Working together to promote a career in social work

**Introduction**

Dear employer,

As part of promoting the Degree in Social Work in Northern Ireland and to help promote social work as a career of choice, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (the Social Care Council) has drafted the below template for you to use.

This can be personalised with your own story, from a social worker in your organisation and/or additional information added that you think is important.

This idea came from a social worker in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust who thought it might be good for students in their local area to hear directly from a locally-based social worker as a way to encourage young people to choose social work.

We would love to hear if you use this or not. Please email: comms@niscc.hscni.net with any feedback or ideas for future promotion.

**Employer letter template**

Title: Hello, from your local social worker

Hi budding social worker,

My name is *[insert name of social worker]* and I’ve worked as a social worker for the last *[insert number of years working as a social worker]* years, specialising in [insert service area or type of social work] for *[insert organisation name].*

If you are reading this letter this means you have an interest in a career in social work. You also might be choosing to put the Degree in Social Work on your UCAS form or want to know the different ways to become a social worker in Northern Ireland. Good for you.

The great news is I can help you with this journey, as I have been there, done that!

In my experience social work is the best job - I mean that sincerely. You have possibly heard, as I did, comments about the challenges of this career –from the media, from family or someone you know who works with social workers. However, if you are still here it proves you have the determination and draw towards becoming part of the social work profession.

I am not here to tell you that it is always an easy job, but those comments do not reflect the joy, value and sense of achievement generated from your experience as a social worker. It is a great career choice, with opportunities to specialise and progress. There is great job security and a huge variety of roles - you won’t become bored.

The chances are if you are keen to be a social worker, you want to experience a career supporting people in your community. Perhaps you have loved or encountered people who have been marginalised, had the odds stacked against them or needed support to alter the life trajectory set out for them. Perhaps you were that person. The people you will work with as a social worker are sometimes the most vulnerable in society and need people who can advocate for them, show compassion and empathy but who can, also, have honest, difficult conversations – so they can be supported to improve their circumstances or situation.

Like everyone, I have experienced challenges in my career but becoming a social worker and supporting the people whose lives I entered, is not one of them. We need more people who want to effect change and who have compassion.

As a social worker, you will find yourself gifted with the most personal narratives of people’s lives and with this comes great opportunity to support others. There will be days when you experience genuine joy and fulfilment, you will leave work feeling like your contribution to the world that day has been worthwhile and purposeful.

Although not every day will be a day that you can conquer the world and reverse social injustice, you will feel that you can effect change in your small part of the world, in someone’s life, one person at time. It’s not every profession that can offer that.

So, in summary, as I began this letter to you – congratulations on thinking you would like to get into social work, whatever stage of the process you are at. You can be part of our next generation of social workers – all you have to do is say ‘yes’.

Find out more by going to: <https://niscc.info/degree-in-social-work/>.

Yours sincerely

*[insert social worker name, Organisation]*