students or marginally less.*

*The Field Coordinator/Placement Finder initially had a choice of finding placements outside the West Midlands, especially for those students who were not from the local area. That said, this practice had a short life after Partnership Schemes with more local agencies developed. Issues of 'race', racism, cultural, sex, gender and sexual orientation differences were as hot as they are today.*

*There were full time and part-time routes available for students doing the DipHE/CQSW. Pam Houghton was instrumental in her staff and student recruitment policy and as a result both groups reflected the thinking of the time particularly in terms of widening participation as a principle of students' admissions. I had the difficult task of managing the admissions process which can hardly be considered a science. DipHE/CQSW Part-Time was approximately fifteen students. With DipHE/CQSW Full-time, numbers varied each year, but it was not unusual to have between 90-100 students. In fact, on one occasion numbers were over 120! There were times when applicants had to make a choice between an offer near home and one quite a distance away, which would involve high accommodation and other living cost to themselves and parents, especially when a financial grant was doubtful".*

Winfield retired from full-time teaching in 2007 but has remained a **Visiting Lecturer** and tutor teaching and marking across several modules in the now BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree. These include Equality, Diversity and Anti-discriminatory Practice, Introduction to Research Methods and Research Knowledge for Practice.



Picture of City of Birmingham Polytechnic at Perry Barr Campus in the 1980s.



This was the logo used in the Late 1980's.

Since its designation in 1971, Birmingham Polytechnic had been part of Birmingham Local Education Authority provision. However, on 1 April 1989 the Education Reform Act made all polytechnics independent corporations with charitable status.

**June 1992 – September 2007**

**Social Work Education at the University of Central England in  
Birmingham**

In March 1992 the Further and Higher Education Act gave all polytechnics the power to adopt the title of 'university'. A new name, 'University of Central England in Birmingham', (known as UCE) was approved by the Privy Council in **June 1992**.





*A vibrant UCE Perry Barr Campus, featuring Baker Building in the 1990s.*

## **Pamela Houghton**

### **Head of School of Social Work: September 1992 – August 1996**

Pam Houghton began her social work career in 1964 when she obtained a Certificate in Social Work (CSW). This started a substantial career in social work practice as a childcare officer, team leader and Mental Health Social Worker. She obtained a Home Office Letter of Recognition in 1968.

Her career as a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at Birmingham Polytechnic and UCE, spanned across 20 years, including the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. She mainly taught, Social Work Methods and Professional Values with an emphasis on oppression, inequality, women's studies and sexual diversity. Pam worked closely with CCETSW on integrating social work methods into social work education and was an external examiner.

She developed a project with Birmingham Training and Enterprise Council to improve recruitment from Bangladeshi, Chinese and Vietnamese communities into social work between June 1992 and June 1993. She had strong anti-discriminatory perspectives.

After she became Head of Social Work at UCE in September 1992, Pam organised a Conference 'Solidarity between generations: working with families in multi-racial Britain', in April 1993. She retired in August 1996 but stayed in touch with UCE for many subsequent years. Colleagues who worked with Pam speak with great warmth about their experiences of her. She died on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021.

**During the 1990s Colin Fishwick was instrumental in incorporating Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) Rehabilitation Studies into the School alongside Social Work.** This included reproducing and installing a 'felt-environment' at the UCE Perry Barr Campus. He worked closely with many people to transform the physical environment and bring in resources to enable students of social work and RNIB Studies to be prepared for effective practice. For example, there were two kitchens developed at the Perry Barr Campus, one with accessible gas appliances and another with accessible electric appliances. On another occasion, Colin worked closely with Patrick Haywood (Course Director, Rehabilitation Studies), Julie Franks (Lecturer in Rehabilitation Studies), Steve Jones (Installation Supervisor, GEC Marconi Transport Systems), Tim Hennessy (City Engineer, Road Safety Unit), and Councillor Mike Olley, to obtain and install a Marconi Traffic System that was specially adapted to promote the independence of and not 'disable' people with sight impairments. Overall, this 'felt environment' helped to ensure the successful teaching and learning of empowering Social Work Students and RNIB Rehabilitation students.

### **Discrimination and Anti-Discriminatory Laws in the 1990s**

The 1990s was a period of further progress in understanding the nature of discrimination and oppression and in legislating for improved rights for all people especially disadvantaged people in society in England.

**Stephen Lawrence was murdered in a racially motivated attack on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1993.** The 18-year-old was stabbed to death in an unprovoked attack by a gang of white youths as he waited at a bus stop in Eltham, south-east London, with his friend Duwayne Brooks.

After the initial police investigation, two suspects were arrested but not charged. A 1998 public inquiry, headed by Sir William Macpherson, examined the original Metropolitan Police Service investigation and

concluded that the force was not only incompetent but also **institutionally racist**. In addition, it recommended that the double jeopardy rule should be repealed in murder cases to allow a retrial upon new and compelling evidence. This was affected in 2005 upon enactment of the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

The publication in 1999 of the resulting **Macpherson Report** was not only "one of the most important moments in the modern history of criminal justice in Britain but also a further step forward in understanding the systemic and institutional nature of racism. The case was therefore used widely as an exemplar when teaching anti-racist practice to social work students and qualified workers at BP/UCE and elsewhere. It is still central to anti-racist teaching at BCU.

In **1995 the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)** was enacted. This limited piece of legislation defined 'disability'. After the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) was established in 1999 and tasked with reviewing the original DDA, it was significantly improved by the DDA 2005.

In **1996, The Community Care (Direct Payments) Act**, enabled local authorities to make payments to 'disabled' people to assist them to buy community services according to their needs. Teaching and training in how to assess for, manage and implement direct payments became a core element of social work training.

**Anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive perspectives have always featured centrally in all our social work education courses.**

During the 1990s some social work academics in the School of Social Work and RNIB Rehabilitation Studies, especially **Helen Gorman, Annette Gurney and Kumlaish Kumari** were important team members in helping to shape and deliver a **Postgraduate Diploma and MSc in Collaborative Community Care**. Overseen by the School of Postgraduate Studies in the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, this course attracted some already qualified practising social workers (including our long-term colleague Victoria Coker).

Helen Gorman who was course director of the MSc in Collaborative Community Care from 1992, remembers:

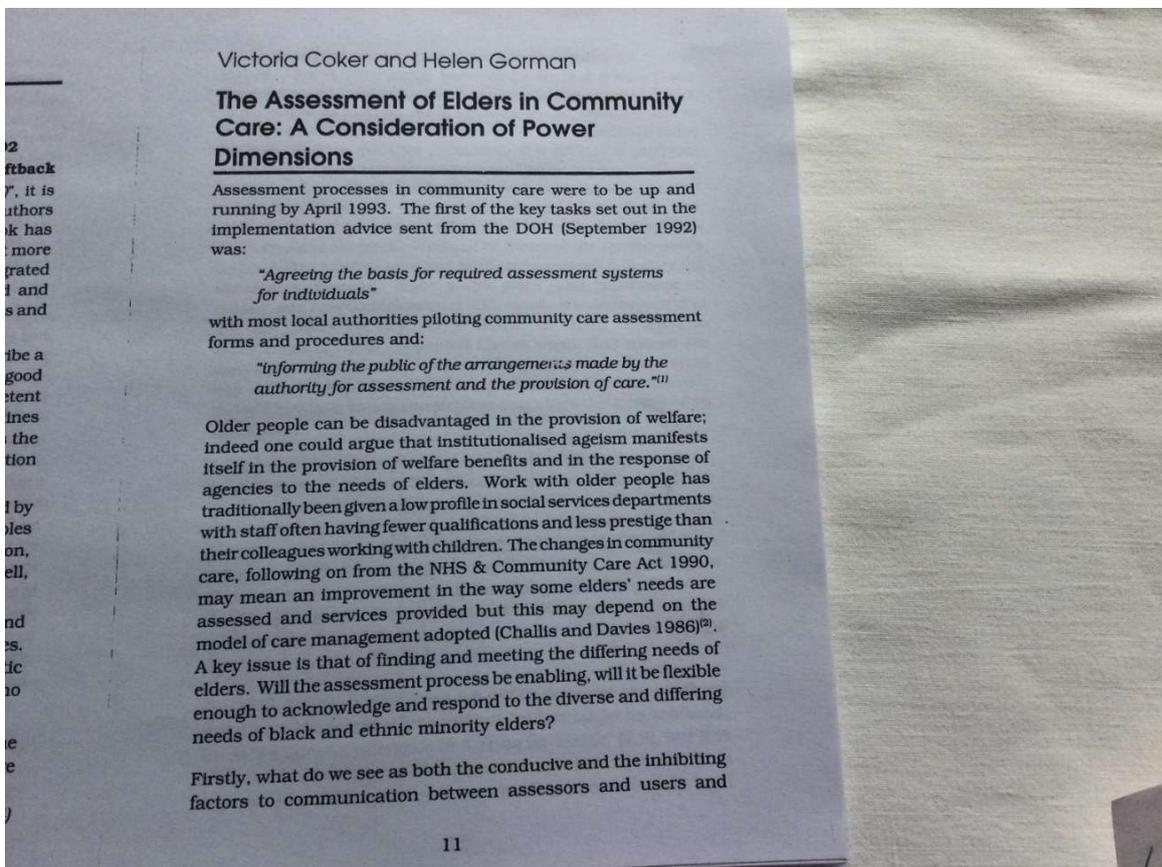
*"We tried to incorporate the local community in our training of students. The photos below relate to an event we hosted focussing on the 1993 European Year of Older people and solidarity between generations.*



Helen Gorman is included at top right of picture 1 and top left of picture 2



*"In February 1994 I collaborated with Victoria Coker in writing an article in the Journal of Care and Practice about 'The Assessment of Elders in Community Care: A Consideration of Power Dimensions'".*



## The value of analysing the interlocking in nature of oppression for those engaged in working and learning together in community care

H. GORMAN\*, A. GURNEY, A. HARVEY, O. HUTCHINSON, V. SYLVESTER & J. WARBURTON, with contributions from P. GOODWIN & C. R. JOYE

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**Summary** *This paper is written in response to the editorial in Journal of Interprofessional Care, 8(2), 1994 entitled 'Discrimination'. It is a co-operative effort from a group of staff and students—black and white, male and female, and of differing sexual orientation and cultures from the University of Central England in Birmingham. It is the outcome of a process; the framework was devised by a staff member and was then reflected and worked on by a small group of staff and students over a period of time. The process of working on the paper enabled a small number of people who elected to be part of the editorial group to reflect on their own experiences, both in working on issues of oppression within the context of the postgraduate diploma/MSc in collaborative community care and in relation to their experiences of the practice and management of care in the community. We discuss how the process of reflection on power and oppression amongst individuals from diverse backgrounds may be of value for collaborative working in agencies and for practice teaching and learning.*

**Key words:** *oppression; process; practice; interdisciplinary; community care; post-qualification.*

### Introduction

In this paper we explore the importance of linking issues related to the oppression of others in the practice context of health and social care. An understanding of the nature of oppression centres on an exploration of power relationships and an awareness of its interlocking nature between individuals and groups. In the discussion which follows, we use our own process of working within a framework of an interdisciplinary teaching and learning model to develop awareness and strategies that can have significance for, and be integrated into, practice wisdom and management at a wider level.

### An understanding of terms

In a purist sense, the dictionary meaning of discrimination—to note difference between—car-

“This was followed by an article in 1996 that was included in the *Journal of Inter-professional Care* after collaborating with Annette Gurney, Omari Hutchinson, Val Sylvester and others”.

## International Visitors come to UCE

During the 1990s connections were made with Universities outside the UK and Colin Fishwick remembers meeting with staff and students who visited UCE from Universities in Denmark, Japan and KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

**Promising investment in ‘Education, Education, Education’, Welfare-Reform and changes to frontline care ‘New Labour’ under Tony Blair, took power in the UK in 1997.**

**In 1998, The Human Rights Act** enshrined in UK Law, rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights.

The same year, **Sure Start** - A labour government initiative, is announced by the then **Chancellor Gordon Brown**, with the aim of "giving children the best possible start in life" through improvement of childcare, early education, health and family support, with an emphasis on outreach and community development.

### **Jane Dooley Reflects**

*“My friend Karen Byfield and I both attended as social work students from **September 1994 to 1997**, when it was University of Central England. Social Work Education was based at Cox Building, Perry Barr site. Social Work education was located in the **School of Social Work and RNIB Rehabilitation Studies** within the wider Faculty of Health and Community Care. The three pathways available were Children and Families, Community Care and Probation Service. I chose Children and Families. Pam Houghton was head of Social Work when I arrived, and during my journey at UCE Mark Doel took over this role in 1996, when Pam retired.*



*I recall making an application. With the application there had to be a personal statement to why we wished to study social work / social sciences and qualify as a social worker. There were references to be provided and one had to be an academic reference. You had to have two A levels and alongside completed voluntary work for*

*12 months or have experience within a social care setting. Some people on the course had secondments from their local Authorities / or the Home Office. Others were on career breaks from their local Authorities. Other students like me had given up their jobs and applied to their local authority for an Educational Grant.*

*Part time and full-time routes were available. There were approximately 90 students in my full cohort, which included 45 students full time (including 10 Home office / probation sponsored students) and 10 part-time students on the Diploma route. The Degree route admitted 30 students per year. I did a full-time three-year BSc Hons degree consisting of two years for the DipSW and an additional 'top-up' year to obtain my degree.*

*Some classes were general to all students regardless of pathway and other teaching sessions were specific to one's pathway. Throughout the course there was a strong emphasis on anti-discriminatory practice, especially anti-racist approaches. Most teaching sessions were between 9.30pm to 3.30pm. Lunch was between 1pm to 2pm. A register was taken, and I recall the social work teaching team were very strict about time keeping and attendance of students at the lectures.*

***Winfield Belgrave** was Course Director for the Degree and taught law and theories of deviance. He also led the probation pathway. In 1996 **Val Sylvester** taught about Mental Health practice, and feminist perspectives, and marked some of my assignments. Most assignments were essays, typed by the student, printed out and had to be handed in physically to the University. The student received hand-written feedback and a grade from the marker who signed and dated their feedback. **Colin Fishwick**, **Bharat Pattni**, **Annette Gurney**, **Pam Ogilvie** and **Ian Dyson** also taught on the course. **Pam Houghton** was my tutor in years 1 and 2 and **Annette** in year 3. The Education Welfare Service existed as a separate entity at the time and some students went on to become **Education Social Workers** in Education Welfare.*

*I had individual study support needs and remember excellent individual development and study support for myself and other social work students was available from the University. This included support from the **Personal Development Centre (PDC)**".*

## **Other departments and Colleagues**

The social work department has never functioned as a 'stand-alone' or isolated teaching unit within the University. Our growth and success and the development of our students has been dependent on and supported by a multitude of other university departments, colleagues and services. There are too many to mention here, but centrally include the library, the personal development centre/department and the 'Disability' Support Team and all the dedicated staff who work in these vital areas.

## **This short account of the history of the PDC/PDD and its staff was written by Clair Zawada in September 2021**

### **The Personal Development Department.**

The Personal Development Department (PDD) was originally called the Personal Development Centre (PDC) and was initially set up in the early 1990's in the then Faculty of Health. It was the brainchild of Professor David Cox who had a vision of an easy access support department that students could access for support with all aspects of their university work. It consisted of 4 staff members, Sue Lillyman, Meriel Hutton, Maggie Reeves and Sherron Parkes, Sherron is still a member of the PDD team today. The team's initial remit was study skills support which was primarily delivered via a range of evening classes in Academic Writing and Mathematics.

However, the introduction of a national 'Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS)' in the mid-1980s meant that all of the university's courses were in the process of moving to a modular structure with specific credits allocated to each stage and module. As a result, the PDC became instrumental in the administration of the CATS scheme enabling students to gain recognition of prior learning that could be counted towards awards, and the concept of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL, now RPL) became a recognised component of academic awards. In addition, the United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (UKCC, later the NMC) had set out its requirements for Post Registration Education and Practice (PREP) in 1994, meaning that all registered nurses and Midwives would need to maintain a Professional Portfolio for the first time. As this was a new concept for many experienced practitioners there was a demand on the university to provide support for the development of such portfolios and again the PDC became central in providing this support, and Portfolio Development became a key remit of the department.

Gay Johnson joined the PDC in 1997 to replace Sue Lillyman and became Head of Department a couple of years later. In the meantime, Maggie retired and Meriel moved to work for the NMC. Barbara Hepburn (now Barbara Howard Hunt), Angela Hull and Helen Gardner joined the department in 2002/2003. Helen, who was instrumental in supporting qualified practitioners in developing portfolios and engaging with ongoing CPD became the department's first 'Professional Navigator'. The Professional Navigator role remains a role unique to BCU and to the faculty and is focused on enabling students to make the best course and module choices from the wide range of options that are offered, whilst using RPL processes to maximise the value of any prior learning and experience. In response to this demand, Gay developed the APEL module in 2001, which enabled potential students to utilise their prior learning to gain credit enabling to access top-up degrees, whilst also preparing them for study at degree level. This module ran successfully for over 15 years, and led to several other portfolio and profiling modules, as well as academic skills modules, developed and run by the PDD team.

Demands on the department continued to increase, enabling the appointment of Jenny Peacock (Literacy Support), David Maynard (Numeracy Support) and Ethan Rhemahn (Academic Skills Support) in 2004. This increase in the team enabled the department to become much more flexible in its support of students and bespoke workshops and individual and small group tutorials were introduced. Philip Dee joined the department in 2006, initially as an APEL advisor. However, Philip's expertise in Mathematics enabled the department to extend the numeracy support offered and introduce statistics support for both students and colleagues undertaking Masters and doctoral studies.

Helen left the department in 2008 to be replaced as Professional Navigator by Tracey Cutler, who has since gone on to head up the CPD department from 2014, when this role was taken on by Nicola Clarke and Adele Millington. Whilst Nicola was appointed as Professional Navigator, her expertise in Reflection enabled the team to further develop support for students with Reflective Writing and Portfolio Development.

Jenny retired in 2013 and Ethan moved to the university's Education Development Department. Barbara left the department in 2014. They were replaced by Simon Cook and Emma Craddock. Simon remains in the department and forms the core Academic Skills Support team along with Rebecca Gibbons and Jon Potter who joined the department in 2018 / 2019 respectively. These bright young members of the teams have brought in experience and fresh ideas which help to keep the department's provision contemporary and relevant.

In 2018 Mark Hetherington was appointed to the department, initially as a Professional Navigator to replace Adele who was moving to join Tracey in CPD. However, at this time the department was asked to develop a Foundation Year program (for potentially 30 students, we were told). Mark took on this challenge and developed a course that has successfully recruited about 180 students a year, with a second January intake being added in 2020. The development of this course led to the appointment of the Foundation Year team, Julie Davis, Rhiannon Lockley, Sam Geary, Jess Lowe and Gary McLean, who are specialists in post-compulsory education and experts in the delivery of level 3 courses. The team continues to develop the course and take it from strength to strength.

This brings the team to a total of 14 staff members. Gay Johnson retired from the Head of Department role in July 2021 handing over the reins to Clair Zawada who now takes the department forward into a whole new era.

**Jane Dooley continues:**

*“Our award ceremony took place on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1998 at the Convention Centre, Symphony Hall in Birmingham. The chancellor of UCE at the ceremony was the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Mrs Sybil Spence. I remember having my picture taken in my gown and hat, after the awards ceremony with Pam.*

*Here I am on the left, with Pam Houghton on the right.*



During her career as a social worker, Jane has worked in increasingly senior roles with the **children's Charity Barnardos**. She obtained a qualification in Practice Teaching in 2005 and in her role as practice educator and practice learning coordinator within Barnardos has offered and overseen many placements for UCE and BCU Social work Students. Her outstanding qualities as a **practice educator** were officially acknowledged when she won the BCU Social Work Education Award for 'Best PIV Practice Learning Manager' at our inaugural Practice Learning Celebration Day in June 2017.



**Jane Dooley (speaking)** with from left to right, Dorothy Boatswain, Val Sylvester, Gero Kaur and Robert Wu at our inaugural Practice Learning Celebration Day - Curzon Building City Centre Campus, in June 2017

**Val Sylvester advises:**

*“After many years in social work practice, I joined the Teaching Team for social work Education in 1995 at University of Central England, Perry Barr Campus. Winfield Belgrave, Jerry Tew, Bharat Pattini and Robert Dolton were colleagues of mine at this time. Pam Houghton was Head of School when I started”.*



Val Sylvester pictured with Jerry Tew in front of Room C223 at Cox Building Perry Barr Campus.

Following her qualification as a social worker at City of Birmingham Polytechnic in 1983 Val was a **Research Associate** at University of Birmingham (1984-1985), and **Senior Social Worker** with Birmingham City Council (1985-1992). As a Senior Social Worker, she joined with J.R. Kemm and J Douglas to write 'A Survey of Infant Feeding Practice – Afro-Caribbean Mothers in Birmingham which was published in the journal *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, Vol. 45 No. 3, 1986

She obtained a management Certificate in 1991 and whilst being a **Co-ordinator/trainer at Birmingham Settlement** (1992-1995) qualified as a **Practice Teacher** (1993) and obtained a PQSW Assessor Award (1994). This was followed by an MSc in Collaborative Community Care, Val is listed as an 'independent adviser' to the UCE Social Work Education Team in their August 1994 course handbook – when she was co-ordinator/trainer/practice teacher at Birmingham Settlement.

She joined the academic teaching team as a **Senior Lecturer at UCE in 1995**. At the time she was coordinator of the CCETSW West Midlands Black Practice Teacher Group with research interests in the Health Education of African-Caribbean Mothers, and collaborative community care. Her principal teaching subjects in the 1990s were the Child Care Pathway, Anti-discriminatory Practice, Group work, professional development and the Black Voluntary Sector.

She joined with colleagues for a further publication:

Gorman, H. Gurney A., Harvey A., Hutchinson, O., Sylvester V. & Warburton J. (1996), 'The value of analysing the interlocking nature of oppression for those engaged in working and learning together in community care', *J. of Interpersonal Care*, 10:2.

Whilst still under the UCE banner, Val obtained a Master's in Education (MEd), and became Vice-chair of the UK Standing Conference for Stakeholders in Social Work Education. She taught on the Inter Professional Practice, Evidence Based Research; Specialist, Practice Children and Families; and Critical Appraisal and Reflective Practice Modules.

She made very significant contributions to the development of social work education as **Course Leader** for the BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree between 2005 and 2011. In recent years, since 2013/14 Val has taken up course Leadership for our very successful Stage 1 and Stage 2 Practice Educator Training Programmes.



Val Sylvester (on the right) presents a floral bouquet to Dr Prospera Tedam (key note speaker) at our practice learning celebration day in June 2017.

Congratulations to **Dr Val Sylvester**, who has recently completed her Phd. We wish you well as you continue your illustrious career!

## Probation

The separation of probation training from social work education in the late 1990s meant a loss of the University's longstanding connection to education, for probation work. Probation Officers were no longer taught alongside our social work students.

In a 2015 online published article entitled '**Moving Away from Social Work and Half-Way Back Again: New Research on Skills in Probation**', Raynor and Vanstone wrote the following in the British Journal of Social Work.

[Peter Raynor and Maurice Vanstone](#)

[Br J Soc Work](#). 2016 Jun; 46(4): 1131–1147.

Published online 2015 Feb 12. doi: [10.1093/bjsw/bcv008](https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcv008)

Although probation remained recognisable as a social work agency, by the mid-1980s, it became more specifically focused on reducing reoffending ([McGuire and Priestley, 1985](#)) with the result that more and more practitioners saw this as the main purpose of their work ([Boswell et al., 1993](#)).

Significant as these developments are, it can be argued that the growing distance from social work was also the result of much more powerful, wide-ranging forces operating at a political and societal level. [Hudson \(1996, p. 109\)](#), whilst acknowledging uncertainty about whether economic depression prompts an increase in crime, argues that, during such economic downturns as occurred in the 1980s, 'the vocabulary of justice becomes harsher' and the central concern of justice becomes punishment rather than help. In a similar vein, [Garland \(2001\)](#) describes the development of a 'culture of control' and traced its specific implications for the probation service in a seminar at the Probation Studies Unit ([Garland, 1997](#)). It is, perhaps, no coincidence that, during the 1980s, the declaration of governmental interest in remoulding the shape of probation in the Statement of National Objectives and Priorities ([Home Office, 1984](#)) heralded an era of unprecedented, direct political control which led to the regularisation of probation practice through National Standards ([Home Office, 1992, 1995](#)), accountability expressed in the Effective Practice Initiative ([Underdown, 1998](#)), the removal of probation officer training from social work courses ([Aldridge and Eadie, 1997](#)) and the creation of a national probation service in 2001.

Of course, not all this change was negative but the combined effect of political populism, prescriptive managerialism and the end of the benign world of political consensus which probation had inhabited throughout its history was to make probation a criminal justice service rather than a social work agency ([Garland, 2001](#)).

## Mark Doel

### Head of School of Social Work and RNIB Rehabilitation Studies 1996 - 2003



Professor Colin Fishwick - who was then Assistant Dean, Staff Development and Learning Resources - welcomed Mark to UCE. In the 'Occasional Monograph' published by UCE in July 1997 to mark the Inaugural Professorial Lecture at UCE by Professor Mark Doel on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1997, Colin wrote:

*"I am privileged to chair the occasion and formally to introduce Mark Doel as he had become the first Professor of Social Work at the University. He (Mark) read Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Oxford, graduating in 1972. For a year he practiced as an unqualified social worker in West Suffolk Social Services Department, before going to the University of Hull to gain his professional qualification – the CQSW and Diploma in Applied Social Studies, where he gained a distinction in Field Practice.*

*On qualification he was briefly the head of a day centre, before he took off to be a case worker at the Children's Aid Society in Philadelphia, USA. On his return to the UK in 1976, he was a social worker with the Family and Community Services Department of Sheffield Metropolitan District Council, where he gained promotion to Senior Social Worker and then entered into a joint appointment with the University of Sheffield. He held this appointment for 10 years. In 1990 he took off once more to the United States, this time as Principal Investigator and Visiting Professor at the Portland State University Regional Research Institute. On his return to the UK, he became a Lecturer in Social Work once again at the University of Sheffield, but alongside this part-time appointment he had another professional 'life' as a freelance training consultant. His depth of scholarship is shown in his many publications.*

*He has gained international recognition, with his many publications translated into several languages, and it is no surprise that one of his most recent publications is entitled 'Social Work in a Changing World: An International Perspective on Practice Learning' (Doel, M. and Shardlow, S.M. 1996).*

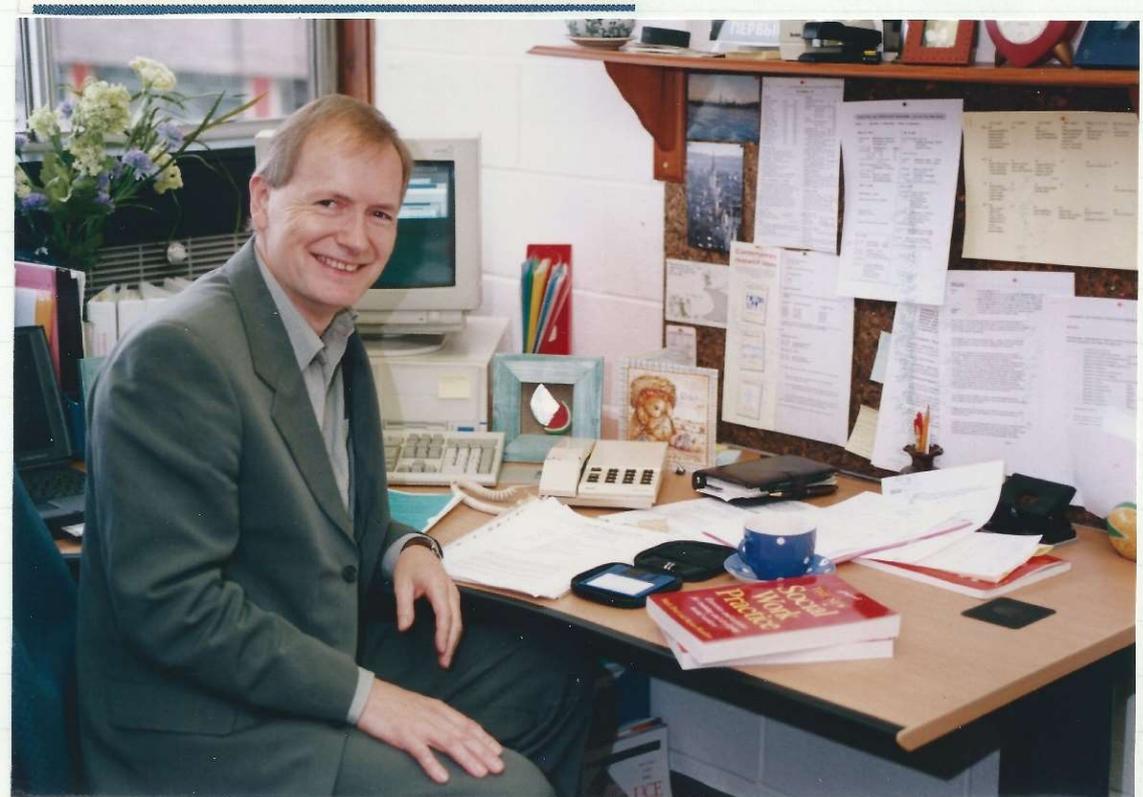
This followed on from one of Mark's most recognised books- often used by practice teachers in training – 'Teaching Social Work Practice: a programme of exercises and activities towards the Practice Teaching Award' – written together with Steven Shardlow, Catherine Sawdon and David Sawdon – and published as a first edition in 1996 by Arena.

In his conclusion, Profesor Fishwick is clear; *"I think it is important for someone in his position to have a solid and substantial grounding in social work practice. His published work and his professional record are testimony to his commitment to education and training, and the development of practice skills. Included in all of this is a commitment to anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive ways of living and working.* (July 1997, UCE Occasional Monograph, p2-3)

Prior to arriving at UCE, Mark had worked with Peter Marsh to write *Task-Centred Social Work*, first published by Ashgate in 1992. Mark collaborated again with Steven Shardlow to write *The New Social Work Practice*, published by Arena in 1998, and with Catherine Sawdon to write, *The Essential Group Worker* in 1999 published by Jessica Kingsley.

### **Mark Doel Remembers.**

*"I joined UCE from Sheffield University in **September 1996** and took over as Head of School (following the retirement of Pam Houghton).*



*The 'main' staff members at that time were: Winfield Belgrave, Jan Clare (part-time), Robert Dolton, Ian Dyson, Esther Ford, Rose Gordon (placements), Annette Gurney, Kumlaish Kumari, Pam Ogilvie, Maureen Olusola, Bharat Pattni, Novlett Richards, and Val Sylvester. Later, I appointed: Dorothy Boatswain, Ashok Chand, Omari Hutchinson, Vincent Johnson, Chandi Patel, Theresa Renwick, Jerry Tew. Administrative support; Bridget Woodcock (School Secretary), & Terri-Ann Norris.*



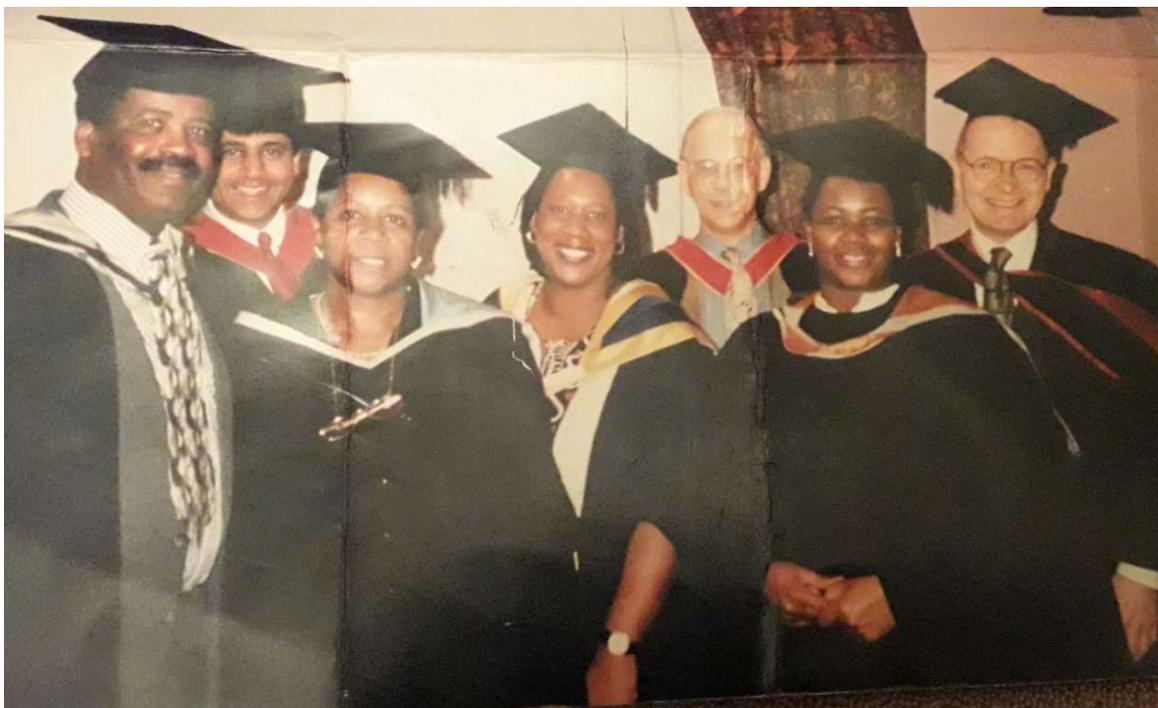
Above is the entrance to the School of Social Work and RNIB Studies, Cox Building, Perry Barr Campus. The school was located within the Faculty of Health and Community Care.

***RNIB Rehabilitation Studies were part of our School: Tina Browne, Julie Franks, Patrick Heywood, John Irvine. Later, I appointed Nigel Taylor; School Secretary: Pat Tinsell.***

*The courses were BSc (Hons) and a top-up to BSc for Diploma holders; part-time and full-time courses; the RNIB Rehabilitation Studies Diploma and a new joint BSc in Social Work and Rehab Studies. June Yee joined Ashok Chand and me in some research with students around teaching and learning anti-discriminatory practice.*



One of the Directors of RNIB handing the annual cheque to UCE. Patrick Heywood and John Irvine (staff) are on the left - with a group of students.



*Happy times at a graduation ceremony circa 2000. From Left to right Winfield Belgrave, Bharat Pattni, Novlett Richards, Val Sylvester, Robert Dolton, Dorothy Boatswain and Mark Doel.*



Ashok Chand and Bridget Woodcock.



Omari Hutchinson



Kumlaish Kumari

**Mark Doel continues,** *“We involved service users in every aspect of the course, including Admissions. We had a group process whereby part of the selection process was observing candidates in small groups (how much they contributed how much they helped others to contribute) and a service user was always a part of the observing team. Service users were also involved in assessments.*

### **Practice Placements and Practice Learning.**

*We introduced Signposted Portfolios as part of the placement assessment process and an innovation at the time was the PET - Practice Enquiry Team. It was an exceptionally effective method of fairly managing placement breakdown and practice concerns. It involved practice and academic staff (and service user reps) and was highly regarded. I was a member of the National Organisation of Practice Teachers.*

**Dorothy Boatswain and Vincent Johnson** jointly led Practice Placements at this time. The role was named Director of Field Studies.

*I collected annual statistics (before CCETSW required it) of student profiles - especially ethnicity. We regularly had 40% students from BAME groups, which reflected the Birmingham community. I was always very proud at Award ceremonies. At that time, social work seemed to be the only discipline where there was a very large BAME presence in the graduates being awarded. Many were first-time graduates, within their own families.*

*I left UCE and went to Sheffield Hallam University in August 2003”.*

**The following are pictures of some familiar faces at my leaving party.**



Pictured at the front from left to right are Jan Clare (looking left) Dorothy Boatswain, Vincent Johnson and Ashok Chand. Val Sylvester (back, centre) and Richard Cox (RNIB Rehab Studies) is on the right at the back.



*Do you recognise people in this group picture?*

Like each decade before, the 2000s was a decade of significant social problems, lessons to be learned, law and policy changes and further developments in social work education and practice.

**Victoria Climbié** a black girl, born in the Ivory Coast, died in the intensive care unit of St Mary's Hospital Paddington on **25 February 2000**, aged 8 years and 3 months. Her death was caused by multiple injuries arising from months of severe abuse by her great-aunt, and her great-aunt's partner. They were convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Her death led to a public inquiry, headed by **Lord Laming**, with the inquiry report published in 2003, making 108 recommendations. This led to major changes in child protection policies in the UK. Victoria's murder and the subsequent report were largely responsible for the formation of the **Every Child Matters** initiative 2003; the introduction of the **Children Act 2004**; the creation of the Contact Point project, a government database designed to hold information on all children in England (now defunct after closure by the government of 2010); and the creation of the **Office of the Children's Commissioner** chaired by the Children's Commissioner for England.

### **The General Social Care Council (GSCC)**

During this period there were significant developments in the Regulation of social work education and practice. **The Care Standards Act 2000** made the role of 'social worker' a protected title and paved the way for setting up the next regulator in England - the GSCC in 2001. In the same year, **The Social Care Institute for Excellence** was established with a role of identifying and disseminating the knowledge base for best social work practice.

Also, in October 2001, country specific regulators replaced CCETSW. The Care Council for Wales. The Scottish Social Services Council. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council. The GSCC became the Regulator for social work education and practice in England overseeing standards in social work education and practice. **Students (as part of joining a social work course) and qualified workers (following qualification) were required to formally register with the GSCC**, with a Code of Practice produced for Students and qualified workers. For the first time a Code of Practice (as guidance not law) was also produced for Employers of Social Care Workers.

## The Social Work Degree

From September 2003, a three-year degree in social work, open for the first time to **18 year olds and above**, as well as two year Master's degree programs were introduced by government. This was a significant change to the previous minimum education achievement that was required to practice as a social worker in the UK.

The **title 'social worker' became protected** and could only be used by social workers successfully registered with the GSCC. 1 April 2003 marked the creation of a **professional register for qualified social workers**—a first in the history of the profession.

**Service user and carer involvement** in the degree course became mandatory – and there was a new requirement for students to **'shadow'** and experienced social worker as part of becoming ready to practice.

The **National Occupational Standards** (consisting of 6 Key Roles and 21 Units with values and ethics requirements at the centre) became the framework for assessing students over **at least 200 days in practice** learning. Practice became more central to the new degree, with academic learning supporting practice, rather than the other way round.

To meet the degree practice requirements, each student needed to have practice learning experience of working with at least two different service user groups in at least two different practice settings. This would include experience of statutory social work tasks involving legal interventions.

### **Department of Health - Requirements for Social Work Training in England - May 2002**

Jacqui Smith, Minister of State for Education wrote

*“Social workers deal with some of the most vulnerable people in our society at times of greatest stress. There can be tragic consequences if things go wrong. Social workers often get a bad press. What they do not get is day to day coverage of the work they do to protect and provide for some of the most vulnerable people in our society.*

*Social workers need to be properly equipped for such challenging tasks. The new degree level qualification must prepare social workers for the complex and demanding role that will be required of them. This is an opportunity to transform the status, image and position of social workers and put social work training on a level with other professions.*

*The new award will require social workers to demonstrate their practical application of skills and knowledge and their ability to deliver a service that creates*

*opportunities for service users. It will require all social workers to demonstrate their knowledge of human growth and development, particularly development of children and other vulnerable groups, their communication skills and their ability to work confidently and effectively with other professionals. The emphasis must be on practice and the practical relevance of theory.*

*The new degree must produce competent practitioners. Students will have to undertake much of their learning in practice settings and demonstrate their competence in practice. Service providers, working in partnership with other key stakeholders, must deliver sufficient quantity and quality of practice learning opportunities in order to ensure that tomorrow's social workers are properly trained to do their job.*

*We have involved service users, employers, students and providers of social work education in determining the shape of the new qualification.*

*Delivery of this new qualification presents a huge challenge for all partners in the education of social workers: universities, employers in all sectors, users of services and students. Those providing the teaching and learning opportunities for social work students need to ensure that they take on board the implications of these changes. This is not tinkering at the edges of social work training. This is a major shift in expectations of those providing the training and of those undertaking it”.*

1 The Secretary of State has the function of ascertaining what training is required by persons who are, or wish to become, social care workers. This function is given by section 67(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000. This document sets out the Secretary of State's requirements of those providing qualifying training and education for social workers.

2. The General Social Care Council (GSCC) has the responsibility for the approval of social work courses under section 63 of the Care Standards Act 2000. The GSCC will publish its arrangements for quality assuring the new degree in social work. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) also has a role in monitoring the provision of higher education. GSCC will be working closely with the QAA in ensuring that social work courses offer high quality education and training for social workers.

### **Standards for the Award of the Social Work Degree**

3. The standards for the award of the social work degree are outcome statements that set out what a student social worker must know, understand and be able to do to be awarded the degree in social work. The National Occupational Standards for Social Work set out what employers require social workers to be able to do on entering employment. These standards form the basis of the assessment of competence in practice. Social workers will be required to demonstrate competence across the full range of standards before being awarded the degree. Practice is central to the new degree, with academic learning supporting practice, rather than the other way round.

4. The Quality Assurance Agency benchmark statement for social work sets out, in outcome terms, the requirements for the achievement of an academic award at degree level. Students would be expected to reach this level before being awarded the degree.

5. The occupational standards and the benchmark statement taken together form the basis of the assessment of students at the end of the degree programme. Programme providers need to ensure that their course equips students to achieve these outcomes.

6 The GSCC accreditation arrangements require HEIs to publish a programme specification detailing how they intend to cover the required areas in their programme. The programme specification will have to set out how the HEI and its stakeholder partners will ensure that all the requirements of the occupational standards and benchmark statement are covered in their programme.

### **Requirements for Training and Assessment**

7. The Requirements for Social Work Training specify what providers of social work training must do. They are organised in two sections, entry requirements and teaching, learning and assessment requirements.

#### *Entry Requirements*

##### **All providers must:**

A. Satisfy themselves that all entrants have the capability to meet the required standards by the end of their training and that they possess appropriate personal and intellectual qualities to be social workers.

B. Ensure that, in addition to the university's own admission requirements for the degree, all entrants have achieved at least Key Skills level 2 in English and mathematics. This would normally be equivalent to grade C in the GCSE examination in English and mathematics.

C. Satisfy themselves that all entrants can understand and make use of written material and are able to communicate clearly and accurately in spoken and written English.

D. Ensure that, as part of the selection procedures, all candidates admitted for training have taken part in an individual or group interview.

E. Ensure that representatives of stakeholders, particularly service users and employers, are involved in the selection process.

#### *Teaching, Learning and Assessment Requirements*

##### **All providers must:**

F. Design the content, structure and delivery of the training to enable social work students to demonstrate that they have met the national occupational standards for social work and the social work benchmark statement and are suitable for admission to the General Social Care Council register of social workers.

G. Ensure that the teaching of theoretical knowledge, skills and values is based on their application in practice.

H. Ensure that students' achievement against the required standards is regularly and accurately assessed and confirm that all social work students have been assessed and have met all the standards before being awarded the degree in social work.

I. Ensure that the principles of valuing diversity and equalities awareness are integral to the teaching and learning of students.

J. Ensure that all social work students spend **at least** 200 days gaining required experience and learning in practice settings. Each student must have experience:

- in **at least** two practice settings
- of statutory social work tasks involving legal interventions.
- of providing services to **at least** two user groups (e.g., childcare & mental health)

K. Ensure that all students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to ensure their safety to undertake practice learning in a service delivery setting. This preparation must include the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the experience of service users and the opportunity to shadow an experienced social worker.

L. As well as providing teaching, learning and assessment across the full range of the occupational standards and benchmark statement, providers will have to demonstrate that all students undertake specific learning and assessment in the following key areas.

- Human growth, development, mental health and disability.
  - Assessment, planning, intervention and review.
- Communication skills with children, adults and those with particular communication needs
- Law
- Partnership working and information sharing across professional disciplines and agencies.

M. Ensure that the number of hours spent in structured academic learning under the direction of an educator is sufficient. This is expected to be at least 200 days or 1,200 hours.

N. Ensure that teaching and learning are continually updated to keep abreast of developments in legislation, Government policy and best practice.

The main qualification for social work at UK Universities (including BCU) is still the undergraduate Bachelor's degree (BA, BSc or BSW) in social work. There is also available a master's degree (MA, MSc or MSW).

## Robert Dolton

### Head of Social Work at UCE: 2003 – 2005

From September 2003 Robert Dolton, who had spent many years at UCE as a Senior Lecturer since the early 80s, mainly teaching Psychology, theories in social work and critical issues relevant to best practice when working with People with Learning Difficulties and their parents - took over the Head of School of Social Work responsibilities.

Julie Williams and Steve Wood joined the social work education team during this time.

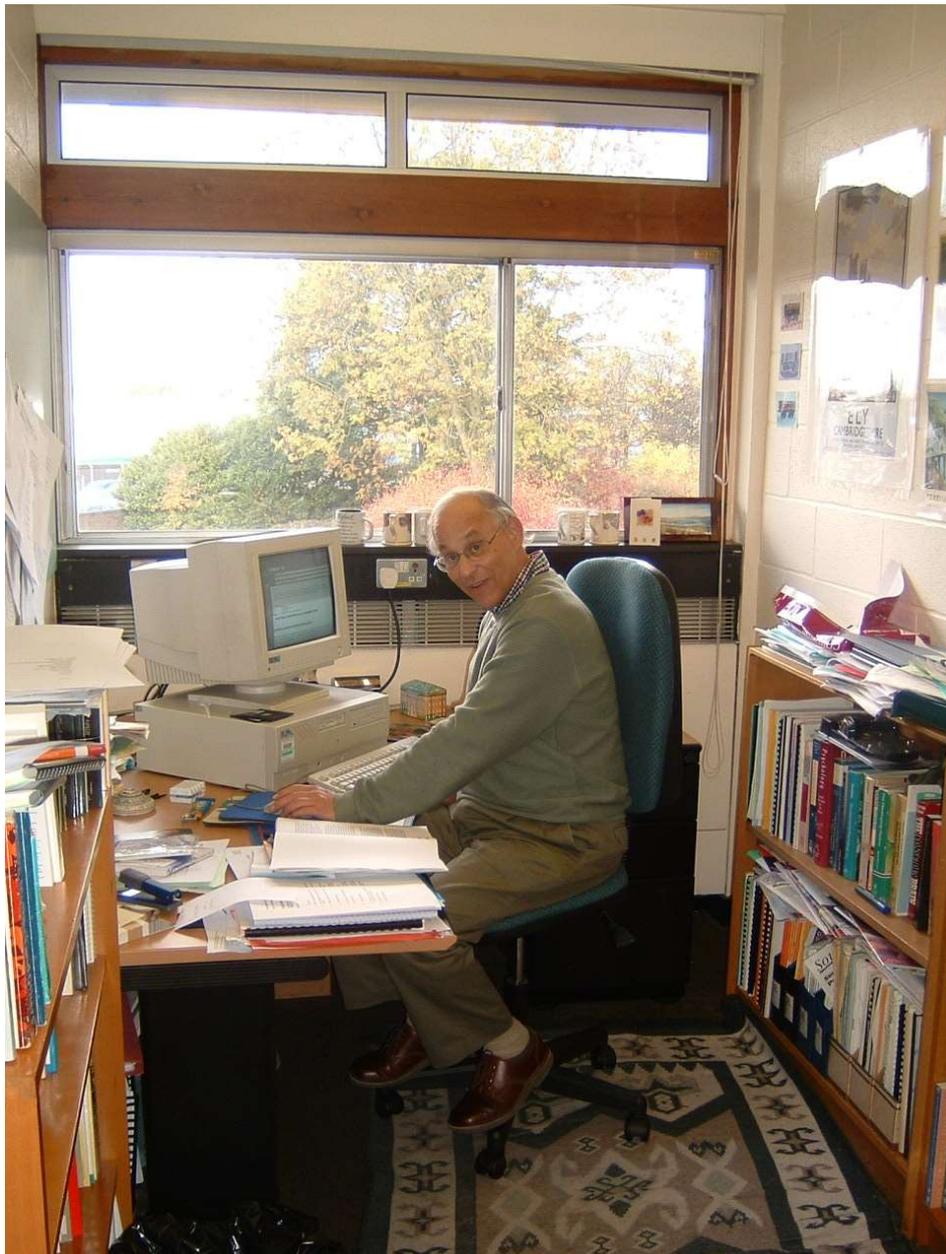
Prior to joining UCE Robert had been a Senior Social Worker and earlier a Child Care Officer. He had achieved an MA at Keele University and received a Letter of Recognition in Child Care from the Home Office. He was a Lay minister.



Robert Dolton (front left) chairs a pre-exam Board at UCE in 2003 with (from left to right around the table) Jerry Tew, Omari Hutchinson, Val Sylvester and colleagues.

Robert contributed to a number of publications including chapter 4 of 'Teaching pupils with severe learning difficulties' edited by C. Tilstone in 1991 (published by Routledge).

Due to ill health, Robert retired from teaching and died in May 2007. Val Sylvester who was course leader at the time remembers sending an email to colleagues with the title 'sad news'. Stuart Buchanan who was a Dean in the Faculty, was instrumental in organising and leading a 'packed' Memorial Service that was held in Birmingham Cathedral.



Many colleagues and former students will remember visiting Robert in his office at Cox Building, Perry Barr Campus.

A labour government under Tony Blair launched the **Every Child Matters Policy in 2003** with 5 stated outcomes for all children; be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and economic wellbeing. This began to dominate the outcomes for children in all Local Authority Children's Services and became central policy material when teaching students.

The policy was followed by an updated **Children Act 2004**, mainly in response to the death of Victoria Climbié. This act created the post of Children's Commissioner in England, provided for the creation and multi-agency representation of a Local Children's Safeguarding Board in each council area, and placed a statutory duty on agencies to work together

The **Working Together to Safeguard Children Framework** became the policy document that social work educators taught, and agencies drew on and used to put law into practice.

The Children Act 2004, brought all local government functions of children's welfare and education under the statutory authority of local Directors of Children's Services. It was an act which had the intention and consequence that each local authority should create a children's services department led by a director of children's services – most of whom in the early days had an education background – bringing into one department local authority responsibilities for schools and children's education along with children's social services. This increased the split between children's and adult's services in local authorities.

There were other consequences. The New Labour government was already on a mission to build joined-up local government services for children, as symbolised by the Every Child Matters white paper. Despite the Care Standards Act 2000 having made 'social worker' a protected title, social work a graduate profession, and required the registration of social workers, there was a New Labour government where leading politicians had little affinity or confidence in social work. They saw it, largely incorrectly, to be based on a deficit model.

One of the outcomes of the 2004 act changes is that social workers are now separated between two local authority departments, whose leadership is often not by qualified and experienced social workers, and where social work services may not be their primary concern or focus.

## Chandi Patel

### Head of Division of Social Work: 2005 – 2009

Chandi had previously worked as a Welfare Rights Advisor, Race Relations Advisor, Social Worker and an Approved Social Worker (under the Mental Health Act), Research Associate and a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at various universities including UCE. He was the first black man to lead social work education at the University.



Chandi Patel (on the right) with Mark Doel and Pam Houghton (as a guest visitor - middle, back of room) at Mark's Leaving Party in 2003.

Adopted 25<sup>th</sup> January 2006-Social Work Divisional Meeting  
**MEET THE TEAM**

				
Chandi Patel	Val Sylvester	Bharat Pattni	Steve Wood	Omari Hutchinson
				
Vincent Johnson	Dorothy Boatswain	Annette Gurney	Inderjit Patel	Jan Clare
				
Jerry Tew	Julie Williams	Novlett Richards	Winfield Belgrave	Reshma Patel
				
	Bridget Woodcock	Harjinder Sagoo	Karen Jackson	

**Above is the Social Work Education Team at UCE in January 2006 under Chandi Patel. (Please note Dorothy's second name is 'Boatswain').**

**Records from course guides, under ‘an introduction to the staff team’, include Chandi’s stated professional and research interests;** “Professional interests are in the fields of childcare, mental health and also Social Services performance management with specific reference to Race Equality Schemes. Research interests are in the area of ‘race’ and social work training”.

Together with Dawn Williams-Macintosh, Chandi collaborated with our colleagues in education to design a Children and Integrated Professional Care Course. This was an innovation that would result in the course being approved, and jointly delivered by social work academics and colleagues who were engaged in teacher training.

Chandi worked closely with employers in the Local Authority and Private Independent and Voluntary Sector to ensure a sufficient amount of high-quality placements. He developed new partnership boards with employers – a forerunner to what would later be taken up by government and launched as teaching partnerships, first piloted in 2015.

When the Mental Health Act 1983 was amended in 2007, the role of approved social worker (ASW) was replaced by approved mental health professional (AMHP). Chandi combined his expertise in the field of Mental Health Practice to work with other academic colleagues Inderjit Patel and Robert WU (both with specialist experience in Mental Health service provision and education) to design and deliver an AMHP course followed by Best Interests Assessor Training.

Under his tenure new staff arrived including Caroline Lee, in September 2006. Albert Moylan, Robert Wu, and Dawn Williams-McIntosh joined in September 2007. Colin Elton and Peter Ayling were recruited later.

Chandi left BCU in 2009 to take up a post as ‘Head of Social Work’ at Sheffield Hallam University.

**The Mental Capacity Act 2005 included Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)**, an assessment carried out by social workers to protect people who do not have the mental capacity to consent to treatment. DoLs are a safeguard to ensure people are only deprived of their liberty when it is in their best interest, for example, to keep them safe. Because of the DoLS, vulnerable people cannot have their freedom taken away unless it is in their best interests and there is no ‘less restrictive alternative’ (an option which will affect the person’s freedom or rights less).

**In 2006, our social work education team moved from Cox Building, to 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Baker Building, Perry Barr Campus.** RNIB Rehabilitation Students were no longer taught alongside our social work students.

**The last Social Work Course Guide printed with the UCE Logo was in July 2007**

In this 251-page guide, each of the teaching team have a section where they provide a profile containing their current role, responsibilities and previous qualifications and experience.

Two very significant experts by experience (EbE) or People with Lived Experience of receiving Social Work Services (PWLESW) who are integral members of the teaching team introduce themselves as follows:

**Mark Lynes  
Service User Colleague**

*“Hi, I’m Mark Lynes I’ve been involved with UCE Birmingham Division of Social Work for about 3 and a half years now. My role is called ‘Service User Colleague’. What does this mean? Well about three and a half years ago the Division of Social work decided to further enhance the involvement of service users in the BSc (Hons) Social Work course partly due to Government requirements for involving service user and carers in Degree course education.*”



Mark Lynes (sitting)

*At UCE Birmingham Service User Colleagues are involved in most areas of the social work degree. Below are some of the areas I am involved in:*

- *Teaching & planning modules*
- *Marking placement portfolios*
- *Induction days*
- *Curriculum planning*
- *Attending internal & external Meetings*

*Away from UCE Birmingham I have been employed as an Outreach Worker and Personal Assistant Organiser. I have also been involved in a wide range of service user, disability and voluntary organisations over the last 11 years”.*

## **Reshma Patel**

### **Service User Development/Support Worker**

*“Role: To identify and develop working relationships with users of Social Care services. To encourage and promote the involvement of Service Users in all aspects of teaching and learning in Social Care and Health.*

*Professional and Research interest: Creating an inclusive society, the social model of disability and ensuring people have a Voice.*

*Previous experience: I have previously worked as an advocate for people with learning disabilities, independent living advisor and held an accounting post (cipfa)”.*



Reshma Patel (sitting)

**Reshma and Mark have provided a short overview history of the involvement of Service Users and Carers now named Experts by Experience in social work education at UCE and BCU.**

Reshma Patel.  
Expert by Experience Development Worker  
[Reshma.Patel@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Reshma.Patel@bcu.ac.uk)

Mark Lynes  
[Mark.Lynes@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Mark.Lynes@bcu.ac.uk)

Reshma advised:

*I have experience of receiving social work services since the 1970s and began working with UCE in 2002, when the team was located in Cox Building Perry Barr, Campus. I was contacted initially by Kumlaish Kumari. The head of department at the time was Mark Doel. Stewart Hendry, Angela O'Rourke, and Cora Jones (all SU/C) were already doing some work with the team.*

*Through a friend of a friend, I was invited to a meeting at University of Central England (UCE). I knew virtually nothing about social work education at the time; but I had always advocated both in paid and voluntary jobs, on behalf of people who were labelled as 'disabled' and a campaigner for the rights of Disabled People's movement 'Rights not Charity'.*

*I suddenly found myself faced by academics and academic language. The whole experience was daunting and disempowering, a lot of jargon was used, however I persevered to work with the University staff and attended other planning days. Individual staff including Jerry Tew, Kumlaish, Annette Gurney and Jan Clare, explained what the jargon meant, and this gave me hope. From speaking with other SU/C they had similar experiences at this time.*

Alma Featherstone had been participating in and supporting admissions at UCE since February 2002. Mark Lynes started working closely with the UCE Social work Education Team in 2003. At the time he was working with the Search Team and Birmingham Disability Resource Centre (BDRRC) funded by Birmingham City Council (BCC). The Search Team were campaigning for better social policies in BCC. Mark recalls being invited to UCE in 2003 by Jerry Tew to work on the EPP Module. Professor Mark Doel and Cora Jones (SU) were heavily involved in the process of how to integrate our voices. Mark Lynes concluded *"In the early days my input was concerned mainly with a focus on me as a campaigner for Disability Rights rather than my own lived experience of social services"*.

Reshma and Mark agreed:

*The team were genuinely committed to involving 'service users and carers' (the legal terms used and accepted at the time) in social work education but had few involved at the start. They now needed more people who could provide different experiences to deliver teaching sessions 'in partnership' with the staff. We*

*discovered that the main trigger for expansion of SU/C participation was that it had now become mandatory as part of the Department of Health Regulations for the 2003 Social Work Degree.*

*Reshma remembered; in 2003 a Group of Service users & unpaid Carers with experience of Social Workers were invited to University of Central England to discuss their involvement in a year 1 module named **Expectations of Professional Practice (EPP)**. This module was led by a group of Staff including Jerry Tew, Kumlaish Kumari, and Annette Gurney. This group of SU/C included Cora Jones, Mark Lynes, Angela O'Rourke and Stewart Hendry. We co-designed several sessions with academics that ensured the voices of academics and SU/C were both heard. The added value from SU/C's included authentic verbal accounts of their lived experiences e.g., experiences of social workers, history of impairment and the rise of the 'disability' movement.*

*The department took Information we provided and put it on to, slides on acetate produced by administrative support colleagues. Administrative support colleagues at the time included Bridget Woodcock and Harjinder Sagoo. SU/C then spoke to these slides which were projected on to a screen by an overhead projector. In this module, following morning lectures, SU/C did lead seminar group discussions in the afternoon, about the relevant topics, using white boards and flipcharts.*

*Reshma Recalls, "Even in these early days Stewart Hendry and me, frequently led seminar groups without Academic Staff. I also need to say we were paid £37 per hour for all direct work with students and £15 per hour for meetings!! Wow the Best paid job I ever had!"*

**The role of SU/C's at that time included:**

To attend meetings on and contribute to Course Programme Design

To provide 'Personal Stories' during teaching Sessions e.g., Mark Lynes remembers working alongside Vincent Johnson to deliver preparation for practice.

Teaching on Service User Involvement in Local Authorities & wider communities including Mental Health Survivors & Disability Movement.

Help with Admissions in a limited way e.g., observing group discussions, and reading written exercises that were part of the admissions and recruitment process. Reshma said *"It did feel good to have our views taken on board. I remember about 100 students used to be invited, we were in a very large room (in Baker building ground floor) and we used to observe 20 students at a time)".*

In 2004, funding was set aside whilst Robert Dolton was Head of Department (HoD) and with the support of Chandi Patel who became HoD in 2005, Reshma became an integral part of the social work staff team at BCU as their **Service User Development Worker**. This included formalising the SU/C Group and setting up the systems and procedures for effective involvement/participation.

*Reshma added; "This included payment mechanisms for expenses such as travel, including regular meetings where we had administrative support, provided by the*

department. In my role of Development Worker my first task was to take stock (position statement 1 was produced in June 2005), followed by totally coproducing. In those days from my own background, I didn't use the term co-producing I used to call it I want to produce documents 'In Partnership with everyone' to ensure shared ownership. A briefing pack for SU/C and Academic Staff was finalised and printed in hard copy in January 2006. This included advice and guidance about health and safety, equal opportunities and Complaints Procedure".

In time, the role of SU/C's was expanded to include contributions to Quality Assurance Meetings for Placements and the **Department Management Board** which included all partners including Local Authorities, Private, Independent and Voluntary agencies and academic staff.

In time, the role of SU/C's was expanded to include contributions to Quality Assurance Meetings for Placements and the 'Department **Management Board** which included all partners including Local Authorities, PIV agencies and academic staff. My role also included recruitment of new SU/C. As part of this Reshma sent a letter to social workers in Local Authorities. We recruited Colin Burbridge, David Morris, Tracey Holly, Pat Caplen and Ben Kelly as well at a small group of young care leavers.

This was also when Reshma realised the importance of debriefs and how to recognise triggers. She adds; "I was naïve and assumed people only discuss what they are comfortable with to suddenly realise the stark reality can be very different (wondered if I now required counselling skills to do my role) which I discussed with my line manager and introduced informal 5 minute debriefs after every session".

Reshma recalls; "In 2006, I took part in and spoke at a **Conference at the Open University in Harborne**, organised by Albert Moylan who was then a Practice Education Development Worker within the Birmingham City Council Student Support Team at Chamberlain House in Moseley. The Conference was about – **Effectively involving SU/C in higher education especially practice placements**. It was attended by SU/C, Students and practice Educators.

In July 2006, alongside Academic Staff SU/C's and students from UCE, we prepared and delivered a Workshop about our joint working on Expectations of Professional Practice at the Joint Social Work Education and Research JSWEC Conference. I remember Colin Burbridge, myself and Jerry Tew attended the 2-day conference. We were joined by a staff member and student. The Title of our workshop was ' **How do labels (e.g., service user, carer, student, academic, researcher) affect our expectations, experiences and interactions; and how might we cross the boundaries they impose to work more effectively together?**'

Between 2006 and 2008, my role in Social Work remained 'embedding involvement' leading to some service users pairing up with Academic Staff to carry out **Learning Agreement Meetings** - Initial placement visits, I remember Stewart, Mark and Myself doing this role. Supporting the Faculty (Nursing etc.) to develop a Faculty strategy was also delegated to me. The biggest achievement we had in 2007 was one of the Placement Providers '**Options for Life**' agreed to work with

me to train their Service Users to give Feedback to UCE Students on Placements throughout their placement. This was shared at a Faculty Conference in August 2007. I was just finding more Placement providers and I received the news that I had to undergo Major hip surgery in April 2008.

In 2008 I left the University for health reasons. My records show that I was asked to return as a consultant to reinstate the service user and carer meetings between 2009 and 2010. My report and findings gave several recommendations, and it bridged the gap to get the momentum going again.

In 2013 when I re-joined BCU as a service user who worked in partnership with staff, Bharat Chauhan was HoD and Albert Moylan was course leader for the Social Work Degree. One of the changes that had occurred was the introduction of 'Quality Days' and SU/C were very much involved in contributing to and assessing the quality of all areas of the degree programme. **I learned that from 2008 onwards Mark Lynes had been attending quality assurance meetings especially in relation to placement quality.** Regular SU/C group meetings continued to take place. We were also involved in successful revalidation of the Social Work Degree in 2014 when HCPC, who had taken over from the GSCC, were the regulators.

On the 1st July 2015 a new group called **Forum for Accessing Community Experience (F.A.C.E)** was started by the faculty to promote engagement of the Service Users and carers input into all the Health and Social Work programmes - as it was a requirement of Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC). This wider faculty group of which Social work is a part, is still in existence and meets bi-monthly. Its main purpose and role is to look at processes and be a pool of experts that all courses in the Faculty can access.

*"Supported by Albert Moylan, SU/C were fully consulted about the content and design of the proposed new BCU MSc Degree in April 2017 and part of the internal approval panel when the MSc was approved by HCPC and the University in 2018".*

There are many EbE's who have provided their expertise to UCE/BCU over the years. In addition to those mentioned above, these included, Flavia Jarret, Alma Featherstone, Karen Hillier, Sally Parker, Ben Davis, David Thomas, Taitu Forrester, Jane Williams and Colin Burbridge.

Reshma and Mark confirmed; *In 2018, David Childs who had taken over as HoD from Michael Adams reintroduced the SU/C development role. Prior to this, Sally Parker (carer) was now working alongside other SU/C within BCU. Reshma worked closely with Sally Parker to review both the MSc and BSc. The Review was co-produced with staff and students and service users and carers views were heard. The review led to several key recommendations and plans which were to be implemented over the years that followed (see below). **Following discussion and debate we decided that we wished to be described as Experts by Experience (EbE), rather than SU/C.***

Following a competitive process for the new position, Reshma was successful and took on the role of **EbE Consultant** at BCU to lead and further develop and

coordinate greater engagement of diverse groups and to take forward the plans and recommendations that had come from the above review. She again became an integral part of the staff team. In addition, Sally Andrews (already working as a Senior Lecturer) took on the Staff Lead role as the plan was to co-work and co-produce.

New Guidance was issued for Academic Staff and EbE's for effective working together based on the following 4P's.

**Principle:** BCU Department of Social Work Education has already agreed that planning and delivering sessions to students in collaboration with EbE's does make a difference.

**Purpose:** How will involving EbE's including people with lived experience of social work (PWLESW) make a difference?

**Presence:** The importance of involving a diverse range of EbE's with a diverse range of lived experiences.

**Process:** Who's doing what and how?

**Impact:** The impact you would like to make and the outcome that is being sought.

Since then, BCU Social Work Education EbE and Academic Staff have enhanced participation and made further progress towards true co-production'. **Co-production** can be defined as working together with people as equal partners in design, delivery and review.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (2015) suggests that for co-production to be real or 'true co-production' it needs to be based on 4 key principles:

**Equality:** no one group or person is more important than another, and everyone has skills, knowledge, abilities and other assets to bring to the process. (This is why naming, seeing and interacting with people with lived experience of SW as 'experts by and through experience' is critically important)

**Diversity:** co-production should be inclusive of all communities and groups.

**Accessibility:** ensuring that everyone has the same opportunity to take part in an activity fully, in the way that suits them best.

**Reciprocity:** ensuring that people receive something back for putting something in. (This may also include ensuring that you have appropriate policies and systems in place to pay people with lived experience for their time).

**Developments in recent years include:**

EbE's being joint module co-ordinators alongside academic staff initially on specific modules.

EbE's leading on teaching and assessing core skills within the BSc and MSc Courses.

A more diverse EbE Group in terms of identity and lived experience e.g., ethnicity; younger people leaving care and foster carers as well as inpatients being supported to get to BCU to share their experience with Social Work students.

Participation in the West Midlands Teaching Partnership Regional Involvement/Participation Group.

Increased connections with BASW.

Attending Joint training alongside academic staff.

A team approach to preparing, planning and delivery.

Participation in events involving international partners.

More social events for the EbE group where other colleagues are also invited.

The Story goes on..... The Pandemic hit! March 2020 and EbE's were supported with online access to teaching sessions.

EbE's being joint year leads with academic staff.

**The above account has been edited by both Reshma Patel (Expert by Experience Consultant) and Albert Moylan (now, Visiting Lecturer)**

**The three Appendices below contain information provided by Reshma Patel.**

**Appendix 1: List of SU/C from March 2005**

A	Olu Akinola	Billesley Birmingham		Passed away
A	Cora Jones (Service User)	Saltley Birmingham		Passed away
A	John Cairney (Service User)	Edgbaston Birmingham		
A	Stewart Hendry (Service User)	Weoley Castle Birmingham		
A	Mark Lynes (Service User)	Sutton Coldfield		

A	Angela O'Rourke (Service User)	Erdington BIRMINGHAM		
b	Anvarali Alimohamed	Sparkhill Birmingham		Passed away
b	Ben Davies	Kings Norton Birmingham		
b	Satveer Nijjar	Wolverhampton		
b	Sudha Patel	Penn Wolverhampton		

## Appendix 2

### EXPECTATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE DRAFT TIMETABLE 2006

Module Teaching Team: Julie Williams, Annette Gurney, Jan Clare, Winfield Belgrave, Omari Hutchinson, Caroline Lee, Shama Ahmed, Cora Jones, Reshma Patel, Stewart Hendry, Bruce Kelly, Ann Shearer, Ben Kelly, Pat Thomas, George Patel, Mark Lynes

Module Coordinator: Chandi Patel

		Lecture	Seminars	
20.11.06	<b>Introduction to the module</b> Working in partnership	<b>F316</b> 10.00-11.00	<b>B423 B606 B612</b> 11.30-1.00 2.00-3.00	<b>Julie, Annette, Reshma, Stewart</b>

21.11.06	Users' Expectations of Social Workers	<b>F316</b> 10.00-11.30	<b>B406 B609 B612</b> 12.00-1.00 2.00-3.00	<b>Reshma,</b> Julie, +1 Cora, Ben K
27.11.06	Carers' Expectations of Social Workers	<b>F316</b> 10.00-11.00	<b>B405 B423 B706</b> 11.30-1.00 2.00-3.00	<b>Annette,</b> Winfield Shama,
28.11.06	Cultural competence	<b>F316</b> 10.00-11.30	<b>B625 B609 B702</b> 12.00-1.00 2.00-3.00	<b>Julie,</b> Jan, Omari
5:12:06	Social Workers' use of Power and Authority Module Evaluation	<b>F316</b> 10.00-12.00		<b>Julie,</b> Caroline Stewart

### Appendix 3

#### SERVICE USER / CARER DETAILS 11<sup>th</sup> August 2008

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Notes</b>
A	Cora Jones (Service User)	Saltley Birmingham		Physical Disability (passed away)
A	Stewart Hendry (Service User)	Weoley Castle Birmingham		Mental Health
A	Mark Lynes (Service User)	Sutton Coldfield		Physical and Learning Disabilities
A	Anvarali Alimohamed	Sparkhill Birmingham		Older People

A	Ben Davies	Kings Norton Birmingham		Older People
A	David Morris	Newtown Birmingham		Mental Health
A	Colin Burbridge	Highgate Birmingham		Mental health trainer (Passed Away)
23/9/05	Ben Kelly	Birmingham		Physical and Learning Disability Young Person Speech Impairment
18/9/05	Flavia Jarrett	Kings Heath Birmingham		Care leaver
8/8/06	Tracey Holley	Worcester		Mental health issues
12/9/06	Rashida Begum	West Bromwich		Mental health issues Cultural issues
Carer	Pat Caplen	Stourbridge		Carer
Carer	Bruce Kelly	Birmingham		Carer
Carer	Audrey Hainsley	Birmingham		Carer – epp 3years /mh
Carer	Alma Featherstone	Birmingham		Carer- admissions
Carer	KAREN HILLIER	BROMSGROVE		Carer – admissions

**October 2007 - 2020**

**Social Work Education at Birmingham City University**

In June 2007, it was announced that the University would be renamed from 'UCE Birmingham'-with three possible names being proposed: Birmingham City University, Birmingham Chamberlain University, and Birmingham Metropolitan University. Staff and students (both current and alumni) were asked to complete a survey on what they wished the name to be changed to. **On 1 October 2007, Vice-Chancellor David Tidmarsh unveiled the name change from UCE Birmingham to Birmingham City University.** 48.2% of those who voted on the survey voted for this name.

The university's current logo is based on the tiger in the crest originally used when it was awarded university status. The crest itself originated from the Birmingham College of Commerce, one of the institutions that formed the polytechnic in 1971.

**Below is the new logo and name appearing on signage erected at Perry Barr Campus in October 2007.**





A sign with the new logo and name was also installed in front of the Kenrick Library (to the rear) and the Kenrick Lecture Theatre entrance (on the left).

### **Albert Moylan recalls:**



*“I joined BCU in **2007** as a **Senior Lecturer** in Social Work with a remit to lead on teaching equality and diversity. Prior to this I was a member of the Birmingham City Council Student Support Team (see picture on next page) when we were located at the now closed Chamberlain House, Moseley, B13.*

*All colleagues on this team will have supported students at UCE and BCU mainly in the role of **off-site practice teacher**. This team also included **Gero Kaur, Joyce Samuel**, Linda Evans John O’Gara and Shazia Hanif. Gero and Joyce later joined the BCU Social Work Education Team with Linda, John and Shazia contributing as Visiting Lecturers and Practice Tutors. Sadly, Joyce passed away in January 2021 at the height of the coronavirus pandemic”.*

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

17/5/06

Rosalind Hurst  
 Jacques Mirano  
 Marian Jaggard  
 Marion Taggart  
 Sharon  
 Shazira Haniff  
 Marilyn Giddings  
 Marilyn Giddings  
 Angela Miller  
 Carol Duffin  
 Carol Duffin  
 John O'Garra  
 J. O'Garra  
 Linda Evans  
 Linda Evans  
 Brijhu Bhura



Albert Moylan  
 A. Moylan  
 Karen Gumbs  
 K. Gumbs  
 Owen Summercales  
 Owen Summercales  
 Debbie Morrish  
 D. Morrish  
 Gene Kear  
 G. Kear  
 Toby Samuel  
 T. Samuel

"I was initially located on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Baker Building, Perry Barr Campus - in the same room as fellow newbies **Robert Wu** and **Dawn-Williams McIntosh**. We started a trend in December 2007, when we were the first in the team to put up Christmas decorations. We laughed a lot and had some great debates. Robert was the main protagonist!



**The name Birmingham City University appears on the side of Baker Building, Perry Barr Campus in October 2007**

*“Chandi Patel was my mentor and taught me many priceless things about higher education. Giving me the role of **Subject Quality Coordinator** in support of the then course leader Val Sylvester, helped me to obtain a deep understanding of academic quality, the course-leader role and how HEI’s functioned. Because I was a qualified practice teacher who had worked with many students from UCE and across other HEI’s in the region as both onsite and off-site practice teacher, I was also handed the task of preparing students for and co-ordinating the **Final Placement in Year 3**, then named PP3.*

*I learned the importance of listening carefully and taking on board and responding to student and employer concerns. However, it was in the area of ‘teaching’ that most progress was achieved. In my early days, I was over-reliant on slides and notes. In contrast, Chandi often taught with minimal notes or slides, was an impressive verbal communicator, and had excellent student feedback. I learned that it was important to reach your audience through the use of self and that often a better connection and better learning can occur by having a more balanced use of own presence and direct vocal narrative supported by targeted but limited classroom aids”.*

*I remain indebted to and wish to thank all colleagues who supported me in my transition to teaching in Higher Education”.*

In practice and in government policy and law, there continued to be significant developments that would further influence and change the nature and expected quality of social work education at BCU.

**Peter Connelly, a 17-month-old white English boy died in London on 3<sup>rd</sup> August in 2007** after suffering more than fifty injuries over an eight-month period, during which he was repeatedly seen by the London Borough of Haringey Children's services and National Health Service (NHS) health professionals.

**A new Equality and Human Rights Commission was established by the Equality Act 2006.** On 1.10.2007, it took over the responsibilities of the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission. It sought to promote and protect human rights in England and Wales.

**The Mental Health Act 1983 was amended in 2007. The role of approved social worker (ASW) was replaced by approved mental health professional (AMHP).** Qualifying 'patients' could have an independent mental health advocate (IMHA). Unlike ASW's the AMHP role could now be undertaken by other professionals including registered mental health or learning disability nurses, occupational therapists and chartered psychologists after completing appropriate post-qualifying masters level training at level 7 and being approved by a local authority for a period of up to five years.

**The BCU BSc (Hons) Social work Degree was successfully revalidated/reapproved with the GSCC (and BCU) in 2008** with Chandi Patel as Head of Division, Val Sylvester as Course Leader, and Bharat Chauhan as GSCC Regional Inspector.

Following the death of Baby P in 2007, Lord Laming's report in March 2009 '**The Protection of Children in England – A Progress Report**', **made 58 recommendations for improving and strengthening child protection procedures.** ... However, the overarching message was that the commitment through the Every Child Matters programme (and Working Together to Safeguard Children Framework) to support vulnerable children and young people in a holistic and integrated way should be maintained.

**In December 2008 a Social Work Taskforce (SWTF)** was set up to conduct a 'nuts and bolts' review of the social work profession. The Social Work Task Force was an expert group, jointly appointed by the Secretaries of State for Health, and Children, Schools and Families, to

advise the Government on social work reform. The Task Force met for the first time in February 2009. The members of the Task Force were drawn from local frontline services and senior leadership, research, the media, the third sector, service user organisations, Unison and the British Association of Social Workers.

They reviewed practice and education and in their **November 2009 Final Report** made the following statement;

*“At present, social work in England too often falls short of the basic conditions for success. Weaknesses in recruitment, retention, frontline resources, training, leadership, public understanding and other factors are all compounding one another. They are holding back the profession and making service improvement difficult to achieve. Most importantly, people who look to social workers for support are not getting the consistently high quality of service they deserve”.*

As a consequence, **The Social Work Task Force made 15 recommendations.**

1. **Calibre of Entrants:** that criteria governing the calibre of entrants to social work education and training be strengthened.
2. **Curriculum and Delivery:** an overhaul of the content and delivery of social work degree courses.
3. **Practice Placements:** that new arrangements be put in place to provide sufficient high quality practice placements, which are properly supervised and assessed, for all social work students.
4. **Assessed Year in Employment:** the creation of an assessed and supported year in employment as the final stage in becoming a social worker.
5. **Regulation of Social Work Education:** more transparent and effective regulation of social work education to give greater assurance of consistency and quality.
6. **Standard for Employers:** the development of a clear national standard for the support social workers should expect from their employers in order to do their jobs effectively.
7. **Supervision:** the new standard for employers should be supported by clear national requirements for the supervision of social workers.
8. **Front Line Management:** the creation of dedicated programmes of training and support for front line social work managers.
9. **Continuing Professional Development:** the creation of a more coherent and effective national framework for the continuing professional development of social workers, along with mechanisms to encourage a shift in culture which raises expectations of an entitlement to ongoing learning and development.

10. **National Career Structure:** the creation of a single, nationally recognised career structure for social work.
11. **National College of Social Work:** the creation of an independent national college of social work, developed and led by social workers.
12. **Public Understanding:** a new programme of action on public understanding of social work.
13. **Licence to Practise:** the development of a licence to practise system for social workers.
14. **Social Worker Supply:** a new system for forecasting levels of supply and demand for social workers.
15. **National Reform Programme:** the creation of a single national reform programme for social work.

Over time, these recommendations led to the setting up of an **independent College of Social Work**, a clearer national career structure for social workers, and new arrangements for Practice Learning. This included a Professional Capabilities Framework and greater focus on the Quality Assurance of Practice Learning.

**In 2008 there was a severe Global Financial Crisis.** Excessive risk-taking by global financial institutions, especially unethical lending to low income house-buyers resulted in a bursting of the United States housing bubble. Mortgage-backed securities (MBS) tied to American real estate, as well as a vast web of derivatives linked to those MBS, collapsed in value. Financial institutions worldwide suffered severe damage. It reached a climax with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers on September 15, 2008 and a subsequent international financial crisis. In the UK, **Gordon Brown** (former Chancellor of the Exchequer) had taken over as prime minister from Tony Blair and one of his responses (which was mirrored by other major economies including the USA and Europe) included massive bailouts for the big banks to keep the financial system from collapsing. This crisis and the necessary response naturally caused the UK government to go into significant debt. A recession followed. These developments would eventually have significant implications for social work education and practice.

By 2008/9, the BCU Social Work Education team were delivering **Postgraduate AMHP Training** as part of a PG Cert/Dip Mental Health course. The Module Leader was **Inderjit Patel**, with the teaching team including Lyn Andrews, Robert Wu, Albert Moylan, Martin Walsh and Service Users and Carers. **Best Interests Assessor (BIA) training** as a Postgraduate module followed, led by **Robert Wu**.



**Inderjit Patel and Robert Wu**

### **Our Move from Perry Barr Campus to Edgbaston Campus.**

On **25<sup>th</sup> July 2009**, the remainder of the social work education Team moved from City North Campus (Baker Building, Perry Barr) to City South Campus (Ravensbury House, Westbourne Road, Edgbaston B15). Members of the social work Practice Learning Team (Dorothy Boatswain and Vincent Johnson) had moved at least a year earlier and were already located at City South Campus (Seacole Building, Westbourne Road) within the Department of Practice Learning Team.

The main reason for the move was to have all Faculty of Health Departments located on one Campus.



Front views of Ravensbury House (in Autumn Above and Summer Below), Westbourne Road, B15 3TN, located directly across the road from Seacole Building on Edgbaston/City South Campus.





Front Entrance: Ravensbury House

The front entrance to Ravensbury House



Foyer - Ravensbury House, with stairs to Floor 1

The Foyer of Ravensbury House, with stairs to floor 1 where the social work education team were based.



Floor 1 with BSc (Hons) Social Work notice board on the left.



Room 210 Ravensbury House where the Head of Department was initially based, before all HOD's were required to be based in Seacole Building.

## **When we moved from City North to City South Campus, our library resources followed.**

Library staff worked to identify all the print books and journals which needed to be transferred from the Kenrick Library to the **Mary Seacole Library** at City South Campus. The logistics were complicated; existing books and journals were moved around in the Mary Seacole Library, and additional shelving added to ensure there was plenty of space for Social Work resources.

We owe significant debt of gratitude to our library services who have supported us through the decades. Below is a brief account of the history of our library services written by **Ann Stairmand-Jackson with contributions from Chris Hands.**

### **50 years of Social Work Education – Library**

I'm delighted to have been invited to write this piece on how BCU Library and Learning Resources has supported, and worked alongside, the Social Work Department, their staff and students over the past 50 years. The Library service has evolved, and grown, alongside the Department; continuing to provide relevant resources and services to support Social Work students in their studies. Hopefully this piece will bring back memories for you too.

#### **Social Work library support and services: Looking back:**

In the early 1980s the then Social Work Department was based in an old red brick building that used to be an Infant and Junior School in Camp Hill, Birmingham. The library was in a largish room with a small room for journal stack, which was kept locked, and was for staff use only. Jean Wood was the Head Librarian; there was Janice (another librarian), and a library assistant.

The library catalogue was on Microfiche, and a four part issue slip system was used if you wanted to borrow a book; lots of pieces of paper to keep track of for the library staff. Microfiches are thin pieces of film which contained miniaturised details of the books stocked by the library; Microfiche readers were used to magnify and read the details contained on the Microfiche.

The Library was single staffed after 5pm, and Chris recalls it felt very spooky as very often there was no-one else around - there were few people around after 4pm really.

#### **City North Campus, Perry Barr:**

The Social Work Department and Sociology Departments then relocated to City North Campus, and moved into C block (Cox building), which was one of the last buildings to be built on the campus. The Library at Perry Barr at that time was in F Block (Feeney Building) where it covered 3 floors. Here's a brief reminder of what it was like:

The **Ground floor** of the library was journals, the library staff room, Technical Services, book/journal stack and Library management offices.

The **First floor** was the entrance to the Library (off the walkway), which had an issue desk for taking books out, and an enquiry desk where you could ask for help finding books and journal articles. There was also a small seminar room, a seating area where you could read the library's newspapers, a new book display, and study tables (these were all the round the perimeter of the floor). This is also where you'd have looked up, on the microfiche readers using the microfiche

catalogues, where to find the books recommended to you by your lecturers. One of Chris's tasks was to replace the microfiche every month, updating the information about the books that were available in the library; there was no internet to use in those days.

The **Second floor** is where the Social Work books would have been located; there were 2 librarians working on this floor that became an unofficial point for student's enquiries. There was no self-service at this time, with all books being issues through the Issue Desk; complete with manual date stamps and ink pads. The library catalogue was still on Microfiche, so not particularly up to date with the latest Social Work books added to the collection. Social Work students requesting a book that was out on loan would have had to fill in a pink reservation card with the book's details and their address – there were no emails! Inter-Library Loan cards had to be completed to request books and journal articles not available from the library, which were expensive at this time and limited to 6 requests at any one time. In 1985 the new building for the City of Birmingham Polytechnic library was formally opened by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor R. Hales. This was the William Kenrick Library, which became generally known as Kenrick Library; if you'd visited this library as a student who could forget the seemingly huge flight of stairs up to the library entrance



**City South Campus:**

In 2009 the Social Work Department relocated from City North Campus, Perry Barr to City South Campus in Edgbaston joining the Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences; their library resources followed. Library staff worked to identify all the print books and journals which needed to be transferred from the Kenrick Library to the Mary Seacole Library at City South Campus. The logistics were complicated; existing books and journals were moved around in the Mary Seacole Library, and additional shelving added to ensure there was plenty of space for Social Work resources.



The Mary Seacole Library is named in honour of [Mary Seacole](#), whose energy, pioneering role, entrepreneurial spirit and caring attitude acts as an inspiration to all students.

#### **Social Work library support & services: 2021**

The Social Work Department is currently supported by a subject team: Ann Stairmand-Jackson, Collection Management and Engagement Librarian, Janice Wright, Learning and Teaching Research Services Librarian, and Trudi Pledger, Customer Services Librarian. Working closely with lecturers to ensure that Social Work students have the relevant resources, and support, that they need.

Following the initial lockdown in the current Covid-19 pandemic the Library Service worked hard to increase the online resources, and support for the students and staff. The [Subject Guide for Social Work](#) gives an idea of the library resources and support available to current Social Work students. During this time library tutorials have been offered online, and library support has been available via the library's popular 24/7 Live Chat service.

Where the library catalogue back in the early 1980's was on Microfiche, it's now been replaced by [Library Search](#), where Social Work students can search for journal articles, ebooks, books, and other resources all in one place. Books where all copies are out on loan can be reserved online, and instead of filling out inter library loan cards students can request journal articles the library doesn't have copies of via our Rapid ILL (Inter-Library loan) service, with an average turn round time of 7 hours. BCU Library's have been awarded the [Customer Service Excellence](#) quality mark; a testimony to the service we provide to our students, staff, and researchers.

Social Work students in the 1980's might be amazed at the wealth of information instantly available to current students; the constant over the last 50 years though is the presence of the Library, and it's staff, working with the Social Work Department, helping students to succeed.

#### **Ann Stairmand-Jackson, with contributions from Chris Hands**

Librarian: Collection Management and Engagement

Library and Learning Resources

Birmingham City University

[Ann.Stairmand-Jackson@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Ann.Stairmand-Jackson@bcu.ac.uk)

## **Bharat Chauhan**

**Head of Department of Social Work at BCU March 2010 until 2015**



As a senior social worker, approved social worker, principal training officer and former Regional Inspector with the GSCC, Bharat brought with him a wealth of experience of practice, of training and of regulation of social work courses. He was very focussed on and intensely committed to raising standards in teaching, learning and assessment.

This was very much in line with government and social work sector policy at this time. Following several major enquiries and high -rofile reports with recommendations, most notably Laming 2009 and the Social Work Taskforce 2009, there were a plethora of initiatives taking place that were aimed at further improving the standards of social work education and practice.

Due to earlier experience as an **Approved Social Worker** or ASW practicing according to the Mental Health Act he had a specialist understanding of Mental Health Practice. His personal and professional understanding and experiences of racism also led him to take a keen interest in increasing diversity and embedding and teaching anti-racist practice. Bharat also had a personal and professional belief in the importance of spirituality and contributed to teaching in this space.

All of this brought new opportunities and challenges to the social work education department at BCU.

Based on a CV issued by Bharat in September 2014 (as part of revalidation for the BSc Hons Social Work Degree), the following is his educational and work journey.

**CQSW (Lanchester Polytechnic- July 1987)**

**Dip HE in Social Work (Lanchester Polytechnic - July 1987)**

**ASW (Birmingham 1988)**

**PG Diploma Ethics of Social Welfare (Keele University – Feb 2001)**

**MA Ethics of Social Welfare (Keele University – June 2005)**

**PG Certificate in Education (Birmingham City University-2011)**

He held a series of key roles as follows:

Jan 1982 to May 1990: UQ Social Worker to Senior Social Worker including Approved Social Worker between 1988 to 1990 for Social Services Department, Birmingham City Council.

May 1990 to August 1991: Principal Training Officer Social Services Department, Sandwell MBC.

5<sup>th</sup> August 1991 to March 2010: GSCC Regional Inspector/CCETSW Social Work Education Adviser until transfer to GSCC in 2001) including National and Regional Lead role for Mental Health; ASW and AMHP training requirements.

Membership of an ACPC in Sandwell between 1990 and 1991.

He delivered training courses and consultancies in a range of social work areas including Children's' and Adult Protection/Safeguarding.

Chaired and conducted reviews of Social Work Education course at graduate and post graduate levels as CCETSW Social Work Education Adviser and GSCC Inspector between August 1991 and March 2010. Chaired, Managed Conduct and reporting of investigations of Social Work courses in England for CCETSW and GSCC

**His Research Interests and Experience included:**

Training in research design, modelling and methods at Coventry University as a part of MPhil Programme in Research in Health and Social Care.

Thought Leadership

Variations in Progression of Social Work Students in England.

Barriers to Progression and Retention in Social Work Education.

Diversity and Progression in Social Work Education in England

Led Diversity and Progression Project Group: Scoping and initial research of progression rates of Black and Minority Ethnic students on Professional Social Work courses.

**His publications included:**

2007: GSCC: Scoping and initial research of progression rates of Black and Minority Ethnic students on Diploma in Social Work courses.

2009: "Variations in Progression of Social Work Students in England: Using student data to help promote achievement: Undergraduate full-time students' progression on the social work degree Shereen Hussein, Jo Moriarty and Jill Manthorpe, January 2009 Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London.

2009: 'Hanging on a Little Thin Line': Barriers to Progression and Retention in Social Work Education. Journal: Social Work Education, vol. 28, no. 4, with Jo Moriarty, Jill Manthorpe, Bharat Chauhan, Gwynne Jones, Helen Wenman, Shereen Hussein:

2009 Diversity and Progression in Social Work Education in England. An update report from the General Social Care Council (GSCC).

2010: Social Work Now: Thought Leadership.

**Whilst at BCU**, Bharat was Chair of University Examination Boards, led the Curriculum Development Group and Organised and Delivered a Social Work Conference for Students and Academics in 2014 Focused on "BME perspectives in Good Social Work and Health Care Practice: Is it Separate or Indivisible?" (June 2014).



He responded to discussions with Saxon University about student exchanges and had significant input into Professional Social Work Skills Development especially the use of Viva's. **During this time, David Collins, Sally Andrews, Abigail Ingram, Gero Kaur, Joyce Samuel, Charles Mugisha, Lyn Andrews, David Childs and Frank Nyoni joined the team.** Bharat attended and took a central role in the 'Child Poverty in Birmingham', Karlake Debate. He was an external panel member for University Validation Panels for Social Work and Education graduate and post graduate courses. He had regular attendance and engagement at various Conferences including JSWEC.

In the **May 2010** General Election, the Conservatives, led by **David Cameron**, won the most votes and seats, but still fell 20 seats short. They joined with the Liberal Democrats led by **Nick Clegg** to form a **coalition government**.

A key decision for the new Chancellor (**George Osborne**) was how to manage and address the deep debt crisis and associated recession. He chose the option and path of **Austerity**. This was the beginning of a period of significant cuts to welfare, and other public services especially the budgets of local government departments including social services. This resulted in significant changes to the way social work practice in both local authorities and PIV Sectors was organised and delivered. There was a promise to reduce immigration. Within 2 years 400 sure start centres were closed and there were sweeping welfare cuts. Austerity resulted in very severe cuts to local authority budgets. Payment by results was introduced into the Youth Justice System.

**However, there were also positive developments. A new Equality Act came into force in 2010.** It extended and strengthened previous anti-discrimination legislation that had begun in the 1970s and 1990s. There are now 9 protected characteristics. (Age, 'disability', Sex, 'race', Sexual orientation, Gender reassignment' Religion or Belief, Marriage & Civil Partnership, and Pregnancy & Maternity).

In the same year **the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB)** was established and took forward the SWTF recommendations. One of the many areas widely discussed was the importance of ensuring social

work graduates had high quality 'skills' e.g., in communication, assessment, reflection, etc. by the time they qualified.

One of the most significant early developments introduced by Bharat Chauhan in the 2010/11 BSc (Hons) Timetable was a more enhanced focus on '**Professional Social Work Skills Development**' – both inside and outside modules – throughout all three years of the degree. Although 'at least 30 days of skills training' would not be announced as a new regulatory requirement until 2012, it had been well trailed in the Social Work Reform Board Plans, and Bharat Chauhan was keen to embed this at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **Social Workers in Schools**

**In 2010 Margaret McEvoy** (then based at Bishop Challoner College in Kings Heath) **launched an agency named SSWIS (Student Social Workers in Schools)**. The agency began to offer social work practice placements to Universities in the region including BCU. The idea of social workers in schools already had a long history in the UK but had declined significantly in recent years.

## **Education Welfare in the UK has a long history. The following report by Henderson et al. provides some excellent insight.**

Henderson, Morag, Cheung, Sin Yi, Sharland, Elaine and Scourfield, Jonathan (2016) The outcomes of educational welfare officer contact in England. *British Educational Research Journal*, 42 (3). pp. 399-416. ISSN 0141-1926

*The role of EWO was created by the Forster's Education Act (1870) giving local authorities the power to make school attendance compulsory in Britain; the role was further developed by the Education Act 1944, allowing EWOs to provide support to young people and their families to facilitate school attendance. Over the years, those undertaking the role have been known as School Board Officers, Attendance Officers, and Educational Social Workers (Pritchard et al., 1998). But while the name and the role has changed over time, broadly its primary purpose has been to enable all young people to get the best out of the educational system, thereby improving equality of opportunity.*

*During the period 2004-2006 the EWO role was to encourage parents to form good relationships with school, to identify attendance problems and support parents and pupils to resolve them. EWOs have also advised parents on their legal responsibility for their children's enrolment and attendance at school and taken action through magistrates' court if necessary. In addition to attendance issues, EWOs also deal with pupils' behaviour, underachievement, health and general welfare (Reid, 2008), advise on child protection issues and prepared reports on pupils with special*

*educational needs. Furthermore, they have helped families to obtain benefits e.g. free school meals, transport or clothing; made referrals to others such as social services, health professionals or educational psychologists; and arranged alternative education for students who have been excluded from school (Reid, 2006a). In recent years EWO provision in England has shrunk, along with other local authority functions, and the role has also become more dispersed. Schools often now employ their own 'attendance officers', and local authorities use education social workers or other services such as home-school liaison officers.*

Although SSWIS is considered a 'non-statutory' agency - The following information from SSWIS confirmed that placements in schools clearly offer students the opportunity to use and apply law and policy.

### **Legislation and Policy relevant to Social Work in Schools**

All of the practice learning opportunities available to a student social worker in a school setting are within the statutory framework. Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on the local authority to make arrangements with relevant agencies to cooperate to improve the well-being of children. In response to this the government's guidance document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) sets out an expectation on schools to identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organizations where appropriate. 'Safeguarding' is a limiting judgment for schools, and a 'graded scale' (fail, satisfactory, good, and outstanding) for Safeguarding has been in place since 2009.

**Schools are evaluated in terms of:**

### **Care, Guidance and Support, as well as Safeguarding policies and procedures in place**

Please note here the key pieces of legislation and relevant Government or agency policies that the student will address on this Practice Learning Experience. Potential range include:

- ✓ Education Act 2002, Section 175, implemented 2004, Section 157 for independent schools: Promoting and Safeguarding the welfare of children.
- ✓ Children Act 2004, Section 10,11,12,12A, 13, Section 53
- ✓ Children Act 1989, Section 17(l), 17(5), 17(10), 47
- ✓ Education Act 1996, Section 27: Special Education Needs.
- ✓ Emergency Protection Powers: Children Act 1989, Section 46
- ✓ Homelessness Act 2002, Section 12
  
- ✓ Every Child Matters (ECM) Framework; Developed in response to the 2003 Green Paper 'Every Child Matters': published after

the death of Victoria Climbié. The five key Outcomes are legally entrenched in the Children Act 2004:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being
  - ✓ The Common Assessment Framework is a key component of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme (Education Act 2004).

**Use of the Common Assessment Framework will help guide and inform judgments about welfare and safety from the point of contact, through the processes of initial and more detailed core assessments, according to the nature and extent of the young person's needs**

- ✓ The Education Act 1996, Section 7: Legal duty to ensure their children attend school, Section 444, 437
- ✓ Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 16)
- ✓ Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- ✓ Pupil Registration Regulations 2006
- ✓ PACE 1984: Cautioning of young people/people who offend.
- ✓ Education Supervision Orders, Education 1996, Section 447.
- ✓ Parenting Orders, Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- ✓ Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- ✓ Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000
- ✓ Education and Inspectorate Bill 2006
- ✓ LAC: Children Act 1989 – updated by The Adoption and Children Act 2002. Children and Young Peoples Act 2008, Section 20
- ✓ The Special Guardianship Regulations 2005
- ✓ Anti-social behaviour Act 2003
- ✓ Data Protection 1998
- ✓ Disability & Equality Act 2010

#### Other

- ✚ Safeguarding Children and Safer recruitment in Education (DCSF), guidance for schools (Jan'2007)
- ✚ The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report, The Lord Laming Report 2009, Recommendation 10
- ✚ Learning lessons, taking action: Ofsted's evaluation of serious case reviews, 1st Apr 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> Mar 2008, Ofsted
- ✚ Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010): A guide to inter-agency working to Safeguard and promote the welfare of children. (this doc. is a must for all Student Social Workers)

The **Browne Report in October 2010 - *Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education*** removed the cap on the level of fees HEI's could charge for higher education courses. **This paved the way for the increased marketization of social work education**, including the support, education, assessment and management, of **social work students as 'customers and consumers'**.

Alongside the National Student Survey introduced in 2005, which measures 'student satisfaction' this was to have an increasingly significant impact on the 'ethos' surrounding the education and training of social work students on professional courses throughout the country. By removing the previous cap of £3,290 a year that universities could charge for tuition, and setting a new initial cap of £9000 per year from 2012, the cost to students of undertaking social work training jumped markedly. During the budget announcements of July 2015, George Osborne announced that tuition fees, which had been capped at £9,000 since 2012, would rise with inflation from the 2017–2018 academic year onwards.

With social work students becoming high fee paying customers of the University, since 2012, the relationship between educators and students changed. The most noticeable changes were, expectations around mutual responsibilities, passing, an enhanced focus on results and classifications gained, alongside reduced emphasis on levels of attendance, engagement, assessment and learning. There was certainly a **'tension'** between the business, marketing, customer and consumer focus supported by Government and increasingly expected by University students and their families, and the plethora of initiatives from government and the profession prior to and after 2012, aimed at raising standards and expected student and practitioner responsibilities, performance and outcomes in social work education and practice.

Accredited professional courses such as Social Work had limited independent powers to introduce requirements that would be different from University courses where students were not being trained to enter a profession. **Across England NSS Student satisfaction scores, league tables and accountancy measures took centre stage in University plans.** Traditionally and philosophically social work practice and social work education are not naturally aligned with the principles of privilege, and being served as a customer and consumer. They are more closely aligned with the principles of rights, duties, service, vocation,

responsibilities and personal and professional accountability. Official social work values, ethics and professional standards (such as the soon to be published HCPC Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students 2012) remained clear that in order to demonstrate sufficient competence as a professional, each student should 'take responsibility for their own learning' and 'follow their education provider's policy on attendance'. 'Everyone' has a responsibility to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults. As the marketization of social work education intensified over the next decade, the new more acute business ethos at Universities spawned by the Browne principles, was increasingly in conflict with both ethical positions within social work, and the rising standards agenda which had widespread support.

**With the stated intention of 'raising standards', new Education Secretary Michael Gove, Government funded fast-track social work PGDip/MSc programs, beginning with Step Up to Social Work in 2010.**

It targeted career switchers who did not have a background in social care but did have some experience of working with children. The minimum entry requirement was a 2:1 degree or a 2:2 plus a higher level qualification. Trainees completed a post-graduate diploma (and social work qualification) over 14 months. Candidates received a grant (around £19,000) and had their tuition fees paid. The curriculum was devised by regional partnerships of councils and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Soon after, the Government launched a new Policy for Mental Health Professionals - **No Health without Mental Health. It was published in February 2011.** Aimed at people of all ages, one of the clear goals and expectations was to achieve 'parity of esteem between mental and physical health services'. A good objective but over ten years later, has this been achieved?

In June 2010, in a further move to improve standards, Michael Gove asked Professor Eileen Munro to conduct an independent review of child protection in England. This led to publication in **May 2011 of The Munro Review of Child Protection – A Child Centred System**. It was based on eight excellent principles and made 15 recommendations for improvement, which went on to influence and shape social work education and practice in relation to children and families.

**The principles included:** The system should be centred on the child, early help is better for children and good professional practice needs up to date knowledge of the latest thinking and research.

**Her recommendations included:** Inspection of child protection should look at what all local services do, and how well, to keep children safe (*including health, education, police, probation, and the justice system*). The Government should require Local Safeguarding Children Boards to use methods based upon *systems theory*. Government should appoint a Chief Social Worker to advise on social work practice and report to the Secretary of State and Parliament each year.

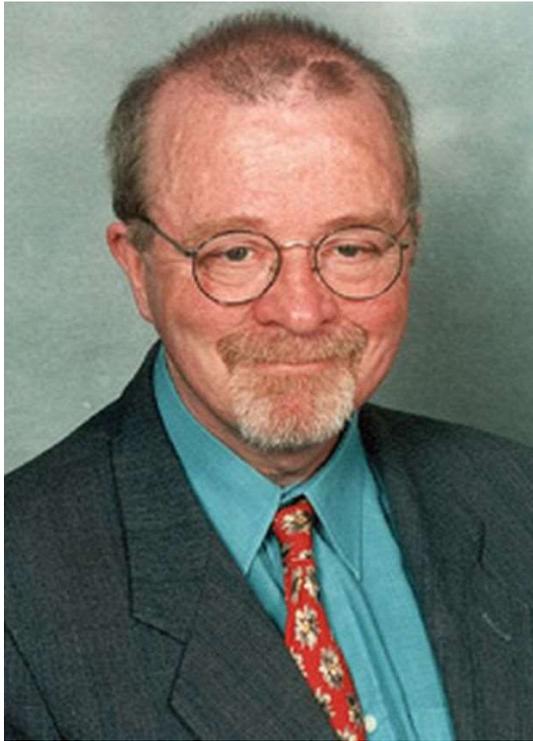
**In May 2010** Dorothy Boatswain (Senior Lecturer) wrote to colleagues on the social work education team at BCU, via email;

*“**Vincent Johnson** is not very well at the moment and has been transferred to Hospital. The hospital are assessing him over the next few weeks with a view to carrying out an operation. His wife Chris would like to thank you for the cards and good wishes and for always asking about his well-being and progress over the past months”.*

**The following was printed in Birmingham Live at 10:00, ON 9 JUN 2011**

The funeral of a much-respected former Birmingham councillor is taking place today. Vincent Johnson represented Bourneville between 1999 and 2003. The Labour politician was a social worker and spent much of his career at the Glenthorne Youth Treatment Centre in Erdington. He was also a veteran of several community campaigns. Labour colleague Stewart Stacey said:

“He was a caring and compassionate man, with a wicked sense of humour. He cared greatly about people and the environment.”



Vincent Johnson

In September 2011, **Stephen Wood** took over as Programme Director of the BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree from Val Sylvester. Soon after this the profession was celebrating a major announcement by Government.

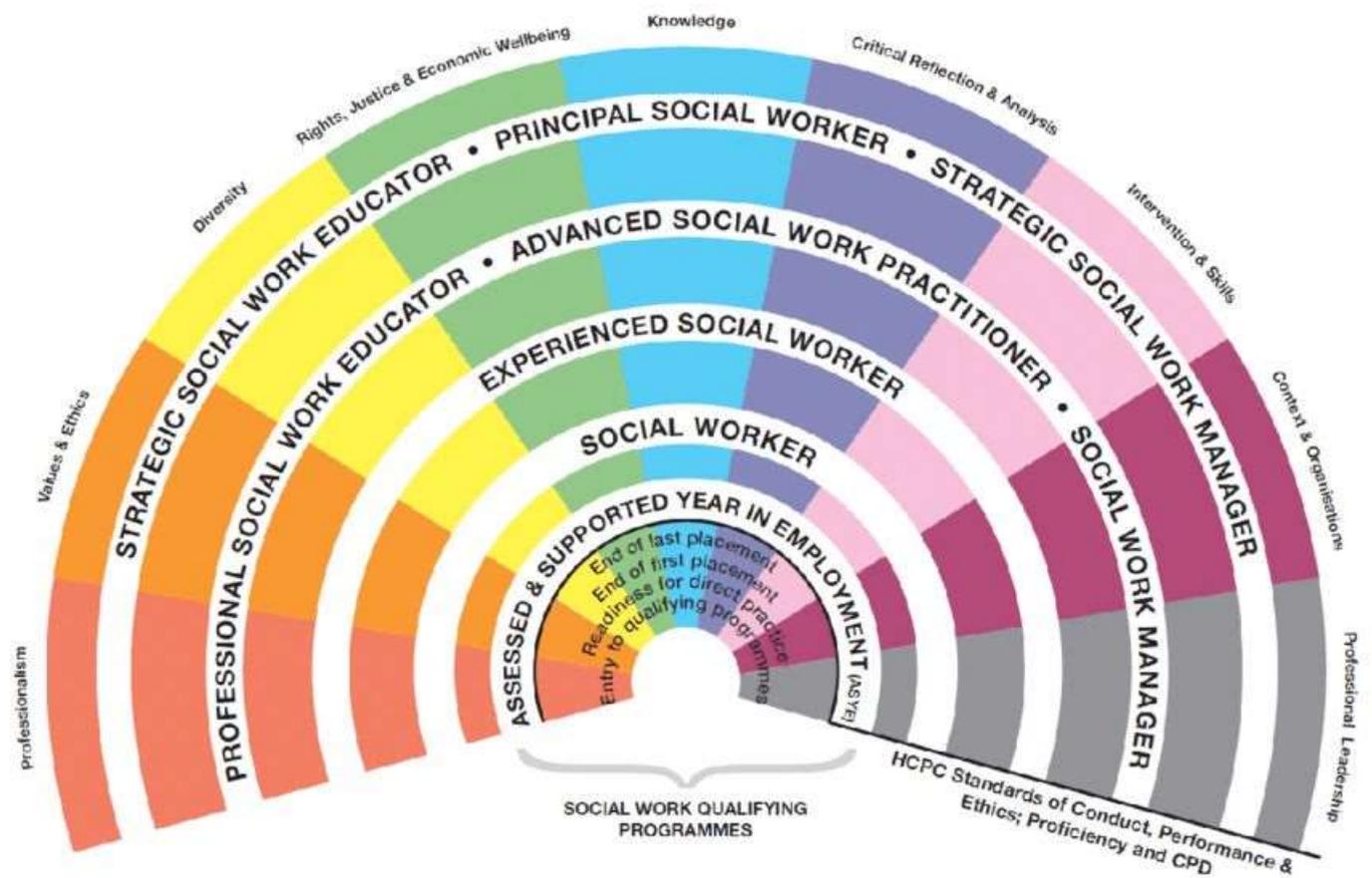
### **The College of Social Work**

After all members of the Social Work Taskforce in 2009, supported the establishment of **an independent and strong organisation to be the voice of and to represent and support the profession** - The College of Social Work (TCSW) was **officially launched in January 2012**.

Developed and led by social workers, it was established as a professional body. The role of TCSW on behalf of the profession, included, to champion high standards and drive excellence in social work and social work education over and above the threshold standards held by the regulator. It would promote good practice, provide information and guidance and disseminate research to support improvement. TCSW was a democratic organisation led by, and accountable to, its members.

TCSW developed the first **Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)** which replaced the NOS as the assessment framework for practice

learning in social work. There were **9 domains** e.g., Domain 1 was 'Professionalism'. Each domain had expected or required capabilities and taken together (not separate) were an overall interdependent statement of what students/qualified social workers should know, understand or be able to do – in terms of knowledge, skills and values at different levels of study or practice in their careers.



What was new and different was that **the PCF is divided into levels before and after qualification**. To qualify a student had to demonstrate the first 4 levels, beginning with an entry level to be used at admissions, a readiness for direct practice level in Year 1, End of First Placement in Year 2 and end of Last placement level of the PCF in Year 3.

This was to shape social work admissions, and curriculum design and development in the years to come, especially the assessment of students during practice placement.

## **The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)**

After the formation of a Coalition government in 2010, the General Social Care Council was earmarked for abolition as part of a drive to reduce the number and cost of publicly funded organisations.

**On 31 July 2012 the GSCC was closed**, and the regulation of social workers was taken over by the Health Professions Council, (already the regulator for 15 other professions) which was renamed the **Health and Care Professions Council** to reflect its expanded role in taking on the social work Profession.

As a result it produced the **2012 Standards of Proficiency for Social Workers in England**. Alongside the PCF, these became the standards which all social work students had to achieve by the end of their degree courses – to be awarded the degree and be ready to apply for registration with the HCPC. In a major change **students no longer had to register with the regulator at the beginning of their course**, and did not have to meet the HCPC value base i.e. the Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics required for qualified workers.

Instead Students were expected to behave according to '**Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students**' issued to all of the professions regulated by the HCPC. Social work in England no longer had a bespoke regulator.

Like other professional bodies TCSW worked alongside the Health and Care Professionals Council who were responsible for the registration and regulation of social workers in England. Together they set the standards. For example, **the College developed an endorsement scheme for social work degree courses**. This operated alongside the regulatory function of approval carried out by HCPC and was designed to support and supplement the HCPC requirements not duplicate them.

In a major change from the original 2003 degree, the requirements for Practice Learning changed with the transfer of regulation to the HCPC and the formation of TCSW. The new requirement included **a reduction from 200 to 170 days in practice placement settings**.

New arrangements for Practice Learning/Practice Learning Guidelines were published by TCSW in June 2012. These guidelines required all social work degree programmes to introduce a new model of 200 days practice learning (from 2013) to include, **at least 30 days for**

**development of skills for practice** and assessment of 'readiness for direct practice', 70 days first placement and 100 days last placement.

They also required use of **Quality Assurance in Practice Learning (QAPL) or an equivalent standard**. At BCU, to meet HCPC Standard of Education and Training 5.4 (SET 5.4), as an education provider we had to maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements, including how difficulties were responded to. Although HCPC did not require the use of QAPL, and any other evidence may be used to show how SET 5.4 was being met, we were using the Quality Assurance Framework for Practice Learning (QAPL) since the academic year 2010.11.

Overall these changes, reduced the number of days social work students had to engage with and learn during practice placements (and the corresponding Educational Support Grant, given for placement days) but put a greater emphasis on 'skills and readiness for practice training' within the academic curriculum. There was speculation that this change from 200 to 170 days was part of cost cutting by a Government committed to austerity, while others argued that it increased skills training at HEI's and gave students more time to prepare for practice.

## The Welfare Reform Act of 2012

**This Act ushered in wide-ranging changes to the post-war welfare system in the UK.** White (2014) advises that - Measures introduced by the Conservative-led coalition government formed part of a programme of austerity, with significant cuts to public services. (White G (2014) The Impact of welfare reform on third sector care and support services in Scotland. Glasgow: Iriss)

This led to major changes in UK Welfare law and had a significant impact on social services and social workers.

### The changes to UK welfare law can be summarised as:

- Replacing the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with point-based Personal Independence Payments (PIP).
- Replacing Incapacity Benefit (and related benefits) with Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) – largely completed after initial phase of testing across UK from 2011–14.
- A withdrawal of Council Tax benefits and parts of the Social Fund (community care grants and crisis loans).
- The introduction of Universal Credit (UC), replacing a range of in- and out-of-work benefits incorporating housing costs, and changes to working tax credits.
- The creation of new household caps and ‘under-occupancy’ penalties (known as the ‘bedroom tax’).

### Impact on social workers since 2012

- Welfare reform has increased demand on the social services workforce, especially those in third sector care and support.
- Workers have been emotionally affected by the impact of welfare reform on clients lives and have felt angry, distressed, as well as disappointed and frustrated in their ability to help.
- Workers have been diverted from other tasks to help reassure people affected by welfare reform and guide and signpost them through the system.
- Additional workloads and **emotional stresses** come on top of an already difficult work-life balance, decreasing job security and pay and conditions with possible implications for recruitment and retention.
- The sector is involved in awareness raising, evidence gathering, lobbying and campaigning to challenge aspects of welfare reform.

## The Development of International Student Exchange

Saxion University, Enschede, Netherlands

In November 2012, **Bharat Chauhan** together with **Val Sylvester** and **Albert Moylan** visited the social work division at Saxion University, Enschede, Netherlands to discuss opportunities for international collaboration including student exchanges with BCU.



Albert Moylan outside the entrance to Saxion University

Arising out of discussion was an agreement for two students from the Social Work programme (Saxion University) to visit BCU (Birmingham) in order to gain experience from a UK perspective.

In **May 2013**, two social work students from Saxion attended our Year 3 module **Critical Reflective Practice** (Level 6), as part of completing their respective Dissertation Project, based on a critical reflection of an International perspective of Social Work. They were supervised whilst at BCU by our Module Co-ordinator, **Val Sylvester**.

Both students returned to Saxion University having completed their respective academic projects. In June 2013, Val was invited to participate in the student presentation of their final project, via **Skype**. This was an innovative experience and demonstrated the potential for use of new technology and future exchange developments.

**Issues external to our immediate team, continued to shape the social work curriculum and student experience at BCU.**

**The Rough Guide to Curriculum Design** published by the Centre for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) at BCU in **January 2013**, included – designing for improved feedback to students, designing to embed employability in the curriculum and designing to include more technology to support learning. These principles in particular were to shape some future developments in the social work education department.

However the landscape for social work education was not entirely positive for students, staff and the profession during this time period. The Government announced in 2012 that **from academic year 2013, social work bursaries were to be capped**. In addition, undergraduate students would only be able to apply for the bursary in their second and final years. In a statement the Department of Health said it hoped reducing the availability of the bursary would help to attract only those with a serious desire to become social workers to the degree. “These changes are designed to drive up care standards in the sector and will give employers a higher quality pool of candidates to choose from,” said care minister Norman Lamb. This seemed out of step with other government objectives e.g. increasing and widening participation.

**Despite reductions in funding for local authority social work departments, an increasingly austere welfare environment for citizens, and higher costs for students engaged in education and training, the context for further raising standards in social work education and practice at this time could not have been clearer as approximately 30 children each year were continuing to die at the hands of their parents and/or ‘carers’.**

		
Jasmine Beckford Died 5 July 1984 Aged 4	Victoria Climbié Died 25 February 2000 Aged 8	Peter Connelly Died 3 Aug 2007 Aged 17 Months
		
Khyra Ishaq Died 17 May 2008 Aged 7	Hamzah Khan Died 15 December 2009 Aged 4	Keanu Williams Died 9 January 2011 Aged 2
	?	?
Daniel Pelka Died 3 March 2012 Aged 4		

**After the death of Daniel Pelka and publication of the Serious Case Review report, the following article by Beatrix Campbell, was published in the Guardian on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2013. It sums up the complex ‘social, political and legal context’ that educators, students and practitioners had to negotiate, including the rights of parents and compliance culture.**

## **From Jasmine Beckford to Daniel Pelka: a history of chaos and calumny**

In three decades of child protection, an alliance between state and children has been compromised by the compliance culture.

Almost three decades lie between the deaths of four-year-old Daniel Pelka and four-year-old Jasmine Beckford. Both suffered cruelty, beatings, and starvation. Both were, in effect, tortured to death. In those three decades there has been a revolution in our awareness of what adults can do to children. And a counter-revolution. In all the blaming and bleating that has accompanied the publication this week of Coventry's serious case review into Daniel Pelka's life and death misses this vital context. The similarities in the suffering of these two children should remind us of the calumny and chaos that has defined the history of childhood adversity in Britain.

The 1985 inquiry by Louis Blom-Cooper into the death of Jasmine Beckford triggered the transformation of child protection services. He delivered an ultimatum: thou shalt not intervene. Proactive protective services were to be wrapped around children, and child welfare professionals were to be clear: the children – not adults – were their clients; they had to seek out endangered children and discover what they might have to say about their lives.

The mid-80s became the moment, therefore, when the state took the side of children. The professions were empowered to use their judgment to intervene on their behalf. In that context, sexual abuse was added to the category of concerns.

Almost instantly there was a mutiny by adults who felt accused, and by reluctant professionals. By 1988 another inquiry, by Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, into contested allegations of child abuse in Cleveland concluded that there was "no reason to doubt" the medical evidence that had precipitated the controversy, but reserved its ire for the services that had intervened.

This set the template for practice thereafter. As the Conservative health minister Tony Newton told the House of Commons in July 1988, "proper action to protect children' would not be allowed to "trample on the rights of parents". Professional protocols were rendered useless by these irreconcilable imperatives: the Children Act placed the "paramountcy" of children's best interests against parental rights. Practitioners felt patrolled to ensure that they did not transgress parent power; the Children Act 1989 and the Memorandum of Good Practice, published in 1992, proclaimed the emancipation of children's testimony. In fact children's testimony was not freed up, but was controlled within increasingly forensic priorities. By the mid-1990s, following ferocious campaigns against child welfare professionals, policy drifted away from child abuse and protection, towards family protection. Social workers were discredited and disempowered. This defeat of the central profession concerned with child welfare inevitably discouraged teachers, police and paediatricians from a more interventionist stance.

Subsequent inquiries merely cemented what has come to be known as a compliance culture: checklists and targets are perceived not as protecting children but providing cover for wary professionals. Although they were commanded to

work together, the purpose of co-operation was less obvious, and less likely to happen. Children might be assessed, but that didn't mean they would be protected.

Despite this cold climate, feminist campaigners persuaded politicians that domestic violence against women carried serious implications for children. Policymakers began to understand this, and gender was knitted into their understanding of generational abuse.

New Labour showed little sympathy with the child welfare professions. Tony Blair's approach to children, notoriously, was animated less by protection than policing: managing "problem families", antisocial behaviour and crime.

But yet another death provoked a sea change: after Victoria Climbié was killed by her carers, the government in 2003 introduced Every Child Matters. It was another attempt at holistic childcare, albeit too late to repair the damage already done to the professions and, in any case, cauterised by managerialist lore and language.

And so we come back to another dead child. No doubt the education secretary, Michael Gove, will be outraged. Following the death of Baby P, he commissioned Professor Eileen Munro to review services in 2011. Her report warned that the system's ability to be child-centred had been compromised: bureaucracy and compliance culture had "obscured" the centrality of relating to the vulnerable child.

Gove followed up in November 2012 with sound and fury – against trade unions for being outdated, academics for being ideological, and politicians for preserving their own networks against child-centred education. The state was failing children he said, putting 'the rights of biological parents ahead of vulnerable children.'

But Gove was not about to invent a new alliance between the state and children. He accused social workers of being "de-sensitised to squalor" and to parents who left their children in "soiled nappies and scummy baths". Sinister echoes of discredited notions of an underclass, of "cycles of deprivation" loitered in his enthusiastic assault on social services. He dumped Every Child Matters: it was, he noted in February 2012, "meddlesome". No one could be accused of "meddlesome" intervention in the life of Daniel Pelka.

## REFLECTION

This was an important reminder to all in Social Work Education (if we needed this reminder) that we continued to have a central role as *GUARDIANS OF STANDARDS in our Profession of Social Work*. This is directly aligned to the central role of social workers, social work educators, practice educators and all agencies and professionals involved in 'protecting and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults'. If we forget the real purposes of Social Work Education and fail to ensure high standards are implemented, maintained and raised where necessary, we are no longer 'professional' social work educators and are neglecting our central role of 'protecting the public'. *We must always 'LISTEN' to the voices of children and vulnerable adults respond with COURAGE and CONVICTION.*

**In 2013, Michael Gove** – then education secretary – in a speech to the NSPCC **delivered a scathing criticism of social work education** and pledged to *strip out the “dogma” that saw graduates being encouraged to see people they worked with as “victims of social injustice” and inequalities.*

Whilst understanding the complexity and importance of the role and the level of professionalism required, he is clearly focussed on raising the calibre of entrants and very critical of the quality and consistency of social work education and training.

**The following are excerpts from Michael Gove’s speech to the NSPCC on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013 when he said:**

*“Social workers spend their time with the children and families in our society who face the gravest difficulties - those who may have been bruised and battered by events and circumstances and yet are in many cases deeply resistant to accepting the help they need.*

*Social workers have to develop relationships with adults, win their trust and understand their problems, while at the same time thinking hard - and first - about the needs of the children in these homes.*

*Social workers have to weigh very delicate technical, psychological, social and moral questions in their minds as they work with these families. It requires a level of professionalism every bit as great as that of doctors or barristers, teachers or lecturers.*

*Which is why we need to ensure that the people we attract to social work are as talented as possible - and why we need to ensure the training we give them is as professional as possible. That is why I asked Sir Martin Narey - the former chief executive of Barnardo’s - to undertake a thorough review of social work training.*

*... despite the success of Step Up to Social Work in bringing more able graduates into children’s social work, we are still not recruiting enough great people into social work and we are not training existing social workers well enough. That is why the launch of the new Frontline programme by the Teach First alumnus Josh MacAlister is so important. Sir Martin Narey’s report will confirm that we already produce some fine social workers. But it will say more about the need for improvement, about varying educational standards at universities, and a failure to be clear about what our social workers need to know and understand when they emerge into this most challenging of careers.*

*In too many cases, social work training involves idealistic students being told that the individuals with whom they will work have been disempowered by society. They will*

*be encouraged to see these individuals as victims of social injustice whose fate is overwhelmingly decreed by the economic forces and inherent inequalities which scar our society. This analysis is, sadly, as widespread as it is pernicious. It robs individuals of the power of agency and breaks the link between an individual's actions and the consequences. It risks explaining away substance abuse, domestic violence and personal irresponsibility, rather than doing away with them.*

*Social workers overly influenced by this analysis not only rob families of a proper sense of responsibility, they also abdicate their own. They see their job as securing the family's access to services provided by others, rather than helping them to change their own approach to life. Instead of working with individuals to get them to recognise harmful patterns of behaviour, and improve their own lives, some social workers acquiesce in or make excuses for these wrong choices”.*

**During 2013, the Social Work Reform Board ceased to exist following the Appointment of two Chief Social Workers by Government**, one for Adult Social Work in the Department of Health and the second for Children, Young People and Families Social Work, in the Department for Education. Both Report to Government Ministers and write the first **Knowledge and Skills Statements in 2014/15**.

Then we have a positive development, (rare during this period) when **The Marriage (same sex couples) Act 2013** builds on the Civil Partnership Act 2004 by extending marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales.

In an increasingly austere environment, and after HSE surveys find the highest prevalence rates of work related stress in health and social care workers, **the growing importance of resilience in Social Work Practice** is emphasised by the work of **Grant and Kinman**. This is exemplified and evidenced in many reports, especially their 2013 publication; 'Bouncing Back?' Personal Representations of Resilience of Student and Experienced Social Workers. This is followed by their high quality evidence-based book in 2014 'Developing Resilience for Social Work Practice'.

**In July 2013**, still aiming to intervene and disrupt the status quo, **Michael Gove ruled that an independent trust would run children's services in Doncaster**. In 2014, the trust took control over children's social work and care operations, while the council retained responsibility for schools and education.

**Doncaster Council was the first of 10 councils between 2014 and 2020 forced to transfer its Childrens services to an Independent Trust**, following an Ofsted Report to the DfE. Birmingham Childrens Trust and Sandwell were among this group of ten.

**Meanwhile back at BCU ....**

In **September 2013**, we introduce an **'Employability Viva'** as an integral part of Final Placement. Introduced by Bharat as Head of Department, all students on last placement (then named PP3) were required to undertake and pass a mandatory employability Viva Voce Examination (Viva) as part of their PP3 Practice Assessment.

Students had to complete a job application form, present a critically reflective account of a case they had worked on in practice and answer four questions. This involved all final year students having a mock-interview for a social work Job – including providing them with feedback on strengths and areas for development. Each panel included an academic tutor, service user or carer (as they were then called) and a qualified practitioner. This process was intended to evaluate and provide feedback to each student about their level of readiness for future interviews and employment. This initiative was widely supported at a time when 'employability' was high on both the professions and University agendas.

There was also a move to smaller marking and internal moderation teams for each module, as a way of further increasing quality.

In a highly acclaimed move, **The College of Social Work launched new Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS) in October 2013**. From October 2015 all practice educators of social work students had to be registered social workers. TCSW also introduced new arrangements for CPD.

## **These positive initiatives, led to the final Development and Launch of Stage 1 and Stage 2 Social Work Practice Educator Training Courses at BCU**

Following the introduction of TCSW 2012 Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS), supported by Bharat Chauhan, Val Sylvester and Albert Moylan (who both completed the practice teaching award earlier in their careers, and had experience of being a practice teacher and running practice placement modules) - began designing and writing Stage 1 and Stage 2 Practice Educator Training (PET) Courses.

Following approval, **the First ever BCU Social Work PET Course was piloted in 2013/14 after being launched in December 2013** by Course Leader Val Sylvester. Many local Practice Educators in the LA and PIV sectors have obtained their qualifications at BCU over the last 7 Years.

Since 2013.14, the BCU PET courses have been updated in line with changes to the PEPS and run each year with Postgraduate (Masters) Level 7 credits attached. Two colleagues who studied social work at Birmingham Polytechnic in the 1970s and later went on to be qualified social workers and qualified Practice Teachers (Linda Evans and Victoria Coker) have been invaluable members of the teaching team.

## **Move to more TELT including eSubmission and eFeedback**

**Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching (TELT)** became a significant development at the university including the social work department, especially from 2013 onwards. Various initiatives had taken place within the Centre for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching and these systems formed the basis of TELT at BCU. The TELT Ecosystem included, **ExpLOR** (Learning Object Repository) **Moodle** (learning Management System), **MyCAT** (Content Authoring Framework) **Mahara** (ePortfolio and Networking) **Shareville** (Virtual Town and **Kaltura** (Video Streaming System.)

Within the social work department, Moodle became a TELT resource very widely used and consequently after a successful pilot **using Moodle, there was a move in 2013/14 to electronic submission for all Modules (except practice placements) and eFeedback for each Module.** This was a major step forward in assisting both students and staff. Apart from 2 practice placement modules, students no longer had to travel to the University to submit their work or to collect their feedback.

The monitoring, processing and marking for staff was also streamlined. One of the other positives, although not discussed at the time, were the reductions in CO2 and traffic congestion!

In January 2014, **Stephen Wood** who had been Programme Director for the Social Work Degree left the team to take up a new role at another HEI and **Albert Moylan** took over as Programme Director during the academic Year 2013/14.

In February 2014, Bharat Chauhan, Val Sylvester and Albert Moylan received an invitation to attend the International Social Work Conference, on **World Social Work Week, at Saxion University, Enschede**. This entailed participating within the Workshops which were being run from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014 to Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2014. Our presentation at the *Conference* was focussed on '*Values and Anti Oppressive Practice at the Core of Social Work*'.

### **Liz Bullock recalls:**



*"I was a student on the BSc (hons) social work degree course between **September 2011 and June 2014**. There were Approximately 110 students in my cohort at the beginning of Year 1.*

*The course was structured very differently to the BSc Programme in its' current form. Assignments were mostly academic assignments and there was also a 10,000 word Research Proposal in Year 3. The teaching team were located in Ravensbury House and this was generally where we would have tutorials with our tutors.*

*Bharat Chauhan was head of Department and Albert Moylan was my Personal Tutor. Steve Wood was course leader when I started in 2011 and Albert took over this role in 2013, during my time at BCU.*

*How placements were organised was different to today. Dorothy Boatswain was heavily involved in leading placements, supported by Lucy Shutt. At this time (due to regulatory changes introduced by the move from the GSCC to the HCPC in 2012 – the launch of the College of Social Work and the change from National Occupational Standards to the PCF) we were one of the last groups to have 3 placements totalling 200 days. 35 days in Year 1. 65 in Year 2. 100 days in Year 3.*

*We needed to ensure a mix between children and families / adult placements. The Students personal tutor was also their placement tutor and there was an academic assignment to complete as part of placement. This academic assignment was based on my placement so it was considered as evidence of meeting the placement standards and I also got academic credits for passing a placement.*

*During Years 1 and 2 the teaching was organised around lectures – these could be 4hrs in duration. Lectures could start at 9am and sometimes end at 7pm. In Year 3 the structure changed to 2hr lectures followed by 2hr small group work. I remember initially our year felt quite resistant about this change, as in general we liked the high level and amount of F2F teaching.*

*I remember attending my initial interview at BCU already having 2 offers from other universities, positive I was going to accept one of those 2 offers. I did not prepare for the written task as my 1st choice had made me an offer. However, within 5 minutes of the introductory talk given by Steve Wood, my whole opinion changed and I realised I HAD to attend BCU to complete my BSc Social Work degree as THIS was the course which would best prepare me to be the best social worker I could possibly be. Luckily I passed the interview and accepted the offer from BCU and I never regretted making this decision. I feel BCU challenged me academically and supported my personal and professional growth.*

**In early 2014 two influential Reports on Social Work Education were published, which were to partially shape future developments** especially in relation to continued capping of the number of bursaries, increasing funding for fast track post-graduate programmes, shaping practice learning and managing educational support grants used to pay employers for providing placement days.

### **January 2014 – Sir Martin Narey: Making the education of Social Workers consistently effective**

Commissioned by: Education Secretary, Michael Gove

**This report concentrated on the education of children's social workers and made 18 recommendations** including;

8 The Education Support Grant should be distributed only to universities which can demonstrate the quality of their placements, including providing every student with statutory experience, or an alternative experience which is genuinely comparable.

12 In further revisions to the allocation of bursaries and in the light of the financial need further to reduce expenditure, postgraduate study should be protected.

16 Universities should be encouraged to develop degrees for those intending to work in children's social work. Such degrees would build on a first year common to all social workers, with a second and third year focussing exclusively on children and related issues.

17. The requirement that social workers have placements in contrasting service settings (typically, one with children and one with adults) should be relaxed to allow those intent on a career in children's social work to spend all 170 days of placement in a children's setting.

## **February 2014 – Professor David Croisdale-Appleby OBE**

### **Re-visioning Social Work Education: An independent Review**

Commissioned by: Care Minister, Norman Lamb

**This report looked at the education of all strands of social workers and made 22 Recommendations.** These included;

**Recommendation 3:** Individual HEI's entry selection processes need to be more rigorous and based on assessing candidates' qualities in relation to a new framework of the social worker as a practitioner, the social worker as a professional, and the social worker as a social scientist, and to the domains in the PCF. Attributes such as values, resilience, dealing with uncertainty and conflict should also be assessed for selection for entry.

**Recommendation 4:** Excellent social work demands high quality social workers, so entry standards to the profession should be raised significantly. Minimum entry level at undergraduate level should be 300 UCAS points...

**Recommendation 6:** ...Practice placements settings should be with a wide range of user groups ...

**Recommendation 10:** All qualifying education should equip newly qualified social workers with the capability to engage in research throughout their career, inculcating an understanding that the ability to carry out research is an essential component in their future professional capability in practice.

**Recommendation 13:** Encouragement should be given to provide innovative routes to social work qualification, such as the fast track routes ...

**Recommendation 14:** A key condition of the regulation of all courses leading to the professional qualification as a social worker is that all social workers should have the capability to work with all individuals, families, groups and communities and to do so in all settings and situations likely to be encountered, so that generic capability is not sacrificed on the altar of early specialism....

**Recommendation 17:** The overall quality of the educational experience in practice placements must be improved, through the imposition of a much more rigorous audit as a requirement of eligibility for receipt of future ESG payment...

**When conducting a review of the Narey and Croisdale-Appleby reports in Community care on July 15 2014, Teresa Cleary (Senior Lecturer in Social Work at Anglia Ruskin concludes;**

“Narey’s emphasis is on producing technically competent workers and his report is more based on opinion and judgement than generalisable fact. By objectively reviewing the merits of these reviews, a basic evidence-based analysis points firmly to Croisdale-Appleby as the stronger of the two (reports).”

**Under the title, Reforming the Education Support Grant, in 2014, Government cut funding to support practice placements.**

The existing £18 per placement day for placements involving the use of statutory interventions (mainly LAs); and £28 per placement day for non-statutory placements - were replaced by a single fee of £20 per day.

This had a significant impact on the ability of private, independent and voluntary agencies to continue offering placements to HEI’s.

For example - On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 **Margaret McEvoy provided the following update on SSWIS to all Universities in the region** including BCU.

*To All Concerned,*

*Although it has proved a very tough year for SSWIS Project in view of financial constraints following cutbacks to the ESG, we are continuing to facilitate 'first' and 'final' placements from 'all' Universities involved, across the thirty statutory education settings. As we progress into our 6th year, we are gaining increased recognition from Ofsted who have commented on the highly valuable social work provided by the*

*students on placement, and the DfE have recommended that a student social worker is placed in one of the 'Trojan Horse' schools. We were also requested by the College of Social Work to support Bedfordshire to set up a similar project.*

*More importantly, we are recognising the extent that placing Student Social Workers in school settings is breaking down barriers where the social work role is increasingly perceived as providing care, guidance and support, as opposed to being negatively equated with purely removing children from their families.*

Margaret McEvoy

SSWIS Project Manager/Practice Educator

However, funding from Government was channelled into other initiatives related directly to developing social work education.

### **Supported by Michael Gove as Education Secretary; The Frontline fast track programme to train children and families social workers was introduced in 2014**

It was inspired by the Teach First fast-track scheme for teachers. The scheme targeted 'high flying' graduates, particularly those from Russell Group universities, and trained them as children's social workers.

- Minimum entry requirement was a 2:1 degree, not in social work.
- The programme lasts two years.
- In the first year trainees complete a five week intensive summer institute, followed by a year-long placement in a local authority alongside academic sessions.
- At the end of the first year trainees get a post-graduate diploma in social work. This allowed them to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- In the second year Frontline trainees work as a qualified social worker in children's services and continue studying towards a master's degree as well as completing a leadership development programme.
- In the first year trainees received a bursary of around £19,000.
- In the second year they are paid a salary by their 'host' council (approximately £24,000).
- The curriculum and training was designed and delivered by The Frontline Academy. This is made up of the University of Bedfordshire, the Institute of Family Therapy and the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College London.

## **BCU Social Work Conference 2014**

On Monday **16<sup>th</sup> June 2014** Bharat Chauhan and members of the Social Work Team organised and led a well-attended Conference aimed at Year 3 Students, academics, faculty colleagues and partners entitled

*“BME perspectives in Good Social Work and Health Care Practice: Is it Separate or Indivisible?”*

Vernon Harris was the Keynote Speaker.

## **The Care Act 2014**

This Act brought many laws on care and support for adults in England together under one new law. It included clearer and simpler rules and guidance on the law. There was an increased emphasis on promoting wellbeing, and independence, through prevention, being strengths-based and personalisation (putting the person and their immediate and wider resources at the centre of the process) and ensuring independent advocacy if vulnerable citizens have no one to speak for them and had difficulty participating in the assessment process. Personal budgets were promoted to allow for each individual to receive tailored packages of care, shifting the focus away from providing services for groups, and safeguarding through Adult Safeguarding Boards.

Under the Care Act, **carers** were afforded the same rights to support and services from local authorities. For the first time, carers could receive assessments of their needs and receive support on a par with those they cared for. Corresponding rights to assessment and support for young carers were included in the Children and Families Act 2014.

Within social work education at BCU, **Strengths-Based Practice** was seen as a collaborative process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing them to work together to determine an outcome that draws on the person’s strengths and assets.

As such, it concerns itself principally with the quality of the relationship that develops between those providing and those being supported, as well as the elements that the person seeking support brings to the process. Working in a collaborative way promotes the opportunity for individuals to be **co-producers** of services and support rather than solely consumers of those services.

Strengths-based approaches value and employ the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in individuals, families and communities. It does not mean ignoring risks and challenges. Practitioners working in this way have to work in collaboration - helping people to do things for themselves. In this way, people can become co-producers of support, not passive consumers of support.

The Care Act 2014 required local authorities to 'consider the person's own strengths and capabilities, and what support might be available from their wider support network or within the community to help' in considering 'what else other than the provision of care and support might assist the person in meeting the outcomes they want to achieve'. In order to do this the assessment 'should lead to an approach that looks at a person's life holistically, considering their needs in the context of their skills, ambitions, and priorities'.

Local authorities should identify the individual's strengths – personal, community and social networks – and maximise those strengths to enable them to achieve their desired outcomes, thereby meeting their needs and improving or maintaining their wellbeing.

Any suggestion that support could be available from family and friends were to be considered in the light of their appropriateness, willingness and ability to provide any additional support and the impact on them of doing so. This is also subject to the agreement of the adult or carer in question (see 6.64 of the Care Act guidance).

The implementation of a strengths-based approach within the care and support system required cultural and organisational commitment beyond frontline practice. Practitioners would need time for research and familiarisation with community resources. Accountability had to be with the practitioner and time had to be allowed for the assessment to be undertaken appropriately and proportionately.

The objective of the strengths-based approach was to protect the individual's independence, resilience, ability to make choices and wellbeing. Supporting the person's strengths could help address needs (whether or not they are eligible) for support in a way that allows the person to lead, and be in control of, an ordinary and independent day-to-day life as much as possible. It would also help delay the development of further needs.

## **The Children and Families Act 2014**

One of the central aims of this Act was to help children get adopted faster. This led to significant debate within social work education and practice. There was no longer a requirement to match ethnic backgrounds of adoptive parents with their new children. When children were going through the process of being placed in care, this act intended that the Family Court proceedings shouldn't take more than 26 weeks.

In addition, every child with Special Educational Needs would have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan in place. There was a presumption that children would be educated in a mainstream setting, unless the child or their parents were against it.

We ensured all the proposed changes of the Act were incorporated into our teaching and learning of law and policy. It would make changes to help children and young people who have a 'disability' or special educational need at school. It would also change the way the Children's Commissioner worked for children. The Act made changes to help with many sorts of difficulties or challenges children can face in their lives. It would make sure schools give more help to children who have medical problems. It would mean more help for young carers who look after someone else. For children in care, there were changes to improve children's homes. There were changes that would let foster children carry on staying with the families who have fostered them after they reach 18. All children would be able to have free school lunches in their first few years at school. And it would make changes to protect children from getting addicted to tobacco or harmed by smoking. The new law was intended to help families by giving mums and dads more choices about sharing time off work after a baby is born. It would give parents who work more choice about the times they go to work. It would aim to help families to get good care for very young children.

Under the **Mental Health Act Code of Practice 2015** five guiding principles were highlighted that should be considered when making all decisions in relation to care, support or treatment provided under the Act:

- Least restrictive option and maximising independence
- Empowerment and involvement
- Respect and dignity
- Purpose and effectiveness, and
- Efficiency and equity.

This shaped how practitioners were trained at BCU.



This is a picture of many of our year 1 students in 2014/15

## **The Identity Project**

The Identity Project was first introduced in November 2011 as part of the second Module in Year 1 focussed on understanding and learning about Discrimination, Oppression and Anti-discriminatory Practice.

It involved dividing the whole first year group through social engineering into 8 diverse groups of approx. 12 people - with each group having people with a very varied range of identities in terms of clear differences in age, sex, colour, ethnicity etc.

The task of each group was to meet regularly throughout the module to study identity, and meaningfully discuss their own and others identities, in order to learn more about identity e.g. the relevance of similarities and differences. Each diverse group had to co-design and co-deliver a presentation together at the end of the Module about what they had learned about identity and the advantages and challenges of working and collaborating together. This presentation could be delivered in any mediums of their choice, but each group member had to work closely in

partnership with others to perform part of the whole. This was assessed by Experts by Experience and academic staff. 30% of the marks for the module were available for the Identity Project.



Diverse Group 6 2014.15

### **BCU Social Work Degree Course is Revalidated in 2014**

Taking into account the HCPC education standards, the College of Social Work professional and endorsement Requirements, the QAA Subject benchmark Statement for Social Work, and the Croisdale-Appleby Review of Social Work Education, this included the following key changes:

An updated Admissions Process.

A skills and Readiness for Practice Module including 38 days skills training built into the academic calendar (over 3 Years).

170 days in practice learning (70 in Year 2 and 100 in year 3)

A greater emphasis on Evidence-Informed Practice.

## Of note at this time was the Increasing Diversity of our Student Groups

The successful re-approval and revalidation of our BSC (Hons) Social Work Degree with the University and HCPC in November 2014 – and official endorsement by the College of Social Work - revealed not only the quality of our academic and practice learning but also the increasing diversity of our student groups, e.g. we were often double the UK Social Work sector average in recruiting BAME students on to our social work degree.

## The 2001 and 2011 National UK Census show the Increasing Diversity of the Population of ‘City’ of Birmingham

2001 Census	2011 Census
<b>City of Birmingham Population</b>	
977, 100	1073, 045
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Pakistani 10.6%	13.5%
Indian 05.7%	06.0%
Bangladeshi 02.1%	03.0%
Black Caribbean 04.9%	04.4%
African 00.6%	02.8%
White British 65.6%	53.1%
White Other 04.7%	04.8%
Mixed 02.9%	04.4%
Chinese 00.5%	01.2%
Other Ethnic Group 2.3%	06.7%
<b>Religion</b>	
What % of the Population indicated;	
Christian 59.1%	46.1%
Buddhist 00.3%	00.4%
Hindu 02.0%	02.1%
Jewish 00.2%	00.2%
Muslim 14.3%	21.8%
Sikh 02.9%	03.0%
Other 00.3%	00.5%
No Religion 12.4%	19.3%
Did not state any religion 08.5%	06.5%

## This was mirrored somewhat by the increasing Calibre of Entrants and Increasing Diversity of the Student Group intake on the BCU Social Work Degree

Here is an excerpt from pages 28 – 30 of the course leader (Albert Moylan’s) Critical Review in preparation for our **November 2014** Revalidation of the Social Work Degree.

### Calibre of Entrants

*UCAS tariff points required to enter the programme have risen incrementally over a number of years from 160 in September 2008 to 280 in September 2013. This is part of our response to the Social Work Task Force recommendation 1, to raise the ‘Calibre of Entrants’ to social work education (DCSF, 2009). Consequently the average UCAS tariff score for entrants to the course has risen from 250 points in September 2009 to 303 points in September 2012.*

### Sex, Ability, Ethnicity and Age

Identity Feature	Sex		Ability	Ethnicity	Age Group
	Male	Female	No ‘disability’ Diagnosis	White BAME	Young 18-20 Mature 21+
2009 - 10	15%	85%	89% 11%	45% 55%	41% 59%
2010- 11	20%	80%	83% 17%	35% 65%	30% 70%
2011 - 12	18%	82%	85% 15%	55% 45%	28% 72%
2012 - 13	18%	82%	85% 15%	45% 55%	34% 66%
2013 - 14	15%	85%	84% 16%	39% 61%	33% 67%

*The numbers of male students recruited has fluctuated between a narrow band of 15% and 20% (slightly above the UK social work sector average of 15%) and the numbers of young students (18 – 20) between a wider band of 28 and 41% (slightly below the sector average). Our equality and diversity policies including widening participation*

*agenda have resulted in a rise in the recruitment of students with a reported diagnosis of a 'disability' from 11% in 2009-10 to 16% in 2013 -14 (matching the sector average). In recent years mature students (people aged 21 or over) have been approximately two thirds of all entrants (above the sector average) whilst, apart from 2011/12 the numbers of students from BAME backgrounds are consistently higher than students identifying themselves as white and are often **at least double the UK social work sector average** of 23 – 29%. This mirrors somewhat the increasing diversity of the 'City of Birmingham' where there is a growing number of people in the National 2011 Census for City of Birmingham who have an identity that does not include White UK. (BCU Faculty of Health Statistics).*

## **College of Social Work Endorsement**

The College of Social Works evaluation of our Degree Course against their core values for endorsement - was summed up in their 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014 report as follows:

*"A comprehensive and well evidenced statement was submitted demonstrating how all 6 core values are embedded and applied throughout the policies, procedures, content and delivery of the course. This was a strength of the programme. A focus on diversity and equality was evident through admissions and selection procedures and analysis. Widening participation, coupled with appropriate support has led to a diverse intake of students with higher than average numbers from BME backgrounds and students with a disability.*

*There are mechanisms for student and other stake-holder voices to be heard, and evidence that staff reflect on and make efforts to respond to suggestions and concerns wherever possible. Students, educators and other stakeholders were expected to demonstrate anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice in how they related to each other and worked together, and this approach was emphasised in handbooks, module guidance and placement documentation. Ethics, values and anti-discriminatory/oppressive practice are comprehensively covered in the curriculum. The University has a range of support systems to meet individual needs and students felt well supported by tutors and practice educators. The course is inclusive in how it works with partners, practitioners, students and service users and carers who all felt respected and listened to by the staff team".*

**In September 2015, due to funding cuts, The College of Social Work was forced to cease its activities and close.**

When the news broke earlier in the year Ruth Hardy wrote an article in the Guardian on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2015 entitled - *'Profession in shock as the College of Social Work is forced to close'*.

*"The professional body for social workers, set up in 2012 to improve standards, had been bidding for extra roles and responsibilities, which could have brought in the money needed to be financially sustainable, but these proposals were rejected by the government. This is clearly devastating news for social work and will have profound and significant repercussions for everyone in social work.*

***Social workers say government's commitment to the sector is in doubt and warn of further hardship for children and families.***

*Bridget Robb, chief executive of the British Association of Social Workers, who was part of the original taskforce that identified the need for a professional college of social work, said: "This day has been predicted for some time, as the model established by the government was not sustainable."*



Bharat Chauhan, at the Joint Social Work Education Committee (JSWEC) Conference at the Open University in Milton Keynes, July 2015

## Michael Adams

**Acting Head of Department of Social Work, September 2015 to April 2017**



Having qualified in 1992 from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, Michael began his career on general medicine wards and then went on to respiratory medicine.

From a professional nursing background, Michael had joined UCE in 2004 where he had a role in clinical placement support for nursing students and also became a senior lecturer in adult nursing. He managed the placement department (DPL) for nursing, midwifery and social work at the University where he helped organise 10,000 student placements a year. His connections with Social Work Education increased when he became **Associate Head of the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work Professions at BCU.**

The team came to know Michael as a person with high quality people skills and humane values that were clearly aligned with those of social work and allied professions. After leaving BCU Michael went on to work at the Royal College of Nursing. When interviewed by the *Nursing Times* on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020 he said. ‘Nurses should not be put in a position where compassion is “driven out of them” because of workplace pressures such as staff shortages. ... he told *Nursing Times* that the “saddest thing” about the pressure nurses are under is the “compassion fatigue” that sets in as a consequence.



Above is a picture of many of our Year 1 Cohort in 2015.16

## **Social Work Teaching Partnerships**

Social Work Teaching Partnerships involving HEI's, and LA's were piloted in 2015 in four areas (phase one). Eleven additional areas made successful applications for two-year funding in phase two (2016) and ten more in phase three (2018). BCU were not involved in phase 1 or phase 2, but have been involved in phase 3 as part of West Midlands Regional Teaching Partnership. More to follow on this later.

**Below are four pictures showing four of the eight diverse groups that were formed and worked together during their first year Identity Project in 2015.16**



Diverse Group 4 2015.16



Diverse Group 5 2015.16



Diverse Group 6 2015.16



Diverse Group 8 2015.16

## **BCU Social Work Conference on Inequality**

The significant growth of inequality around the world and in the UK, especially since the financial crash of 2008, had become exacerbated by government policy and remained a critical area for teaching/learning.

On **16<sup>th</sup> June 2016** the Social Work Education Team planned and delivered a social work conference held in Bevan House and Seacole Building named '*Promoting Equality and Social Justice in an Unequal World*'.

The conference included students, practitioners, academics and a number of private and independent sector organisations most notably ASSIRT who looked at SOCIAL WORK WITH UNACCOMPANIED ASSYLUM SEEKING YOUNG PEOPLE. The Conference explored and debated the context, cause and impacts of inequality and injustice – before proposing a number of measures that could address and reduce a range of inequalities.

**MSc Safeguarding:** In 2016 we joined with faculty colleagues to design and co-deliver a Faculty Postgraduate course in Safeguarding, available as an MSc or individual modules. This remains available to social workers and all allied professionals involved in Safeguarding.

## **Think-Ahead fast-Track Program for Adult Mental Health 2016.**

Widely seen as the 'adult social work' equivalent of Frontline, Think Ahead started training social workers to work in adult mental health services in July 2016. The programme targeted high performing graduates and had had more than 2,000 applications for 100 places available in its first cohort. **Information in July 2016:**

- Minimum entry requirement is a 2:1 degree qualification not in social work.
- In the first year trainees undertake a six week summer intensive course followed by a placement in a local authority or NHS Trust.
- At the end of the first year trainees receive a postgraduate diploma in social work, enabling them to register with the HCPC.
- In the second year they work as a qualified social worker in a mental health setting, alongside completing academic study towards a master's degree in social work.
- Like Frontline, trainees on Think Ahead also receive leadership training.
- In the first year trainees receive a bursary (approx. £16,000 + London weighting). In the second year they receive a social worker salary (typically £21,000 + London weighting).
- The curriculum and training was designed by the University of York, which successfully bid to become Think Ahead's academic partner.

After the Launch of Think-Ahead in 2016 Judy Cooper, Rachel Schraer and Andy McNicoll published the following in **Community care**;

*“David Cameron’s government is trying to change the face of social work education. Fast-track social work schemes will get £100m to expand so they can produce 25% of all new children’s social workers by 2018. At the moment the programmes account for less than 10% of all social work trainees. Signs of the DfE’s dissatisfaction with university programmes have been there for some time. Remember Michael Gove’s criticism in 2013.*

*Fast-track programmes split opinion. Ministers praise them as offering “exemplary” training that produces trainees ready for social work practice. Social work leaders voice concerns that the government is creating a ‘two tier’ social work education system and ploughing in funding to programmes that have yet to be fully evaluated.”*



This is a picture of many of our Year 3 Students on their final day 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Can you name each former student? Can you also spot those who not part of the cohort – including teachers from left to right Michael Greenhouse, Marcia-Squire Wood, Peter Hay (then, Director of Social Services in Birmingham) and Linda Evans?



This is a picture of many of our Year 1 Students in 2016.17

### **Further development of International Student exchange**

In order to contribute to the embedding of the principle of internationalisation into all courses we provide in the Department of Social Work, and to formally revive a previous international partnership we asked Albert Moylan and Val Sylvester to travel to sign an international exchange agreement with Saxion University of Applied Sciences, School of Social Work, Enschede Netherlands.

They travelled to Saxion in **March 2017** and participated in a Conference for International Social Work Week. They presented three workshops with the title of their presentation – *Identity and Intersectionality: The need for and relevance of identity-based social work practice in the UK today*. The Conference involved academics from Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Spain, Belgium, and England.



Albert Moylan at Saxion University Conference Reception, on 14.03.2017



Jose Beckman (Saxion University) and Val Sylvester (BCU) at the Saxion International Conference on 15.3.2017.

## David Childs

**Head of Department of Social Work from May 2017.**



David joined BCU social work education team as a Senior Lecturer in August 2014 after previous experience as a social worker and manager in local authority settings. He had also gained substantial experience of the regulation of social work education as an Education Visitor with the HCPC since August 2012.

Based on a **CV submitted to BCU by David in 2018** as part of the MSc approval process, here are the highlights of his career at the time.

### **Community Care Manager: Older Adults duty team**

Coventry Social Services - 2007 – 2008

### **Social Worker: Learning disabilities and legal casework**

Birmingham City Council January 2009 – March 2012

**Education Visitor:** Health and Care Professions Council since August 2012.

## **Senior Social Work Practitioner: Workforce Management Team**

Birmingham City Council March 2012 – March 2014

## **Continuing Professional Development Assessor**

Health and Care Professions Council since August 2014.

## **Senior Lecturer Social Work**

Birmingham City University August 2014 – May 2017

## **Head of Department of Social Work as Associate Professor**

May 2017 onwards

David completed enabling others, 1 and 2 at University of Birmingham during 2012 and 2013 and consequently supervised, taught and assessed social work degree students undertaking their first and final placements in a Local Authority setting.

Within the social work Department at BCU David contributed to the following Modules;

### BSc in Social Work

- Foundations in Social Work (Module Leader)
- Skills and Readiness to Practice
- Law and Safeguarding 2
- Last Practice Placement

### MSc in Social Work

- Law and Social Policy
- Core Skills for Practice
- First Practice Placement

As Head of Department, he has been a great advocate for regional engagement, partnership and development. He took up the Role of *Deputy Chair of the Strategic Board within the West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership (WMSWTP)* and also *Leads the HEI Forum* within the WMSWTP.

## **Design and Development of a Masters in Social Work**

### **MSc Social Work**

At the request of David Childs, Albert Moylan led a small team that designed, consulted with all stakeholders, wrote and achieved successful approval from the University and validation with the HCPC of a two year, postgraduate academic level 7, MSc Social Work Degree Course at BCU. This was the first ever MSc Course at the University that enabled graduates from other professions who wanted to become Social Workers to take a Masters route as their path to qualification.

A **consultation with all stakeholders** (including academic colleagues, students, experts by experience, practice educators, and employers) took place at Attwood Building, City North Campus Perry Barr in April 2017. Here are some memorable pictures from the consultation event.



Students Leeona Marsh, Elysia Tairu and Ian Thomas discuss the MSc design.



The Quiet Table! - MSc Consultation Event 4th April 2017

From left to right - Razia Bibi (student) Jane Dooley (Social Worker/Practice Educator/Barnardos), Victoria Coker (Practice Educator/Visiting Tutor) Amanda Lewis (then, Social Worker/Practice Educator/Birmingham City Council) Leona Marsh (Student) Bryanne Benyon (student) and Karen Chambers (student).



'The Apple Juice Effect'.  
MSc Consultation Event. Academic Tutors Meeting - 4th April 2017.  
Dorothy, David, Marcia and Louise.

Social Work Academic Staff, Dorothy Boatswain (behind Left), David Childs (behind right), Marcia-Squire Wood (front left) and Louise Manton (front right) pose for the camera at our MSc Consultation in Attwood Building Perry Barr on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

**The BASW position statement against Austerity 2017 followed on from the IFSW statement and firmly established social workers as opposed to austerity in all its forms.**

## **Austerity**

*BASW position Statement 2017*

*Austerity describes economic and social policies in the UK and other countries that result in reduced public and welfare spending, lower taxes, a smaller state and more unequal distribution of wealth.*

*Austerity runs counter to the BASW Code of Ethics for Social Work. As part of an international profession, BASW supports the statement against austerity by the International Federation of Social Workers.*

***Austerity is a flawed economic theory that increases debt burden, unemployment, homelessness, inequality and causes misery upon the lives of citizens. Social workers work every day with the negative realities imposed on people by austerity. We absorb the pressure of the painful and angry reality of the people most affected.***

*The method of reducing public expenditure combined with tax reduction for the wealthy reduces state income and fails to achieve balanced economies. This results in the widening of the gap in inequality and increases poverty. Social workers throughout the world witness which policies support people's wellbeing and healthy economic development; they also see which policies undermine social structures and fail people economically and socially.*

*The banking crisis of 2008, the bank bailout and the consequent increase in the national debt and deficit, was used as the rationale for introducing austerity policies in the UK. These have persisted and deepened in their impact, although the governments of the four countries make different nation-specific choices including some choices to mitigate the impact of austerity economic measures of the Westminster parliament.*

***Austerity is causing unnecessary harm now and storing up problems for the future of society. For example, while the number of people living longer continues to increase, funding for social care has been cut dramatically, causing untenable pressures on acute NHS care, inadequate, undignified social care options, a growing staffing crisis, and higher stress on carers and families.***

*Despite politicians' assurances that 'we are all in it together', the poorest and most vulnerable in society are being made to bear the main impacts of austerity. For example, people with a disability have seen significant cuts to their levels of benefit and higher thresholds to make claims; mental health users have seen a shrinkage of both hospital and community support options; and increased costs in rented housing, reductions in Housing Benefit, the introduction of the bedroom tax and an ongoing decline in the availability of social housing have seen homelessness levels greatly increase. In 2015-2016 over a 1.1 million people were forced to access a food-bank.*

*The reduction in funding for smaller, grassroots and user led groups and organisations has been another silent, damaging consequence of reduced public funding which particularly impacts primary and secondary prevention support. Under austerity, the wealthiest in the UK have become wealthier as inequality grows, tax reductions benefit the wealthiest and fiscal policy favours big business wealth for the minority. Austerity policies also enable big business to accumulate wealth by drawing public assets into profit-making private ownership. Austerity policies often depict the public sector as part of the problem not part of the solution to creating a more equal, productive and healthier society. Under-funding, rising demand and a discourse of failure is used within austerity approaches to undermine confidence in public services and to justify out-sourcing and use of for-profit providers.*

*Austerity functions on a myth of 'scarce resources' which deliberately understates the real wealth within our society and promotes using divisive rhetoric. For example, proponents of austerity distinguish 'strivers' from 'skivers' when the reality is that some 7.4 million people are in poverty despite being in working families. Stigma and a sense of dehumanization are effects of austerity for many, perpetuated by such rhetoric. This contributes to break down in social cohesion and divides individuals and communities. It increases fear e.g. of people perceived as 'outsiders', such as refugees, and a threat e.g. to access to security, services or to jobs.*

**Politicians often claim austerity is inevitable. This is not the case.** *There are other, better ways to respond to economic challenges – for example, public investment in infrastructure, organisations and people to generate and redistribute wealth and raise productivity; a different, fairer distribution of taxes and building alternative economies.*

### **Implications for Social Work Practice**

*Austerity is having a direct impact on citizens who use social work services, on the social work task and on social workers themselves. This includes:*

*People with a disability experiencing reduced benefit levels, lower employment support allowance, higher thresholds of eligibility and lower personal support payments;*

*Older people who have had hospital admission unable to get timely or sufficient support to re-establish independence in the community or move to other more suitable care settings;*

*Mental health service users, who experience hospital and community services being withdrawn and more episodic and discontinuous support;*

*Reduction in early help for families and children: For the small minority of families who face safeguarding issues, worsening income and often severe housing issues exacerbate stress and make state intervention more likely.*

*Austerity has a direct impact on social workers through:*

*Reductions in preventative services increasing the statutory caseload and severity of citizen needs coming forward;*

*Reductions in staffing relative to demand, increasing caseloads and risk;*

*Increased stress and consequent ill-health;*

*Increased ethical and professional dilemmas if citizen's needs cannot be met and austerity policies do not fit with best professional judgement.*

*An effect of austerity is often to isolate individuals – service users and staff – from their wider communities. It is hard to effect change as a social worker in isolation. Joining and being actively involved, in your professional association, trade union, community or faith group is key to challenging austerity and building alternatives.*

Given the above context it was far from surprising that the Conservative Governments (Theresa May) '**race**' **Disparity Audit 2017** (revised March 2018) revealed 'uncomfortable' inequalities between and within ethnic groups and big differences in outcomes in different parts of the UK.

## **The Children and Social Work Act 2017**

Changes in Law continued to have significant implications. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 abolished Local Safeguarding Children Boards, removing the Children Act 2004 duties relating to them. In their place, it put duties on three 'safeguarding partners' - the local authority, any Clinical Commissioning Groups operating in the area and the Chief Officer of Police - to make safeguarding arrangements that respond to the needs of children in their area.

It extended the entitlement to a Personal Advisor (PA) beyond the age of 21 to all care leavers up to 25 years old,

Chapter 4 put a duty on all primary schools to provide relationships education and on all secondary schools to provide relationships and sex education. Previously, only state-maintained secondary schools had any obligation in this regard.

The Act introduced Corporate Parenting Principles which were intended to change local authority culture so that all staff and departments considered the impact of their work on children and young people for whom the local authority is the corporate parent, as well as on those under 25 who were previously in the care of a local authority.

## **Back at BCU ....**

**Discussions had begun during 2016 about ways in which we could more fully recognise the importance of Practice Learning** and to more wholly acknowledge everyone involved in Practice Learning within Social Work Education at BCU. Albert Moylan and Val Sylvester decided we should host an Annual Practice Learning Celebration Day involving all stakeholders to celebrate Social Work Practice Learning at BCU.

Our Annual Practice Learning Celebration Day Event would be an opportunity to celebrate and recognise achievements within BCU Social Work Practice Learning, especially over the past academic year. People who had obtained the BCU Practice Educator Award at Stage 1 and/or Stage 2 would receive certificates. There would be individual awards across a range of stakeholder groups to recognise people and agencies who had made a major contribution over the academic year.

**The First ever Department of Social Work, Practice Learning Celebration Day (PLCD) took place on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017** at Curzon Building, Cardigan Street - BCU City Centre Campus. There were over 100 guests present.

Awards were handed out in **12 distinct Award Categories.**

Best BCU Practice Tutor

Best FPP On-Site Supervisor

Best FPP Student in Practice

Best FPP Practice Educator

Best LPP On-Site Supervisor

Best LPP Practice Educator

Best LPP Student in Practice

Best Private, Independent or Voluntary Sector Practice Learning Manager/Coordinator.

Best Private, Independent or Voluntary Sector Agency.

Best Local Authority Practice Learning Manager/Coordinator.

Best Local Authority Agency.

Person who has made a Significant Contribution to Practice Learning at BCU over the past 5 to 10 Years.

Here are some pictures from our inaugural PLCD on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017





**Dr Prospera Tedam** (left) our Keynote Speaker, hands out a BCU Social Work Practice Educator Training Certificate.



Colleagues from **Birmingham City Council Student Support Team** win a series of Awards at our inaugural Practice Learning Celebration Day in 2017. From Left to right: Eleen McBean, Christine Rankin, Maureen Watson, Ruth Hare, Gian Saini, Emma Colgan, Gwen Boon, Clare Hall-Matthews and Sadia Maynard.



**Peter Walker** (on the right) wins the award for 'Best LPP Practice Educator'. Gero Kaur Module Leader for Last Practice Placement - is in the background



**Linda Evans** receives the award for 'Person who has made the most significant contribution to social work practice learning at BCU in the past 5 to 10 years' from Gavin Moorghen (BASW). Also in picture are Val Sylvester and Albert Moylan.



**Marcia-Squire-Wood** (second from the right) receives the award for 'Best BCU Practice Tutor'.



Margaret McEvoy – then project manager of SSWIS (front left) is accompanied by **Kim Peckover** (holding certificate) winner of Best LPP on-site Supervisor.



**Eules Allport** is presented with the award for best FPP Practice Educator.

## **Staff Changes at BCU**

**Robert Wu** became Programme Leader for the BSc Hons Social Work Degree for one year during the academic Year 2016/17.



Robert Wu

In **September 2017 Caroline Lee** took on the role of Programme Leader. One of her first tasks was to lead curriculum change in the BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree. This was a series of in-house i.e. BCU changes under the banner '**Transforming the Curriculum**'. Caroline was part of a Social Work internal Panel event on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 where our Social Work Degree course met the BCU requirements.

**This resulted in changes to the BCU BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree for all students starting the course from 2018.19 onwards.** Outcomes of transforming the curriculum included a move from 15, 30 and 45 credit modules to 20, 40 and 60 credit modules. There were less modules for students to complete and a reduced Assessment Load for students. Assessment became more focussed on work-related tasks as part of enhancing employability. One of the most significant consequences of this was that for the first time social work students undertaking their first and final practice placements did not have to submit any academic assignments as part of completing their placements. The placement modules became Pass or Fail to be determined by the students' Practice Educator and had no academic credits attached.



Caroline Lee

**Liz Bullock who joined the Academic team in October 2017 remembers.**

*I'd always loved the academic side of social work practice and had joked to friends and family I would love to work part time as a social worker and a lecturer. I was advised of a vacancy in **October 2017** for an Assistant Lecturer at BCU and applied. Yet again on the day of my interview it felt totally "right" and I was lucky enough to be offered the position. When I joined the team as a lecturer, David Childs was Head of Department and Caroline Lee Course Leader for the Undergraduate Degree. I am passionate about developing the social workers of the future and this is reflected within the department as a whole. Whilst I still miss practice within a children and families setting, I love being part of a vibrant social work teaching department at BCU and have the honour of working with passionate and committed colleagues within the department, including practitioners and Experts by Experience".*

In November 2017 **Students from Saxion University** joined us for our Year 1 Module, Equality, Diversity and ADP. They also visited some social work Practice Agencies in the Region.



Students from Saxion University in the Netherlands - Eva (front Right), Tim, (back right) and Robin (second from right at the back) visit Barnardos in the West Midlands. Our Host on the day was Jane Dooley (second from right at the front).

## Professional Resiliency Development Days

**Jackie Greenwood** who had joined the academic social work team in August 2016 took the lead in developing Professional Resiliency Development Days (PRDD) for Social Work Students. They were initially called 'Wellbeing Retreats' with the first retreat taking place in December 2017, when Jackie was supported by colleagues especially Robert Wu.



Jackie Greenwood

By January 2018 PRDD had been developed for social work students in years 1, 2 and 3 and became an important element of the planned journey for students following transformation of the course curriculum. In the first year, students experienced their first retreat during the Skills module, and then in year 2 during preparation for First Placement and in Year 3 as part of preparation for Last Placement. This was led by Jackie in collaboration with **Balbero Devi** (social worker from practice) and with David Childs supporting as HOD. Most PRDD were held at Woodbrooke Quaker Centre, Selly Oak Birmingham.

The development of PRDD took into account the additional pressures brought about in frontline social work practice environments due to the real impacts of Austerity and Neoliberal ideology and policies. They also aligned clearly with the following professional requirements:

*QAA subject benchmarks for social work:* Students needs to be able to manage uncertainty, change and stress

*PCF's: 1. 3 and 1.8:* Social workers need to be able to manage the emotional impact of practice and maintain their own health and wellbeing

*College of Social Work:* Students should demonstrate an “understanding of the importance of emotional resilience in social work” and following training be able to “take steps to manage and promote own safety, health, wellbeing and emotional resilience”

## Move from Ravensbury House to Newly Extended Seacole Building

The Social Work Education Team began preparations at the end of 2017 and moved from Ravensbury House to the Newly Extended Seacole Building just across Westbourne Road in **March 2018** – with most of the team initially based in one large room - Seacole 163.



Front entrance to the newly extended Seacole Building, Westbourne Road B15

By the end of 2018, the social work education team and support colleagues had become more dispersed within Seacole Building as a result of moving to a series of smaller rooms (mostly located on Floor two Seacole).

## Regulatory Approval for the MSc Social Work

Throughout 2017, the consultation, design and development team worked on finalising the proposed MSc course in preparation for approval. They were very well supported by **Simon Spencer** (Quality Enhancement Lead) in the School of Education and Social Work.

The course was aimed at graduates in related or other disciplines who wanted to become qualified social workers.

**Peter Simcock** who joined BCU as a senior Lecturer in January 2018 contributed significantly to the final text.

Course papers were sent to the HCPC in March 2018 and a successful validation took place at Seacole Building in June 2018.

**Jessica Wagner** who was then, Senior Lecturer and Programme Leader in Social Work, Staffordshire University (and later joined BCU as a Senior Lecturer) was one of the external academics who provided written comments to the Panels on our MSc documents.



Jessica Wagner

The first cohort started our MSc Social Work Degree in September 2018, under new **course Leader Peter Simcock**.



Dr Peter Simcock

When Peter joined the BCU Social Work Education Department in January 2018, he was already an experienced Practitioner and Academic. After Senior Practitioner and Team Management Roles in Local Authority settings Peter went on to be a Senior Lecturer, Course Lead and external Examiner in the field of social work within HEI's.

He has specialist expertise in research, Law-informed Practice and in Physical and Sensory Disabilities and deafblind and hearing impaired needs and services.

With a Phd in Gerontology his publications include:

#### Peer-reviewed Papers

Boath, E., Simcock, P., Watts, R., Thomas, N., Evans, J., Taylor, L. & O'Connell, P. (2018) 'Stay with the 'FLO': evaluating a mobile texting service to enhance social work student retention while on placement' *Social Work Education*. doi: 10.1080/02615479.2018.1459537

Irvine, F., Yeung, E., Partridge, M. & Simcock, P. (2017) 'The impact of personalisation on people from Chinese backgrounds: accounts of social care experience' *Health and Social Care in the Community*. 25 (3): 878-887.

Simcock, P. (2017) 'Ageing with a unique impairment: a systematically conducted review of older deafblind people's experiences' *Ageing & Society*. 37 (8): 1703-1742.

Simcock, P. (2017) 'One of society's most vulnerable groups? A systematically conducted literature review exploring the vulnerability of deafblind people' *Health and Social Care in the Community*. (3): 813-839.

Simcock, P. & Manthorpe, J. (2014) 'Deafblind and neglected or deafblindness neglected? Revisiting the Beverley Lewis Case' *British Journal of Social Work*. 44 (8): 2325-2341

#### Books & Book Chapters:

Wittich, W. & Simcock, P. (Forthcoming) *Aging and Combined Vision and Hearing Loss*. In: J. Ravenscroft (Ed) *The Routledge Handbook of Visual Impairment*. London: Routledge.

Simcock, P. & Castle, R. (2016) *Social Work and Disability*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

#### Book Reviews:

Simcock, P. (2014) 'Mandelstam, M. *Safeguarding Adults and the Law*' *Journal of Adult Protection*. (1): 60-61

#### Other Publications:

Simcock, P. (2014) 'Revisiting adult safeguarding cases: challenges and lessons' Bulletin of the Social Work History Network. (1): 8-10.

Matthews, S. & Simcock, P. (2014) 'Ongoing change: Social Work Education in the 21st Century'. Editorial for the British Library Social Welfare Portal Newsletter.

## **Foundation Year**

Course developments were not limited to level 7. In 2018 we introduced a Foundation year that enabled a future entry path to the Social Work Degree.

By studying a foundation year focused on '**Society, Childhood and Education**' the first year was spent learning a wide range of broad subject areas which then open up opportunities for the student to specialise further in the next year – the first year of a full degree.

Upon completion of the Foundation Year, if a student chose to try to enter the BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree they were required to successfully complete the University's selection process for this programme which included an interview in order to proceed onto year one of the full degree programme. Entry onto year one of the degree programme was also subject to a satisfactory DBS and Occupational Health Assessment.

## **The Demolition of Remaining Buildings at Perry Barr Site**

### **Story in Birmingham Live 18.6.18**

*The demolition work has begun on a former university campus to pave the way for the Commonwealth Games in 2022. The last lecturers, staff and students moved out at the end of May 2018 to pave the way for demolition.*

*The diggers moving onto the Birmingham City University site at Perry Barr means that the first major construction project for the global sporting spectacle is now under way.*

*They are clearing the old campus lecture halls and classrooms ready to build the new village for 6,000 athletes and officials.*

*BCU has now fully relocated to its new site at Eastside in the city centre.*

*Following the Games these new apartments will then be converted into some 1,400 homes for Brummies to buy or rent.*

## **The context for social work education and practice in the UK continued to be challenging.**

Following a visit in November 2018, The UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights reported that 14 million people in the UK lived in relative poverty in 2017.

The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Philip Alston, undertook a mission to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from 5 to 16 November 2018. Although the United Kingdom is the world's fifth largest economy, one fifth of its population (14 million people) live in poverty, and 1.5 million of them experienced destitution in 2017. Policies of austerity introduced in 2010 continue largely unabated, despite the tragic social consequences. Close to 40 per cent of children are predicted to be living in poverty by 2021. Food banks have proliferated; homelessness and rough sleeping have increased greatly; tens of thousands of poor families must live in accommodation far from their schools, jobs and community networks; life expectancy is falling for certain groups; and the legal aid system has been decimated. The social safety net has been badly damaged by drastic cuts to local authorities' budgets, which have eliminated many social services, reduced policing services, closed libraries in record numbers, shrunk community and youth centres and sold off public spaces and buildings. Much of the glue that has held British society together since the Second World War has been deliberately removed and replaced with a harsh and uncaring ethos. A booming economy, high employment and a budget surplus have not reversed austerity, a policy pursued more as an ideological rather than an economic agenda.

Despite this context, our Social Work Education Department, continued to churn out positive developments. **On 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 Peter Hay CBE, was given an Honorary Doctorate by BCU, to mark his longstanding commitment to improving the quality of life for second city residents and strengthening people's voices.**



**Dr Peter Hay CBE**

Here is a link to his acceptance speech. [Peter Hay receives Honorary Doctorate from Birmingham City University - YouTube](#)

**Having trained as a social worker**, Peter spent a long career working in social services in both Grimsby and Birmingham, and also served as President of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services.

His work has been renowned for identifying how the challenges and opportunities associated with age, 'disability' and mental health make social care a major contributor to addressing inequalities in our communities.

Having joined Birmingham City Council in 2003, Peter is credited with helping its children's services gain a star rating in the 2005 national assessment, and also played a central role in helping its adult's services secure a three-star rating.

After spending 14 years with the local authority he formally retired from his role as the Council's Strategic Director for People in 2017.

Speaking ahead of receiving his Honorary Doctorate Peter said: *"It was an unexpected honour to be recognised in this way by the University in our home city. As the first recipient from a social work background, I will continue to do all I can to show the contribution that great social care makes to people lives"*.

Peter was awarded his accolade on Thursday 10 January 2019, in a ceremony held at Birmingham's Symphony Hall, alongside students graduating from the University's Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences.



Peter Hay (second from Left) pictured with BCU Chancellor Sir Lenny Henry (third from left) and far right Vice Chancellor, Professor Philip Plowden.

**Here is a copy of Peters Acceptance Speech together with some pictures at the end depicting the 'star of the show'.**

*Chancellor, Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Thank you for those generous words and the honour of this degree, awarded for a profession I love in the city which is our home.*

*Congratulations to Mike and to all of you. For me, this week has painful reminders of the importance of love and family. So, I recognise the value to me of the members of the clans gathered here and through them on your behalf give a shout out to all those who have been part of the teams which have supported all of us to get here.*

*Great social work has the ability to shape our lives and communities by sharing power with people and galvanising action to remove boundaries. Social work was the vocation of Clem Attlee whose post-war government created an approach to welfare whose influence on society still resonates. The rights of others and social justice matter: an American President is an unusual champion, yet it was Teddy Roosevelt who warned of the dangers when we see people as "the other" rather than as fellow citizens. These century old words seem apt for the context into which you now journey, and for which I humbly offer a few suggestions.*

*Walt Disney wisely said that times change so rapidly that we must keep our aim firmly fixed on the future. To prepare to be leaders of change, I have borrowed from Walt three great insights off one of my management gurus - Buzz Lightyear.*

*Buzz is no heroic leader: his pretensions that he is an intergalactic space hero are shattered by the realisation that he is a toy. He discovers that he succeeds when he uses all the skills and talents of those around him whether they are a slinky dog, Bo Peep or toy soldier. Today's public servants have to similarly harness the power of others. Edgar Cahn who founded Timebanks argued that no society has enough money to raise children, care for adults, make neighbourhoods safe and address systemic injustice. Public services are about our lives... my life, in which I want to be an active citizen and not seen a passive consumer or a burdensome "user". In our collective failure to reform adult social care we appear limited by a fear of costs, and unwilling to consider what we all can contribute.*

*Lesson two is that Buzz captures the unlimited potential of people with 'to infinity and beyond'. People are fascinating, diverse, complex and so much more than the one-word definitions we all use... disabled, autistic, remainer, brexiteer, republican, old, immigrant. Let's not limit by labels but lead with potential. To borrow the words of Turning Point's actual mission statement we should be public servants who are inspired by possibility.*

*The final lesson from Buzz is that he knows the difference between flying and 'falling with style'. Underneath public services are complex questions about how children achieve, how we all stay safe and healthy or grow old well. We don't know all the answers, so we need to lead by learning from improvisation and failure, which even in better times can feel like being on the edge of chaos. As leaders for tomorrow keep persevering, learning by doing and knowing that when others think you're flying you might be falling.*

*Whatever or whoever is your Buzz that drives your dreams, hold onto your story to guide you. Walt reflected on his work with the words:*

*'We have created characters ...revealing through them to our perturbed world that the things we have in common far outnumber and outweigh those that divide us'*

*Wherever the future takes you, I hope that you will offer a little bit of leadership every day to share our humanity towards each other and to build a more socially just society. Our perturbed world needs courageous public servants who see infinite possibility in people, are curious enough to explore the questions that underpin today's public services and who work together to offer the hope of something better. Although this honour might suggest otherwise, I know I have done my share of falling with style. I wish you all well and I look forward to watching the skies to see you flying.*



The story continues .....

Since retiring from his position with Birmingham City Council, Peter has a range of different roles across social care, housing and wellbeing, and continues to pursue his passion for social justice.

His roles include being the Chair of social enterprise Turning Point and a member of the Board of the newly formed Anchor Hanover housing and care services.

He also takes in a range of coaching assignments including working with the Firstline programme for developing managers in children's services.

He is now a visiting Lecturer with BCU where he teaches on a number of Modules including Enhancing Transformative Capabilities on the MSc Social Work Degree Course.

**The Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 received Royal Assent on 16 May 2019.** It is due to come into force on 1 April 2022. The Act amends the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and introduces a new process for authorising deprivations of liberty for persons who lack capacity to make a particular decision. It replaces the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards which were introduced in 2008 as an earlier amendment to the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The DoLS are regarded as complex and overly bureaucratic and there have been concerns about the operation of the process since its inception. There was a 55% increase in DoLS applications between 2014/15 and 2016/17.<sup>7</sup> This created significant pressures on local authority budgets and on those who authorise deprivations of liberty, including the Court of Protection, and led to huge delays and a back log of applications.

It is anticipated that the DoLS and LPS will operate concurrently for up to a year to enable a smooth transition across from one system to the other.

Section 1(4) inserts a new Schedule AA1 into the MCA setting out a new process for authorising a deprivation of liberty. The new provisions are commonly referred to as the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS), although this terminology is not used in the new Act. There is no provision for an urgent authorisation, but instead a new interim deprivation of liberty power is introduced. Unlike the DoLS, the LPS are setting neutral which means that they can apply in any setting and have been extended beyond care homes and hospitals to include domestic settings, such as supported living and the person's own home and family home. The LPS are also wider in scope as they extend to younger age groups i.e., those aged 16 and over in England and Wales, whereas DoLS only apply to those aged 18 and over.

Deprivations will be authorised by a 'responsible body' for a maximum period of 12 months initially, up to a maximum period of 3 years. The deprivation must be renewed annually within that maximum period. The DHSC LPS factsheet states that in most cases, a local authority or NHS Trust (or a local health board in Wales) will be the responsible body, and anyone can make a referral to that body, either via email or an online form. It will allow the NHS, rather than local authorities, to make decisions about their patients.



Can you name these Year 3 students who completed in 2018?



This is a picture of many of our Year 3 students in June 2019. It also includes some staff. From left to right can you recognise David Collins, Caroline Lee, Sally Andrews, Reshma Patel, David Childs, Michael Greenhouse and Gero Kaur?

## **From September 2019 Three year Social Work Degree Apprenticeships, for people already working in social care, become a new route to qualifying as a social worker.**

Alex Turner wrote on November 28, 2018 in Community Care

*New pathway into practice likely to open for most in September 2019 after wrangling over assessment format caused delays.*

*Social work degree apprenticeships have finally been signed off and should be widely available from next autumn.*

*The apprenticeships, which were originally meant to launch in September but faced delays, in part because of wrangling over assessment formats, are now “ready for use” according to a statement by Skills for Care.*

*The apprenticeship standard and assessment plan has now been published on the Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) website.*

*Jane Hanrahan, the HR learning and development manager at Norfolk council, who chairs the ‘trailblazer’ group of councils and universities involved in developing the scheme, said she hoped the qualification could have a “significant positive impact” on numbers entering social work.*

*“This is a brilliant opportunity for people working in social work support roles to earn a living while qualifying,” she told Community Care. “We can select good candidates we know and put them through the process, so there should be a whole new stream of social workers whose quality we can be confident in.”*

*Hanrahan, who said a “great long list” of people at Norfolk council had expressed an interest in the apprenticeships, added that she hoped some higher education institutions could be offering the apprenticeships by spring 2019.*

*But she acknowledged that for most employers, September 2019 would be a “realistic” starting date for delivering social work apprenticeships.*

*The social work degree apprenticeship runs for three years and has been designed to offer a career progression pathway for people already working within social care.*

*Final ‘endpoint’ assessment formats, which had been a sticking point, will now be based around critiquing and presenting on a chosen case, and on a responsive ‘scenario exercise’ mirroring a developing workplace situation, Hanrahan said.*

*The IfA had pushed for practice observation to form part of the assessment, but employers and universities had deemed this “impractical and inappropriate” given that this already formed a key part of assessment during the degree.*

*The endpoint assessments make up the degree apprenticeships’ final 60 credits, typically filling the place where a dissertation would sit within a regular degree. Employers and partner universities could though still include some kind of dissertation within their degrees if they felt it appropriate, Hanrahan said.*

*With the framework approved, work still needs to be done by universities to redesign courses to accommodate the new assessment methods, Skills for Care said. Employers must also negotiate deals with partner universities around how much the apprenticeships will cost them.*

*Under the final agreement, a figure of £23,000 has been set as the maximum the government will contribute towards off-the-job training and assessment per apprentice.*

*Lyn Romeo, the chief social worker for adults, said she was “delighted” the apprenticeships had been signed off.*

*“Having a uniquely immersive way to develop their knowledge and skills as part of a social care team, while undertaking the required academic study to become social workers, provides another route for people who aren’t in a position to take time out to do a full-time degree,” Romeo said.*

*Meanwhile the chief children’s social worker, Isabelle Trowler, praised the “commitment” of the trailblazer group in getting the apprenticeships finalised.*

*“This will further broaden the entry routes into one of the most rewarding professions – helping to bring in a diverse cohort of talented individuals and equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need to be outstanding social workers,” Trowler said.*



This is a picture of many our Year 1 Students who started their Social Work Degree Course in September 2019. It includes **Sheikh Sela**, 5<sup>th</sup> from the left at the front – who delivered teaching on the Human Rights Act 1998, on 21.11.2019, as part of completing her PGCE Studies. Sheikh also spent many years supporting social work students at BCU in her role alongside Nick Gee in determining and confirming ‘statements of Reasonable adjustments’ under the Law.

## **Social Work England**

With limited progress and development of social work under the HCPC, **Social Work England** took over as our new bespoke regulator of Social Work education and practice in England on **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019**. This was the fourth different national regulator since we began social work education at Birmingham Polytechnic in 1970. Set up as a non-departmental public body, operating at arm’s length from government, it was established by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 – with a central role of ‘public protection’. It became the regulator for approximately 100’000 Social Workers and all Social Work Education Courses in England. One of its features is a focus on collaboration with people with lived experience of social work services.

## **New Academic Staff**

The BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree Course Handbook 2019/20 confirms the arrival of new academic staff to the social work department including Simon Hall, Jessica Wagner, Colin Watt and Amanda Lewis.

### **Demonstrating innovation, leadership and creativity, with empowerment, learning and change as the goals; social work academics, Albert Moylan, Simon Hall and Colin Watt plan and begin our first ‘Mend that Gap’ Project, run within the Social Work Education Department.**

Mend the Gap has its origins in Europe, and grew out of the value of involving people with direct lived experience of social problems and receiving social work services, in social work education. It is an innovative approach to teaching, learning and research where all participants have at least an equal status and level of involvement.

PowerUs ([www.powerus.eu](http://www.powerus.eu)) have been taking a lead in developing and implementing the concepts of gap-mending and Mend the Gap.

*‘PowerUs is an international network of teachers and researchers from schools of social work and representatives from different service user organizations. PowerUs develops methods of mutual learning in order to change social work practice to be more effective in supporting the empowerment of marginalized and discriminated groups in society’.*

BCU became aware of Mend the Gap through the West Midlands Regional Teaching Partnership Project Lead, Marvin Campbell, and obtained funding from the teaching partnership to run a pilot project.

Although it can be designed as a research project, the BCU Social Work Education team set up its first project as a way of enhancing our understanding of a Mend the Gap approach and as a powerful mechanism of generating deeper learning for all involved, by putting the lived experiences of a specific expert through experience Group (i.e. carers of people who had received a diagnosis of learning disabilities) at the heart of the process.

Five carers, four BCU first year social work Degree Students, three BCU Social Work Academics and two qualified social work practitioners from Birmingham City Council, adult services took part in the project. The group had its first meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and met eight times.

**Here is our Mend the Gap Group on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the final day of the project when all participants were awarded with certificates.**



From left to right, Sharda Lavingia (carer), Anthony Tyrell – partially obscured (student), Albert Moylan (academic), Margaret Fahey (carer), Julia Parfitt (Group Regional Manager Social Work - Birmingham City Council - Guest speaker on final day), Simon Hall (academic), Shabnam Ahmad (Social Worker), Janine Broderick – partially obscured (Social Worker), Tracey Morahan (carer), Jayne Rafferty (carer), Patrice Mendez (student), Sally Parker (carer), Yvonne Gwonyambira (student). Missing from picture are Colin Watt (academic) and Margaret Duckworth (student).



Dr Colin Watt

## World Social Work Day - 17th March 2020

This day brought social work back to its roots and core values by focussing on and promoting the Importance of Human Relationships.

The final poster depicts two human beings bowing in **respect** and **dignity** for each other and transmitting the deeply held principle that **we are all equal as citizens of the world** regardless of our social identity or social role features.



## COVID-19 Pandemic

On 16th March 2020 the UK including Birmingham entered restrictions initially described as 'social distancing', to limit the spread of coronavirus, which had been declared a worldwide Pandemic by the World Health Organisation on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

In his speech on March 16, Boris Johnson urged everyone "to stop non-essential contact with others and to stop all unnecessary travel", adding: "We need people to start working from home where they possibly can."

And you should avoid pubs, clubs, theatres and other such social venues."

The impact on the normally bustling Birmingham City University and Social Work Department was dramatic. And it became even more startling when, **on March 23 2020, a full lockdown was announced**. All colleagues and students became based at home or their place of residence, with strict limits around going out, visiting others and social contact with other people.

**The Coronavirus Act 2020** came into force on 25 March 2020. It provided public bodies with powers to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, in Social Work Practice most councils including Birmingham City Council triggered provisions to suspend duties under the Care Act 2014, in order to manage workforce shortages and demand pressures, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Birmingham City Council started operating under the so-called '**Care Act Easements**'. Although Social Workers were key frontline workers, in most cases, councils were operating the easements – enacted through the Coronavirus Act 2020 – by reducing care and support processes, taking advantage of the provisions, relieving councils of duties to carry out social work needs assessments, financial assessments, care planning and reviews.

The news that authorities were using the easements sparked concern among sector leaders about the impact of reductions in people's care and support and a perceived lack of transparency in the way authorities had communicated their decisions to undertake the easements to citizens.

Speaking to Community Care on April 30<sup>th</sup> 2020, **The Local Government Association** said the decisions taken by the councils reflected the pressures adult social care was under. "Social care was already under significant pressure before this pandemic," said Ian Hudspeth, chair of the LGA's community wellbeing board. "Councils will only enact an easement when it is impossible for them to fully meet their Care Act duties and when trying to do so may lead to some urgent or acute needs not being met. "They will remain mindful of human rights legislation and will also observe the ethical framework on adult social

care. Other Care Act duties, such as on wellbeing, prevention, information and advice, are unaffected.”

### **New Structures for Teaching and Learning**

Online video conferencing (especially increased use of Microsoft Teams and Zoom Platforms), became a norm for social work educators and social work practitioners. Social Work Education at BCU did not stop and moved predominantly online in the Middle of 2020.

**When the new academic year began in September 2020**, there were new structures and guidelines introduced based on small groups of social work students being taught by the same teacher in ‘bubbles’ of approx. 16 students to prevent and limit the spread of the Virus.

Over the summer all future teaching was re-designed where required to be delivered online –‘if necessary’. The University ensured that all staff had access to and instructions on how to use Microsoft Teams for Group Teaching and individual meetings and tutorials.

Regular use of Hand Gel, and face covering/Mask wearing in class became mandatory for students and staff. All staff were issued with Face Shields by the University



## Conclusion

No one could have envisaged that as we approached our post Seebohm 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary we would be forced to make such major changes to keep Social Work Education at the University alive or that we would have to delay our 50<sup>th</sup> celebrations for at least a year.

As research reports began to emerge of the unequal impact of the COVID -19 pandemic on vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged people– further exacerbating the already critical and proven disparities and inequalities in our society, it reminds us about the importance of what we do in Social Work Education and Practice and the shared and unbreakable values that have provided ethical direction and united every social work student, expert by experience, social work practitioner, practice educator and social work educator over the past 5 decades. Whilst everything else constantly changes, our cherished values unite us and give us a shared connection to professional social work education at BP, UCE and/or BCU. We are at least 50 Years old, still growing, stronger together, and indefinitely dedicated to transforming futures.

### **‘Professional’ Social Workers**

**We may not have power over resources, Law or policy, but we do have personal agency, and therefore ability to influence how people experience us as individual people and professionals**

<b>What we Stand For</b>	<b>What we Stand Against</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"> <i>Social Justice</i>  <i>Equality</i>  <i>Diversity</i>  <i>Safeguarding</i>  <i>Sustainability</i>  <i>Welfare and Wellbeing</i>  <i>Solidarity</i>  <i>Human Rights</i> </p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> <i>Injustice</i>  <i>Inequality</i>  <i>Ethnocentrism</i>  <i>Abuse</i>  <i>Environmental Destruction</i>  <i>Poverty</i>  <i>Discrimination</i>  <i>Oppression</i> </p>
<p><b>Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow</b></p>	

## Appendix 1

### Heads of Social Work Education at BP, UCE and BCU 1970 to 2020

Year	Name	University Name & Campus Location
1970	Cyril Spector	College of Commerce Gosta Green, Aston B4.  South Birmingham Technical College/City of Birmingham Polytechnic Bristol Road South, Selly Oak.
Mid 1970s	Paul Waddington	City of Birmingham Polytechnic Bristol Road South Selly Oak.
1979 to August 1992	Colin Fishwick	City of Birmingham Polytechnic Bordesley Centre, Stratford Road B11.  City of Birmingham Polytechnic Cox Building, Perry Barr Campus
September 1992 to August 1996	Pamela Houghton	UCE Cox Building, Perry Barr
September 1996 to August 2003	Mark Doel	UCE Cox Building, Perry Barr
September 2003 to 2004	Robert Dolton	UCE Cox Building, Perry Barr
2005 September 2009	Chandi Patel	UCE Cox Building, Perry Barr  BCU Baker Building, Perry Barr  BCU Ravensbury House, City South Campus, Edgbaston

March 2010 to 2015	Bharat Chauhan	BCU Ravensbury House City South Campus Edgbaston
August 2015 to April 2017	Michael Adams	BCU Ravensbury House City South Campus Edgbaston
Since May 2017	David Childs	BCU Ravensbury House City South Campus Edgbaston  BCU Extended Mary Seacole Building City South Campus Edgbaston

## **Appendix 2**

### **Regulators of Social Work in England 1970 to 2020**

#### **CTSW**

The Council for Training in Social Work was established in 1962.

#### **CCETSW**

In 1970 it was renamed the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work. CCETSW was a UK-wide, statutory organisation responsible for promoting, approving and assuring the quality of education and training for social work and social care staff in personal social services in England, Wales Scotland and Northern Ireland. It ceased to exist on 30 September 2001.

#### **GSCC**

Many of its functions passed to the four new Care Councils: the General Social Care Council (GSCC) in England, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), the Care Council for Wales (CCW), and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) until 2012.

#### **HCPC**

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC, formerly the Health Professions Council, HPC) was responsible after 2012.

#### **SWE**

Social Work England took over regulation of Social Work including Social Work Education in 2019



Back entrance to the newly extended Seacole Building

**Birmingham City University**

**Social Work Department**

Seacole Building

Westbourne Road

Edgbaston

Birmingham B15 3TN

March 2022