

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Risk and Decision-Making: Challenges for Children's Services Management and Practice

A 30 Masters credit level module for experienced social workers
and social care, health and education practitioners

What and how will I learn?

You will learn about key perspectives, theory and the evidence base concerning risk and decision-making in Children's Services in contemporary legal, policy and practice contexts. The focus will be on integrating learning with critical reflection and developing risk management practices, as well as tackling role related challenges.

Teaching and learning will take place through online lectures and workshops and smaller practice development discussion groups, supplemented by virtual learning resources.

Themes covered include:

- Critical perspectives on risk, risk management and evidence
 - Key concepts and challenges in decision-making
 - Subjectivity, evidence and outcomes
- Organisational risk and lines of power and accountability
- What data can('t) tell us about value, benefit and impact
 - The voices and expertise of children and families
 - The role of emotions and relationships in practice.

Learning directly related to your practice context

The module assignment will support you to produce a critical account of one aspect of your risk management undertaken within your usual social work role and agency setting.

Practitioners will demonstrate how they have assessed risk, made key decisions and plans, and sought to improve outcomes. Supervisors and managers will analyse their support and guidance of staff in their agency in relation to risk and decision-making. Participants may, alternatively, opt to undertake and evaluate an action learning project within their agency to improve the quality of assessment, decision-making or risk management.

Regular peer discussion and feedback within small groups will help you to frame and develop effective risk management practices.

Encounter key perspectives, theory and research

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Critically explore risk analysis, decision-making and the nature of data, evidence, voice and outcomes

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Reflect on individual and organisational processes

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Consider role-related challenges in small groups

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Undertake an assignment directly related to your practice - or that of your team

Teaching Dates: 2025/26

All sessions will be taught remotely

DATE	TUTOR-LED TEACHING	DIRECTED INDIVIDUAL STUDY
Wednesday 15 October 2025	9am-1pm	2-5pm
Wednesday 5 November 2025	9am-1pm	2-5pm
Wednesday 19 November 2025	9am-1pm	2-5pm
Wednesday 10 December 2025	9am-1pm	2-5pm
Wednesday 14 January 2026	9am-1pm	2-5pm
Wednesday 11 February 2026	9am-1pm	2-5pm
Wednesday 4 March 2026	9am-1pm	2-5pm

Applying

For more information - including fees - and applications forms, visit www.sussex.ac.uk/schools/education-and-social-work/study/social-work/cpd.

Completed application forms must be received by 29 August 2025

Local authority funded applications must be authorised by a line manager and sent to the University via an Agency Training Manager to confirm funding.

Self-funded applications can be emailed directly to pqcoord@sussex.ac.uk

Contact

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