

# Top 10 careers by Yr. 11

## No.6: Social Work

Social workers, helped by social work assistants, work with people needing support. This can include families and children, people with physical disabilities or mental health problems, older people, or those with drug or alcohol problems. They help their clients find long-lasting solutions to their difficulties and to make improvements in their lives.

### Education and training

The professional qualification for social workers is through an approved programme in social work. These lead to a degree or postgraduate qualification, and are available on a full-time, part-time or distance-learning basis; employment-based routes are also available.

Entry requirements for social work assistants vary between employers. New workers will receive an induction, and training is generally through in-service courses. It may be possible to gain work-related qualifications through part-time study or assessment in the workplace.

### What it takes

You must be:

- able to appreciate your clients' problems without getting involved personally
- good at solving problems and using your initiative
- able to relate well to people of all backgrounds
- good at collecting and evaluating information
- able to work effectively with other professionals
- tough and tolerant
- good at managing your time
- open-minded and non-discriminatory
- thorough, patient and determined
- able to stay positive.

### Prospects

Promotion prospects for experienced social workers are good - there are opportunities to take on extra responsibilities and/or to undertake specialist postgraduate study. Once qualified, it's possible for social workers to work for themselves by undertaking contract work; some do this in partnership or in a social enterprise with other social workers.

Social work assistants may go on to qualify as social workers.

### Pay

There are no set pay rates but newly qualified social workers may earn from around £22,000. With experience and greater responsibilities, salaries can rise to £40,000 or more.

Social work assistant pay varies depending on their role, starting from around £14,000 and rising with more responsibilities to around £23,000.

## **For further information**

**Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)** - tel: 0300 500 6184.

[www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org)

**Care Council for Wales** - tel: 0300 30 33 444.

[www.ccwales.org.uk](http://www.ccwales.org.uk)

For careers information on social work in Wales, see:

[www.ccwales.org.uk/social-work-as-a-career](http://www.ccwales.org.uk/social-work-as-a-career)

**The British Association of Social Workers (BASW)** - tel: 0121 622 3911. A professional association for social workers in the UK. For careers information and job vacancies see:

[www.basw.co.uk/social-work-careers](http://www.basw.co.uk/social-work-careers)

**Skills for Care** - tel: 0113 241 1275. Provides online information and advice about careers in adult social care in England, including social work:

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/care-careers/think-care-careers](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/care-careers/think-care-careers)

The following careers website includes an interactive video challenge to find out whether you have what it takes to work in care. It also has videos of people working in caring roles:

[www.aquestionofcare.org.uk](http://www.aquestionofcare.org.uk)