

# SWK278 Ethics, Law and the Helping Professions

School: School of Law and Society

2024 Semester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast  
UniSC Moreton Bay

**BLENDED  
LEARNING**

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Online

**ONLINE**

You can do this course without coming onto campus.

Please go to [usc.edu.au](http://usc.edu.au) for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

## 1. What is this course about?

### 1.1. Description

The course explores legal dimensions of professional practice. Students will learn how values influence decisions and actions in practice using ethical theories, ethico-legal principles and law. Attention is given to understanding ethics and law as the linked capacities to act for the rights and well-being of people, animals and the ecosystem is considered. The course provides students with ideas and skills for building ethical literacy, resolving ethical dilemmas, interpreting legislation and understanding the importance of professional integrity in complex human services practice settings.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Learning materials</b> – online content	1hr	Week 1	11 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – face-to-face tutorial	2hrs	Week 1	11 times
<b>ONLINE</b>			
<b>Learning materials</b> – online content	1hr	Week 1	11 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – online tutorials	2hrs	Week 1	11 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

Introducing ethics and law

Professionalism and ethical use of self

Ethical theories – PART A: Deontological, consequentialism & virtues

Ethical theories – PART B: Care-based, love, anti-oppressive & Indigenous worldviews

Legal dimensions & ethico-legal principles

Ethics, power and activism

Legal considerations and ethical decision-making

Cultural safety & humility as ethical practice

Professional responsibilities PART A

Professional responsibilities PART B

Building literacy about legislation

Animal and ecosystems ethics

E-professionalism, care of self and supervision

[All topics may contain adult themes]

## 2. What level is this course?

200 Level (Developing)

Building on and expanding the scope of introductory knowledge and skills, developing breadth or depth and applying knowledge and skills in a new context. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally, undertaken in the second or third full-time year of an undergraduate programs.

## 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

#### 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Australian Association of Social Workers
1 Demonstrate ability to make and be accountable for professional decisions based on ethical frameworks, legal obligations, relevant legislation, to resolve ethical dilemmas and issues	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered	1, 1.1, 1.2, 2, 2.1, 2.2, 3, 3.1, 3.2, 4, 4.2, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 6, 6.4, 7, 8
2 Develop and justify arguments based on understanding of ethical and legal dimensions of practice	Knowledgeable Ethical Engaged	1.1, 1.2, 3, 3.2, 4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5, 5.1
3 Describe and critically evaluate theoretical components of ethical practice	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker	1, 3, 4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4
4 Demonstrate understanding of need to act in culturally appropriate ways	Knowledgeable Ethical	1.1, 2, 2.1, 3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 5.4, 6.1
5 Demonstrate verbal and written communication skills relevant to professional ethico-legal issues in the helping professions	Empowered Engaged	1.1, 2, 2.2, 5.2, 5.4, 6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 7, 7.1
6 Develop critical analysis and reflective skills, including ethical use of self in practice	Empowered Ethical Sustainability-focussed	1.1, 1.2, 2, 2.1, 2.2, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 5.4
7 Demonstrate understanding of relevant legislation that influences ethical practice	Knowledgeable Ethical	4, 4.2, 4.4, 5

#### \* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
<b>AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS</b>	
1	Values and ethics
1.1	Practise in accordance with the AASW Code of Ethics
1.2	Manage ethical dilemmas and issues arising in practice
2	Professionalism
2.1	Represent the social work profession with integrity and professionalism
2.2	Behave in a professional manner and be accountable for all actions and decisions
3	Culturally responsive and inclusive practice
3.1	Work inclusively and respectfully with cultural difference and diversity
3.2	Respect and strive to understand and promote the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures
4	Knowledge for practice
4.1	Understand higher level systemic influences on people with respect to area of practice
4.2	Understand and articulate social work and other relevant theories and concepts
4.3	Understand the role of research and evaluation in obtaining and generating new knowledge for practice
4.4	Understand and articulate how and when theories, knowledge bases and knowledge sources inform practice

CODE	COMPETENCY
5	Applying knowledge to practice
5.1	Assess and analyse needs to inform practice
5.2	Work collaboratively
5.4	Apply critical and reflective thinking to practice
6	Communication and interpersonal skills
6.1	Communicate with a diverse range of people
6.2	Communicate the details and nature of the service offered to people
6.3	Work with others in a team environment
6.4	Use information technology to communicate and provide services
7	Information recording and sharing
7.1	Record and manage information appropriately
8	Professional development and supervision

## 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

### 5.1. Pre-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

SCS278

### 5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

### 6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Students will complete some of the weekly Journal entries early in semester and will receive feedback on one of these.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Activity Participation	Individual	10%	Weekly for all tutorials	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	In Class
All	2	Journal	Individual	40%	Five journal entries over set weeks at 400 words per entry, commencing in week 3.	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	Online Test (Quiz)
All	3	Case Study	Individual	50%	15 minutes (2500 words equivalent)	Exam Period	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

**All - Assessment Task 1:** Tutorial Attendance and Participation

<b>GOAL:</b>	To integrate key concepts of the course in tutorial based activities and discussions with an interdisciplinary focus.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Activity Participation	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Students are to attend each of the tutorials and participate in the activities and discussions.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>

**All - Assessment Task 2:** Reflections on Key Ethical and Legal Concepts

<b>GOAL:</b>	To define, discuss and reflect on relevant professional values, ethical theories, ethico-legal principles, power, responsibilities and legislation in helping contexts.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Journal	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Over the length of the Journal assessment, students are to define, discuss and reflect on the professional implications of the key concepts, as provided on Canvas. Each Journal entry needs to use the course text and at least one other reference from the course readings.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Define, discuss and reflect on the professional implications of the provided key concepts. <b>2 3 5</b>
	2	Appropriately use course text and a minimum of 1 other reference from the course materials for each Journal entry. <b>2</b>
	3	5 well written Journal entries (clarity of expression, correct grammar, logically structured, coherent description and analysis), within the word count, appropriately referenced using the Harvard or APA system of referencing. <b>5</b>

### All - Assessment Task 3: Ethical Dilemma on PowerPoint with Voice Over

<b>GOAL:</b>	To apply an ethical decision-making model to a case study, which will inform professional practice.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Case Study	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	<p>This is an individual assessment and can be presented with sub-headings from the recommended ethical decision-making model.</p> <p>You need to identify and critically reflect upon one possible ethical dilemma within a practice situation, as presented through a case study. You will be required to demonstrate: a sound application of ethical theory; professional values; a clear understanding of Australian ethico-legal principles and laws that may apply; and a sound working knowledge of your own profession's code of ethics. You will also need to research your role and your agency related to the case study and show an understanding of issues that may be impacting on the situation. You will demonstrate your ability to work through a decision-making model over-viewed in this course, that will guide your ethical practice.</p> <p>Case studies will be provided to you and you can create an alternative case study in consultation with your tutor. You will be required to place yourself as a worker from your own discipline into this case study and apply an ethical decision-making process that leads to particular action you would take in relation to this case.</p>	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Apply an ethical decision making model to a case study, showing an understanding of ethical theories, your own profession's code of ethics, Australian ethico-legal principles and legislation, relevant case study specific research & power issues. <span style="float: right;">1 2 3 4 5 6 7</span>
	2	An ability to identify the limitations of the ethical decision making model and how you addressed those limitations. <span style="float: right;">3</span>
	3	A well prepared powerpoint with voice over - logically structured, coherent analysis, within the time limit and word count, appropriately referenced using Harvard or APA system of referencing and with a minimum of 6 references from the course. <span style="float: right;">5</span>

## 7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below. Resources may be required or recommended.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	Dyann Ross	2020	The Revolutionary Social Worker: Love Ethic Companion	n/a	Revolutionaries

### 8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

### 10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%

The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct.

### 10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks may be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day - 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late. To request an extension you must contact your course coordinator to negotiate an outcome.

### 10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email [safe@usc.edu.au](mailto:safe@usc.edu.au).

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](tel:0754301226) or email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au).

### 10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au).

### 10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 1226.

### 10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [AccessAbility@usc.edu.au](mailto:AccessAbility@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 2890.

## 10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

## 10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

## 10.10. General Enquiries

### In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

**Tel:** +61 7 5430 2890

**Email:** [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)