

## Your Degree in Social Care...What Next?

Social Care workers plan and provide professional, individual or group care to clients with personal and social needs. Client groups are varied and include children and adolescents in residential care; young people in detention schools; people with intellectual or physical disabilities; people who are homeless; women seeking temporary shelter in domestic violence refuges; asylum seekers; people with alcohol/drug dependency; families in the community; older people and many more. Social Care workers strive to support, protect, guide and advocate on behalf of clients. Social Care work is based on interpersonal relationships.

### What skills have I gained from my Social Care Degree?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong <b>communication and interpersonal</b> skills. Build <b>professional relationships</b> with clients, <b>role-modelling</b>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Empathy</b>, ability to relate to and understand others, to identify with another person's situation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Self-Awareness</b>, critical reflection. Being able to evaluate one's own performance and work toward improving it (while also taking valid criticism and praise into account) is an invaluable skill.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Team work</b> and Interdisciplinary work, being able to negotiate, compromise and work well with others is essential to the coordination of efforts required in social care work.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Empowering</b>, to enable clients to achieve their full potential</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Non Judgemental attitude</b>, accepting and supportive of others</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adherence to and knowledge of <b>Policies and Procedures</b>, Child Protection, Health and Safety etc. Clear <b>Report writing</b> skills.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Behaviour Management</b>, patience, coping skills, remaining calm and professional at all times, helping to de-escalate a situation before it gets much worse</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Advocacy</b>, to speak on behalf of a client who may not be able, to ensure their rights are being upheld and they are treated with dignity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Active Listening</b> skills, the ability to listen carefully, ask pertinent questions and retain information is very important. It helps establish trust</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the capacity to set <b>boundaries</b> and accept the limits of what can be accomplished</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Debriefing/Destress</b>, the ability to unwind and leave work at work, In order to remain engaged and effective at work, it's imperative to take advantage of your personal time by focusing on and tending to your own needs.</li> </ul>

## **What can I do with my Degree?**

After graduating with a B.A. (hons) in Social Care (Level 8) there are many opportunities to work in many different areas of social care. Social Care is diverse and provides lots of flexibility and a wide range of different options.

It is a good idea to make the most of your work placements during your time in college, and that you try out a variety of different places. This broadens your experience and helps you to decide what area you are most suited to and interested in working in when you finish college.

Social Care involves working with people of all ages, it may range from working with those experiencing physical or emotional difficulties, to those whom are disadvantaged or simply needing support. One can work in areas such as community care, various support services/agencies, mainstream residential care, high support, special care, intellectual disabilities (residential & community) and detention schools to name but a few.

The career path in Social Care, particularly in Residential work can be; Social Care Worker, Social Care Leader, D/Manager, Manager, D/Director, Director.

In Europe, social care work is usually referred to as social pedagogy and social care workers as social pedagogues.

Social care practice differs from social work practice in that it uses shared life-space opportunities to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of clients. Social care work uses strengths-based, needs-led approaches to mediate clients' presenting problems. A social care practitioner will typically work in a direct person-to-person capacity with clients. He or she will seek to provide a caring, stable environment in which various social, educational and relationship interventions can take place in the day-to-day living space of the client.

The social worker's role, on the other hand, is to manage the 'case', for example by arranging the residential child care placement in which a child is placed, coordinating case review meetings, negotiating the termination of a placement and responding to child protection concerns in a given area.

## **Regulation**

The Health and Social Care Professionals Act was enacted to protect the public by enabling Health and Social Care professionals to practice in a regulated, controlled and safe environment and in a way that ensures the highest standard of interventions while meeting the complex needs of the people that we serve. The act provides for a system where professionals are made accountable and responsible for the actions. This allows for professionals to provide the highest standard of care. Social Care Workers is one of the twelve professionals listed in the act.

At present we do not have a date for the registration board for Social Care Workers however Social Care Ireland has advocated that the time is right for the board to be established in order to protect the most vulnerable in our society

The profession will in time be subject to statutory registration by the Health and Social Care Professionals Council. The Council, which was established in March 2007 under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 and is currently in startup mode, will in time provide for statutory registration of twelve separate health and social care professions including Social Care Worker.

Information is available on its website at: [www.coru.ie](http://www.coru.ie).

### **Potential Career Options (this list is not exhaustive)**

- Residential Care Centres
- Community Projects
- Family Casework
- Adoption/Fostering Agencies - [www.ifca.ie](http://www.ifca.ie) (Irish Foster Care Association)/[www.fosteringfirstireland.ie](http://www.fosteringfirstireland.ie)
- Probation & Welfare Agencies
- Hostels for Adolescents, Homeless etc....
- Travellers Centres
- Women's Refuges
- Special Schools
- Day Centres for Persons with Disabilities
- Early School Leavers Mentor
- Centres for Asylum Seekers
- Centres for the Elderly/Aged
- Youth Service Projects
- Support Worker, Drug/Addiction Services etc.
- Advocacy – Contact National Advocacy service (Level 6) Advocacy ,Waterford, SHEP Advocacy course
- Non Profit Sector
- School Completion Programme
- LGBT Support Services
- Housing Support Worker
- Human Trafficking Projects
- Teenage Parents Support Groups
- Sexual Health Projects

### **Employment Opportunities**

*Some Employers Include;*

Barnardo's, HSE, Focus Ireland, ISPCC, Youth Advocate Programme Ireland (YAP), Tusla, Rehab Group, Brothers of Charity, Daughters of Charity, Peter McVerry Trust, Cope Foundation, Simon Community, Enable Ireland, Foroige, Respond, Threshold, DePaul, ALONE, Irish Wheelchair Association, Merchants Quay Ireland, L'Arche Community Cork, Camphill Community, Cuan Mhuire, Family Carers Ireland, Youth Health Service, Novas Initiative, Irish Prison Service, Probation Service, Childline, Samaritans...

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*Private Children's Residential & Elderly Healthcare Agencies such as:*

Positive Care Ireland, Extern, SOS, CPL Healthcare, Bluebird Care, TTM Healthcare, Homecare Plus, Cheshire Ireland, Daffodil Care Services, Nua Healthcare, Nua Homecare...

*Also consider in most Counties in Ireland there are the following range of projects/services:*

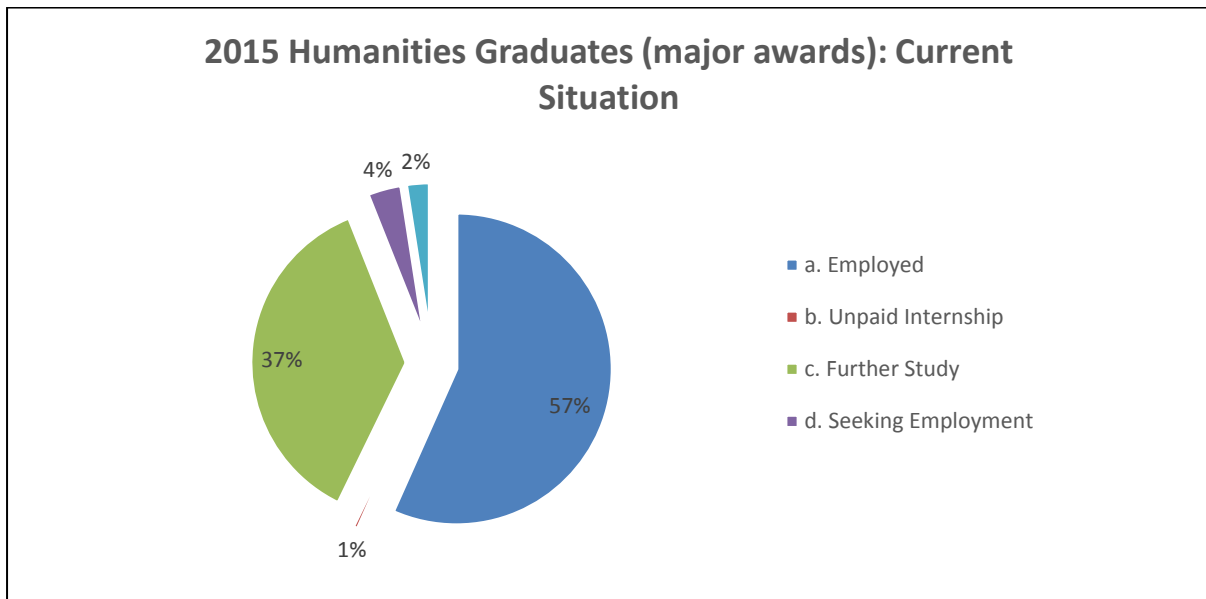
Youth Services (they run various projects such as Diversion programmes, Special youth projects, After school clubs), Youthreach Centres (run by ETB/VEC's), Youth Training Centres (run by SOLAS/FAS), Community Resource Centres, School Completion Programmes, Traveller Action groups, Employability Services, Women & Children's Refuges, Local Area Partnerships...

### **Experience/Volunteering**

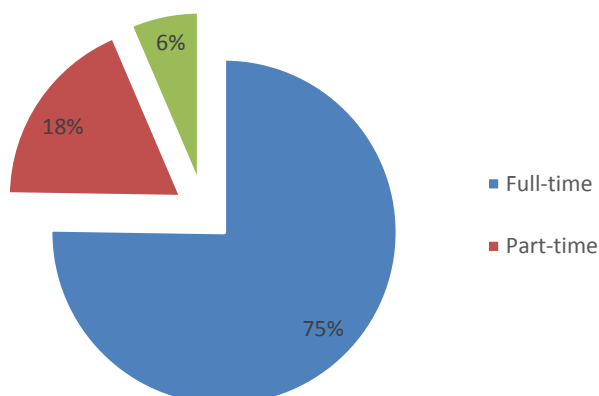
It is very important in Social Care to gain experience as soon as you can. This will increase your employment opportunities. You might consider doing some volunteer work whilst in college in order to increase your 'relevant' work experience.

The Volunteer Centre, Cork, match volunteers with non-profit organisations in both Cork City & County. [www.volunteercork.ie](http://www.volunteercork.ie)

### **What are 2015 graduates doing?**



### 2015 Humanities (major awards): Employment Mode



### Job Roles Graduates of BA Social Care 2015 secured:

Company	Job Role
The Galtee Clinic	Principal Activity Therapist
Solis MMC Children's Services	Social Care Shift Coordinator
Positive Care Ireland	Social Care Worker
CPL Healthcare	Healthcare Assistant
Brothers of Charity	Care Assistant
RehabCare	Programme Facilitator
Cork Foyer	Project Worker

If you would like to know more about the First Destinations Survey please contact the Careers Office [careersadmin@cit.ie](mailto:careersadmin@cit.ie)

### Postgraduate Study:

Gaining a postgraduate qualification brings many benefits. It equips you with more specialised knowledge and skills and can enable you to avail of a wider range of career opportunities.

There are also opportunities to specialise in certain areas within and beyond social care. This may lead you on to further studies.

*Graduates sometimes pursue Masters programmes in;*

Youth and Community Studies, Addiction Studies, Child Protection, Therapeutic Childcare, Social Work, Child, Family and Community Studies, Counselling and Psychotherapy, Guidance Counselling, Play Therapy, Occupational Therapy.

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Some Post Grad Courses include:

### Addiction Counselling

If a graduate of Social Care Level 8 would like to get into Addiction counselling, the requirement is minimum of a Diploma in Addiction Studies (2yrs) plus 2 yrs full time work experience i.e. up to 500 hours before accreditation. See [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

Irish Association of Alcohol and Addiction Counsellors are the accrediting body for Addiction Counsellors in Ireland find them on this directory [www.counsellingdirectory.ie](http://www.counsellingdirectory.ie)  
See accreditation info [http://www.counsellingdirectory.ie/pdfs/IAAAC\\_accreditation.pdf](http://www.counsellingdirectory.ie/pdfs/IAAAC_accreditation.pdf)

PCI is accredited with this body. See their *Diploma & BSc in Addiction Counselling*  
<http://www.pccollege.ie/counselling-courses/degree-addiction-counselling>

### Social Work

Admission to the **Masters of Social Work (MSW) CKE64** in UCC is open to a limited number of students holding at least a Second Class Honours level in the BSocSc Degree (level 8) (or its equivalent) or graduates, who have successfully completed an approved conversion programme, i.e. the **Higher Diploma in Social Policy** (or its equivalent).

For students holding a Level 8 in Social Care they must first complete the HDip in Social Policy in order to be eligible for the Masters in Social Work.

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/cke64/>

### Useful Links & Sources of Information

- ***\*Most useful resource for Social Care jobs in Ireland.***  
[www.activelink.ie](http://www.activelink.ie) - online network for non-profit organisations. Provides information on jobs, tenders, volunteering, events, fundraising, training, publications and funding in the non-profit sector.  
**Tip:** *Can sign up for weekly job vacancies e-mail – this is a great idea as ensures that you check it each week*
- Health and Social Care Professional Council Ireland [www.coru.ie](http://www.coru.ie).
- UK Health and Care Professionals Council - <http://www.hpc-uk.org/>
- Scottish Social Services Council (Scotland and Wales) - <http://www.sssc.uk.com>
- Care Council for Wales - <http://www.ccwales.org.uk/>
- [www.healthcarejobs.ie](http://www.healthcarejobs.ie)
- [www.iascw.ie](http://www.iascw.ie) – Irish Association Social Care Workers

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- <http://arrow.dit.ie/ijass/> The Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies
- [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

### Further Resources

- Gradireland publications – available at the Careers Service or download a copy from [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com)
- For Career opportunities in the UK see [www.targetjobs.co.uk](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk)
- **Tip:** If you are unsure about what direction to take after your degree, the gradireland Careers Report is a useful tool for matching your personal information and preferences to potential careers. Log on and register at [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com) to use the report.
- **Tip:** If you want to find out more information about what is involved in any of the job titles listed in this document check out the A-Z Occupation list on [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie)
- Also go to Job Sectors on [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)