



Inspection Report

Course provider: University of East Anglia

Course approval: MA Social Work Apprenticeship

Inspection dates:

Report date:	1 st May 2024
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved
Date of Regulator decision:	12 th July 2024

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Introduction

1. Social Work England completes inspections as part of our statutory requirement to approve and monitor courses. Inspections form part of our process to make sure that courses meet our [education and training standards](#) and ensure that students successfully completing these courses can meet our [professional standards](#).
2. During the approval process, we appoint partner inspectors. One inspector is a social worker registered with us and the other is not a registered social worker (a 'lay' inspector). These inspectors, along with an officer from the education quality assurance team, undertake activity to review information and carry out an inspection. This activity could include observing and asking questions about teaching, placement provision, facilities and learning resources; asking questions based on the evidence submitted; and meeting with staff, training placement providers, people with lived experience and students. The inspectors then make recommendations to us about whether a course should be approved.
3. The process we undertake is described in our legislation; the Social Worker Regulations 2018¹, and the Social Work England [\(Education and Training\) Rules 2019](#).
4. You can find further guidance on our course change, new course approval and annual monitoring processes on our website.

What we do

5. When an education provider wants to make a change to a course, or request the approval of a new course, they are asked to consider how their course meets our education and training standards and our professional standards and provide evidence of this to us. We are also undertaking a cycle of re-approval of all currently approved social work courses in England following the introduction of the Education and Training Standards 2021.
6. The education quality assurance officer reviews all the documentary evidence provided and will contact the education provider if they have any questions about the information submitted. They also provide advice and guidance on our approval processes.
7. When we are satisfied that we have all the documentary evidence required to proceed with an inspection we assign one registrant and one lay inspector. We undertake a conflict of interest process when confirming our inspectors to ensure there is no bias or appearance of bias in the approval process.
8. The inspectors complete an assessment of the evidence provided and advise the officer if they have any queries that may be able to be addressed in advance of the inspection.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2018/9780111170090/contents>

9. During this time a draft plan for the inspection is developed and shared with the education provider, to make sure it is achievable at the point of inspection.
10. Once the inspectors and officer are satisfied that an inspection can take place, this is usually undertaken over a three- or four-day visit to the education provider. We then draft a report setting out what we found during the inspection and if and how our findings demonstrate that the course meets our standards.
11. The inspectors may recommend in this report that the course is approved with conditions, without conditions or that it does not meet the criteria for approval.
12. A draft of this report is shared with the education provider, and once we have considered any comments or observations they may wish to provide, we make a final decision about the approval of the course.
13. The decisions that we can make are as follows, that the course is approved without conditions, the course is approved with conditions or that the course does not meet the criteria for approval. The decision, and the report, are then published.
14. If the course is approved with conditions, we will write to the education provider setting out how they can demonstrate they have met the conditions, the action we will take once we decide that the conditions are met, and the action we will take if we decide the conditions are not met.

Summary of Inspection

15. Course details: The University of East Anglia intend to run an MA apprenticeship social work course.

Inspection ID	UEA_CPP450
Course provider	University of East Anglia
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	MA social work degree apprenticeship
Mode of Study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	10
Proposed first intake	10
Date of inspection	2 nd April to 4 th April
Inspection team	Laura Gordon (Education Quality Assurance Officer) Jane Jones (Lay Inspector) Michael Isles (Registrant Inspector)

Language

16. In this document we describe the University of East Anglia as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the MA social work degree apprenticeship as ‘the course’. We refer to students on the course as both ‘students’ and ‘apprentices’ throughout the document.

Inspection

17. A remote inspection took place from 2nd April to 4th April 2024. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

18. These meetings formed the basis of the inspection plan, agreed with the education provider ahead of inspection. The following section provides a summary of these sessions, who participated and the topics that were discussed with the inspection team.

Conflict of interest

No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with 13 students on the current MA social work and BA social work degree apprenticeship courses across the first and second years and some recent graduates. Discussions included admissions, readiness for practice, placements, support, assessments and feedback.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course team, admissions staff, senior leaders, support services, and members of the practice learning team.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work who have been involved in the course. Discussions included their experiences of working with the course team and students, the specific activities they have been directly involved in on the current courses, any involvement they have had in the design of the new course and opportunities to provide feedback to the university.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from the placement partner from Norfolk County Council.

Findings

24. In this section we set out the inspectors' findings in relation to whether the education provider has demonstrated that it meets the education and training standards and that the course will ensure that students who successfully complete the course are able to meet the professional standards.

Standard one: Admissions

Standard 1.1

25. Prior to the inspection, the university provided documentary evidence indicating that a holistic approach to admissions will run parallel to their existing BA social work apprenticeship admissions process. The university provided copies of their written activity, role play, group activity and interview questions along with the relevant scoring criteria that form part of the assessment of applicants.

26. Additional evidence was also received prior to the inspection with details from the application form template and scoring criteria.

27. During the inspection, the inspection team heard more from the course team, employer partner and admissions team about how the university and employer partner collaborates across the whole of the admissions process.

28. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

29. Documentary evidence received prior to the inspection confirmed that two years direct work experience with adults or children and families is required for entry to the course. The one exception to this requirement may be for care experienced applicants, whose lived experience may mean the 2 year minimum direct work experience is waived. This experience is assessed within the application and during the interview of applicants.

30. The students that met with the inspection team confirmed they had had a positive experience during the admissions process, and this had allowed them to reflect upon their experiences and skills and whether they were ready for the course.

31. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

32. The documentary evidence confirmed that the employer partner for the course had been involved in the design of the course and would lead the recruitment process in partnership with the university and their people with lived experience steering group.

33. Both the employer partner and people with lived experience confirmed during the inspection that they have been involved in the review and ongoing development of recruitment activities, including co-producing the different elements of the admissions process.

34. The people with lived experience that met with the inspection team advised they felt they were equal participants in the admissions process and gave examples of where they had raised concerns about applicants and felt heard.

35. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

36. The university provided documentary evidence of the process for ensuring appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks had taken place and the completion by applicants of a self-declaration prior to starting the course.

37. During the inspection the course team provided further information about how any suitability issues would be identified through a spreadsheet provided from the employer partner flagging any issues raised. The course team also provided examples of how any issues would be dealt with in collaboration with the employer partner and the types of support that may be put in place for applicants with health conditions.

38. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

39. Documentary evidence was provided prior to the inspection in the form of the university Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy and the equal opportunities for students policy.

40. During the inspection, the admissions team provided examples of how they have considered admissions data to widen participation in socially deprived areas and introduced videos to attract more male applicants. They also gave examples of how they ensure reasonable adjustments and support are put in place early in the process.

41. The admissions team confirmed that all staff involved in admissions had mandatory EDI training and the people with lived experience also confirmed that they complete this annually.

42. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

43. Prior to the inspection, the university provided evidence of the information available to applicants through their website, open days, the employer partner's website and the launch recruitment event.

44. During the inspection, the course team and employer partner confirmed that recruitment for the course had begun, and shortlisting of applications was due to take place in May 2024.

45. It was noted by the inspection team that the information provided to applicants for the course indicated that upon completion they would be eligible for registration with Social Work England. However, there was no indication within the documentation provided that the course had not yet been approved by Social Work England.

46. Both the course team and the employer partner confirmed during the inspection that applicants had not been made aware neither verbally nor in writing that the course was subject to Social Work England's approval process.

47. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 1.6 in relation to the approval of this course. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. [Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the proposed outcomes section of this report.](#)

47A. The university has provided further evidence following the inspection which indicates that the proposed condition has been met.

47B. The university has provided a copy of the letter from the course director informing current applicants that the MA Social Work Apprenticeship is subject to the approval of Social Work England which was shared in person with all current applicants who attended the recruitment days on 30th and 31st May 2024. The university confirmed that the letter will also be shared with all remaining applicants on the final two recruitment days on 13th and 14th June 2024.

47C. All applicants were given an opportunity to ask any questions about the course approval process and given a hard copy of the letter to take away with them which contains contact details for the social work apprenticeships team for any queries, and an undertaking to contact all successful applicants offered a place once the course approval has been confirmed.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

48. Documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection confirmed that the course will consist of a 70 day first placement, 100 day second placement and 30 skills days. The placement handbook and practice learning agreement provide students with details about the expectations and responsibilities during placements and the mandatory attendance requirements.

49. During the inspection, the course team and employer partner confirmed that both placements will usually take place in statutory settings and the need to use private voluntary independent agencies for placements is likely to be an exception. They also confirmed that the contrast of placement will take place during the first placement which will be not in the student's base team. The second placement will then take place in the base team that the student will be located in.

50. The inspection team explored further with the course team how they will ensure that the placement days within the base team are clear. They confirmed that students will not have been with their base team prior to the placement. Students will have a prolonged induction in the base team over the summer in order to prepare them for their second placement.

51. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

52. The university provided a copy of the practice learning agreement (PLA) and placement profile form that detail how learning opportunities are considered for each student. These indicate that there is a consideration of prior experiences and the current level of skill students have coming into the placement.

53. The PLA learning outcomes are mapped to the professional capabilities framework (PCF) and Social Work England's professional standards and allow for consideration of the opportunities available to students whilst on placement. There is also a mid-point review, and students are expected to keep a reflective journal and complete a reflective account of their learning as part of their final placement.

54. During the inspection, the inspection team heard from the employer partner, practice educators and the course team about how placement opportunities are managed for students, with some examples given of allowing flexibility around the needs of individual students.

55. The inspection team were therefore satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

56. The placement handbook and placement guidance and templates provide information about induction, supervision, support and workload management.

57. During the inspection, the inspection team heard more about the support available to students from the university and through the employer partner. The employer partner will allocate students to their student hubs and appropriate team channels and ensure that students have employee and placement inductions.

58. The inspection team met with practice educators who confirmed that they will assess students' workloads and ensure expectations are clear. They also confirmed they will link the theory of what students are learning at university to practice and seek out appropriate learning opportunities for students.

59. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

60. The documentary evidence confirmed that students will have regular progress reviews to consider ongoing learning and responsibilities while on placement. The university confirmed that learning needs are considered in the allocation of placements and that for first placements there is a consideration given to the apprentice's work experience prior to joining the course. The learning needs will be specified in the PLA and measured through the mid-placement and final placement report. For the second placement, learning needs will also be drawn from the student's first placement experience.

61. The employer partner confirmed that team managers are aware of the need for apprentices to be treated as students. There was also a recognition of the different responsibilities required during first and second placements.

62. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

63. During the first semester students will complete a module called 'Professional Theory and Practice'. This year long module requires students to complete a simulated interview and a reflective essay which must be passed before placement.

64. The inspection team spoke with students who confirmed that the readiness for practice role plays involving people with lived experience were useful to prepare them for placement.

65. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

66. The evidence provided prior to the inspection confirmed that a register of all practice educators is kept and that this is reviewed by the Eastern QAPL partnership every year.

67. During the inspection, the inspection team heard more from the placement team and employer partner about how the register is checked and what information is contained on the register.

68. They confirmed that there is an annual meeting to discuss the register which confirms the registration, practice educator professional standards (PEPS) training completion, continuous professional development (CPD) activities and currency of practice educators taking students.

69. The placement team confirmed that the registration of practice educators is checked before taking a student, prior to the placement. There is also a renewal process for practice educators that are on the register which is completed every 2 years. The inspection team heard examples of how practice educators could meet the currency requirements if they had not had a student in the last two years.

70. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

71. The university provided information about their whistleblowing policy and reporting wrongdoing policy prior to the inspection.

72. During the inspection, the inspection team met with students who confirmed that they felt confident raising concerns and provided examples of where this had been done.

73. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

74. Documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection detailed the management arrangements within the school with monthly executive team meetings, monthly teaching executive meetings and monthly teaching team meetings to ensure appropriate academic and pastoral support.

75. The university is part of the Eastern Quality of Practice Education and Placements (QAPL) partnership and the Suffolk Norfolk Social Work Teaching Partnership (SNSWTP), which consider placements and practice educator capacity and provide feedback for review of the curriculum.

76. The inspection team met with members of the senior leadership team who were able to confirm lines of accountability, confirm resourcing for the course and provide further information about how various meetings and committees feed into each other.

77. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

78. A copy of the agreement with the employer partner was provided prior to the inspection and the employer handbook which detailed the expectations and responsibilities.

79. The placement handbook details the process for placement breakdown. During the inspection, the inspection team heard examples of placement breakdown and resolutions on the existing courses.

80. During the inspection, the inspection team met with the employer partner who confirmed the ongoing relationship with university.

81. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

82. The placement provider agreement with the employer partner provides a commitment to provide policies and procedures relating to health, wellbeing and risk. There is also reference to policies in the placement handbook and PLA and support is discussed during the induction and at progress review meetings.

83. During the inspection, the inspection team heard from the course team and employer partner about how they work together to provide wrap around support for students.

84. The inspection team were therefore satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

85. The university provided documentary evidence relating to the SNSWTP which indicated that employer partners have input into the course through three key workstreams of the partnership, focusing on partnerships and planning, placements and practice and curriculum involvement and co-production.

86. The documentary evidence indicated that placement allocation is led by the employer partner, however during the inspection the inspection team heard from the placement team and employer partner that this was a joint process.

87. The bi-annual school board and annual teaching review process involves key stakeholders including employers. Monitoring and review happens through the annual practice learning assessment panel (PLAP) and the Eastern QAPL Partnership.

88. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

89. Documentary evidence was provided prior to the inspection with information about the annual review process, teaching excellence plan review, module evaluations, QAPL forms for review of placements and the PLAP. All teaching staff are also subject to peer observation each year.

90. The inspection team met with the employer partner who confirmed their extensive involvement in the development of the new course and the ongoing review as detailed in the workstreams identified above under standard 3.4.

91. The people with lived experience that met with the inspection team confirmed that they have been involved from the beginning as partners in developing the apprenticeship programme. This has included attending all of the course development meetings and the course team confirmed that they will be involved in the selection event and teaching activities. It was confirmed that two members of the people with lived experience group sit on the operation group board, and they are also part of the PLAP alongside employer partners.

92. The documentary evidence confirmed that student feedback is sought through midpoint and end of module evaluations and staff student liaison committee (SSLC) meetings which are held twice a semester with an action log. There are also opportunities for student feedback through the apprenticeship forum, students have involvement on the EDI committee, there is an annual survey and they have input into the annual review.

93. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

94. The university provided documentation showing the oversight of student numbers across all of the social work courses offered by the university and discussions with the SNSWTP to ensure placement and practice educator capacity for the new course.

95. During the inspection, the inspection team met with members of the senior leadership team, who recognised the need for the proposed course due to declining numbers on traditional routes and the employer partner's commitment to grow their own workforce. They also confirmed the discussions that had taken place with the employer partner regarding recruitment and resourcing.

96. The senior leadership team confirmed that they are looking to recruit 10 students to the course and that this is the maximum number for the apprenticeship cohort.

97. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

98. Documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection confirmed the current social work lead who holds overall responsibility for the programme. The inspection team were

satisfied that this individual is a registered social worker and appropriately qualified and experienced.

99. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

100. Prior to the inspection, CVs for staff were provided as documentary evidence and these indicated a wide variety of research specialisms and project involvement. Information about workload management and the allocation of responsibilities was also provided and the course handbook detailed lists of all of the modules with module leads and contributors.

101. During the inspection, the course team confirmed that the majority of the teaching staff are qualified social workers. The inspection team heard more about the range of experience within the team with staff from backgrounds across children's social care, adult social care, law, mental health and capacity, and sociology. The course team also confirmed that they will bring in specialist guest lecturers where needed.

102. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

103. The documentary evidence indicated that annual processes including exam boards, course and module reviews and the summer school course review meeting are used to monitor and review performance, progression and outcomes including consideration of data on equality and diversity where available.

104. The board of examiners documentation provided detail for apprentices on the role of the board, grades, progression, awards and the different examination boards. Copies of external examiner reports were also provided to the inspection team.

105. During the inspection, the course team provided an example of using EDI data, where they identified that minoritised students were taking longer to pass placements and that they had sought funding for pilot project to consider this further.

106. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

107. Documentary evidence in the form of CVs for members of staff detailed their research activities and project involvement to maintain currency. All new lecturers receive an induction, have a mentor and register for a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice. Academic staff either have scholarship or research time which is used to maintain knowledge and understanding of professional practice.

108. There is a CPD programme for staff which includes elements which are compulsory such as regular and refresher training on prevent, health and safety, equality and diversity.

109. There are opportunities for staff to attend research seminars within the school throughout the year. Practice educators and onsite supervisors are also offered workshops to support the placement learning experience and are also included in invitations to research seminars.

110. During the inspection, the course team provided lots of examples of staff research activities and confirmed that some staff remain active in practice, for example there is a member of staff who is still practicing as an approved mental health professional (AMHP) and an independent member of fostering and adoption panels.

111. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

112. The university provided documentary evidence of the content and structure of the course through course handbooks, module outlines and timetables. Documentary evidence confirmed that the content and structure of the course is mapped to Social Work England's professional standards, the PCF and the apprenticeship standards (IATE).

113. During the inspection, the students that met with the inspection team confirmed their knowledge of Social Work England's professional standards and that they are informed of these early in the course.

114. The inspection team also received confirmation that the course has been through the university's own internal validation process.

115. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

116. Documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection indicated how employer partners and people with lived experience have involvement in the current social work courses offered by the university.

117. The inspection team met with people with lived experience who confirmed their involvement in the design of this course, and how they are currently involved in teaching on the other courses currently offered by the university. The course team confirmed that the involvement of people with lived experience in teaching on this course will be the same, through involvement in round robins, simulations, and on the PLAP.

118. The inspection team also met with the employer partner who confirmed that practitioners are involved in the teaching on the current courses and that the curriculum is shared with them to add their input. They provided examples of how they have worked in collaboration with the university to undertake mapping, to ensure less duplication between students learning in employment and the academic element.

119. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

120. The university provided evidence prior to the inspection of their assessment strategy which addresses widening participation and also confirmed how anti-oppressive and anti-racist practice is embedded into the course. There is a dedicated disability liaison officer for apprentices to help to identify their learning needs and the course is designed in accordance with human rights principles.

121. During the inspection, the inspection team heard examples, from various groups, of reasonable adjustments that have been put in place for students and the ways in which the course team had adapted the course timetabling.

122. The course team also provided more information about the Black, Asian, minority ethnic student society to support minoritised students experiences at placements. Data was collected from a pilot study and as a result they now have a staff and student liaison meeting once a month in the evening attended by the senior academic advisor, course directors, and teaching and learning directors, so that apprentices can attend and highlight any issues they experience on placement or in the university.

123. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

124. The university advised that modules are kept relevant to current practice through a regular module review process, the engagement of staff in research on practice, the involvement of people with lived experience, and through the involvement of practitioners in teaching and programme design.

125. During the inspection, the course team provided examples of how they have introduced learning from their research into the curriculum. The course team explained that through their networking connections they were able to bring in current practitioners in specialist areas such as forensic mental health.

126. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

127. The documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection indicated that theory and practice is embedded and mapped across all of the modules and includes the use of case studies and simulation activities. All taught modules include reference to professional practice and the assessments also reflect this.

128. Practice educators receive guidance on how to teach the use of theory in practice, and the practice educators that met with the inspection team gave examples of how they consider theories that students are learning in their supervisions.

129. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

130. Documentary evidence indicated that there are guest lectures from other professions such as medicine, psychiatry, law, nursing and specialist voluntary agencies.

131. The university has developed a simulated practice exercise with students and lecturers from the law school to develop court skills around giving a testimony and a mock child protection conference with students from other professions to work together to produce a child protection or child in need plan.

132. The school hosts the interdisciplinary centre for research on children and families (CRCF) which runs a regular seminar series and provides opportunity for interdisciplinary learning. Further interdisciplinary learning opportunities are being explored including the use of Schwartz Rounds which include medical and health sciences disciplines.

133. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

134. The module outlines provided prior to the inspection provided a breakdown of time spent on structured learning activities.

135. During the inspection, the inspection team explored with the course team and employer partner how off the job learning is ensured. It was confirmed that students will usually be given the same day each week for academic learning to ensure that this time is protected and to allow students to be able to work together.

136. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

137. The university provided a copy of the assessment strategy prior to the inspection. The modules are designed in line with learning outcomes which are linked to appropriate standards, including Social Work England's professional standards.

138. There are a variety of assessment methods used to suit different styles of learning and these include both formative and summative assessments. Assessments are designed to ensure that both academic and professional practice learning outcomes are met.

139. There is a system of moderation in place and the course team confirmed during the inspection, that they use calibration meetings and marking rubrics to ensure consistency.

140. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

141. The documentary evidence confirmed that assessments are clearly linked to the learning outcomes for each module and build on foundational knowledge and skills in this

first year, to become more advanced and specialist in the second year. All modules are mapped to Social Work England's professional standards, the PCF, the IATE social worker (Integrated Degree) standards and QAA subject benchmark.

142. The curriculum is scaffolded to assist students with their progression and the formative assessments are designed to build skills and confidence in preparation for the summative assessments.

143. The inspection team met with students on the current MA course who were positive about the spacing of assignments.

144. The inspection team were therefore satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

145. Documentary evidence received prior to the inspection detailed the university's moderation policy and feedback guidance. There is an annual review of marking and informal feedback can also be provided to students through progress review meetings.

146. During the inspection, the inspection team met with students who provided a variety of responses in relation to the quality of feedback in supporting their ongoing development. There was an indication that this could differ depending on the marker.

147. The inspection team spoke with the course team who confirmed that, due to student feedback, they use calibration meetings and have recently introduced marking rubrics and have started to use Turnitin to improve consistency in marking.

148. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

149. The inspection team were provided with copies of staff CVs prior to the inspection which indicated the qualifications and experience of the course staff.

150. The course team confirmed that all practice educators are all PEPS 2 qualified, all lecturers register for a postgraduate certificate in higher education practice and that some of the people with lived experience have become trained coaches.

151. It was noted by the inspection team that an external examiner for the course is not currently in place. However, they were provided with documentary evidence of the code of practice for the appointment of an external examiner. The inspection team were satisfied that there is a robust process in place and were assured by the course team that there would be prompt recruitment of an external examiner to ensure they were in place.

152. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

153. The documentary evidence indicated that academics, practice educators, people with lived experience and external examiners contribute to the assessment of and decisions informing student progression at various stages. There is input from people with lived experience in the readiness for practice interview and there are key meetings such as the PLAP meetings, extenuating circumstance panel meetings and progression is considered at a series of exam boards.

154. Three direct observations of student practice are recorded in the placement portfolio, and service user and professional co-worker feedback is also sought on student performance during placement.

155. The course team confirmed that the academic advisor will have discussions with students regarding their progress and the progress review meetings also allow opportunities to discuss progress.

156. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

157. The module outline for the dissertation module confirms that students will bring together the academic skills gained as applied to practice through a literature review. This requires students to demonstrate skills in reviewing literature, research mindedness and critical and analytical thinking and apply their findings to practice.

158. During the inspection, the course team provided lots of examples of how research informed practice is embedded within the course. They also confirmed that they ensure the course covers consideration of ways of working in both adults and children's social work practices.

159. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

160. The university provided documentary evidence of the various support services available to students through the student life team, wellbeing team, mental health team and careers centre.

161. During the inspection, the inspection team met with staff from support services who provided more information about how students are made aware of services and signposting, how they review and adapt services, how support is integrated into the curriculum and how accessible the support and resources are to apprentices.

162. The inspection team were therefore satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

163. All students are allocated an academic advisor who will remain with them for the duration of the course, including while they are on placement. The students that met with the inspection team confirmed they had received good support from their academic advisors.

164. The learning enhancement team at the University can provide support with study skills, academic writing and use of English and this is available through a variety of means including online resources, helpdesks, workshops and tutorials.

165. The student services disability team can offer neurodiversity support including a screening service available and ensuring there is appropriate support in place for students.

166. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

167. It was noted by the inspection team that there is no formal ongoing requirement for students to complete a declaration form after the initial admissions declaration. The emphasis is on students to notify the university and their employer of any change to their circumstances. The academic advisor will discuss any issues in progress reviews and there is a clear fitness to practise process in place.

168. The inspection team noted that the information provided to students within the course handbooks was clear about the expectation to declare any change in circumstance. The students that met with the inspection team confirmed they were aware of the expectation to declare any conduct or health issues.

169. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

170. Documentary evidence received prior to the inspection indicated that information about how to access disability support services from the learning enhancement and wellbeing team is provided on the university website and included in the handbooks.

171. During the inspection, examples of reasonable adjustments were provided by the course teams, support services, students, and practice educators. It was confirmed that support was considered within the PLA and also as part of ongoing progress reviews.

172. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

173. The university provided a copy of the course handbook which provides specific information about course content and progression and the role of academic advisors in assisting students through their learning journeys.

174. The students are introduced to the assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE) towards the end of their second year and have a session with the CPD service within the university.

175. The students that met with the inspection team confirmed that they are given sufficient information about the course, assessments and placements and the transition to registered social worker.

176. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

177. The documentary evidence received prior to the inspection provided clear information to students in the course handbook that all parts of the course are compulsory, and attendance is monitored electronically. Any parts missed will need to be covered in catch up days and there are clear processes in place for students to make up academic sessions, placement days or skills days that are missed.

178. There is a placement attendance sheet and process for reporting absence and attendance is also monitored at progress review meetings.

179. The students that met with the inspection team confirmed their understanding of the mandatory elements of the course.

180. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

181. The documentary evidence provided by the university indicated that there was a 20-day turnaround time for feedback. The students that met with the inspection team confirmed that feedback has been on time or early.

182. As stated under standard 4.10, the course team have implemented improvements to ensure consistency in feedback through calibration meetings and marking rubrics and have started to use Turnitin.

183. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

184. Documentary evidence provided information about the university's academic appeals process.

185. Students that met with the inspection team confirmed that if they needed further information about appeals, they know where to find this information.

186. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard six: Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register

Standard 6.1

187. As the qualifying course is an MA social work degree apprenticeship, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

188. The inspection team recommend that the course be approved with conditions.

Conditions

189. Conditions for approval are set if there are areas of a course that do not currently meet our standards. Conditions are binding and must be met by the education provider within the agreed timescales.

190. Having considered whether approval with conditions or a refusal of approval was an appropriate course of action, we are proposing the following condition for this course at this time.

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	Standard 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that current applicants have been informed that the course is subject to the approval of Social Work England.	This is no longer required as the condition has been evidenced.	Paragraph 47

191. It should be noted that all qualifying social work courses will be subject to re-approval under Social Work England's [2021 education and training standards](#).

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
Admissions			
1.1 Confirm on entry to the course, via a holistic/multi-dimensional assessment process, that applicants: i. have the potential to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards ii. can demonstrate that they have a good command of English iii. have the capability to meet academic standards; and iv. have the capability to use information and communication technology (ICT) methods and techniques to achieve course outcomes.	☒	☐	☐
1.2 Ensure that applicants' prior relevant experience is considered as part of the admissions processes.	☒	☐	☐
1.3 Ensure that employers, placement providers and people with lived experience of social work are involved in admissions processes.	☒	☐	☐
1.4 Ensure that the admissions processes assess the suitability of applicants, including in relation to their conduct, health and character. This includes criminal conviction checks.	☒	☐	☐
1.5 Ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.	☒	☐	☐
1.6 Ensure that the admissions process gives applicants the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a course. This will include	☐	☒	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
information about the professional standards, research interests and placement opportunities.			
Learning environment			
2.1 Ensure that students spend at least 200 days (including up to 30 skills days) gaining different experiences and learning in practice settings. Each student will have: i) placements in at least two practice settings providing contrasting experiences; and ii) a minimum of one placement taking place within a statutory setting, providing experience of sufficient numbers of statutory social work tasks involving high risk decision making and legal interventions.	☒	☐	☐
2.2 Provide practice learning opportunities that enable students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
2.3 Ensure that while on placements, students have appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload.	☒	☐	☐
2.4 Ensure that on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training.	☒	☐	☐
2.5 Ensure that students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to make sure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.	☒	☐	☐
2.6 Ensure that practice educators are on the register and that they have the relevant and current knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
2.7 Ensure that policies and processes, including for whistleblowing, are in place for students to challenge unsafe behaviours and cultures and organisational wrongdoing, and report concerns openly and safely without fear of adverse consequences.	☒	☐	☐
Course governance, management and quality			
3.1 Ensure courses are supported by a management and governance plan that includes the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability of individuals and governing groups in the delivery, resourcing and quality management of the course.	☒	☐	☐
3.2 Ensure that they have agreements with placement providers to provide education and training that meets the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards. This should include necessary consents and ensure placement providers have contingencies in place to deal with practice placement breakdown.	☒	☐	☐
3.3 Ensure that placement providers have the necessary policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk, and the support systems in place to underpin these.	☒	☐	☐
3.4 Ensure that employers are involved in elements of the course, including but not limited to the management and monitoring of courses and the allocation of practice education.	☒	☐	☐
3.5 Ensure that regular and effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems are in place, and that these involve	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
employers, people with lived experience of social work, and students.			
3.6 Ensure that the number of students admitted is aligned to a clear strategy, which includes consideration of local/regional placement capacity.	☒	☐	☐
3.7 Ensure that a lead social worker is in place to hold overall professional responsibility for the course. This person must be appropriately qualified and experienced, and on the register.	☒	☐	☐
3.8 Ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise, to deliver an effective course.	☒	☐	☐
3.9 Evaluate information about students' performance, progression and outcomes, such as the results of exams and assessments, by collecting, analysing and using student data, including data on equality and diversity.	☒	☐	☐
3.10 Ensure that educators are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice.	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum and assessment			
4.1 Ensure that the content, structure and delivery of the training is in accordance with relevant guidance and frameworks and is designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
4.2 Ensure that the views of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work are incorporated into the design,	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
ongoing development and review of the curriculum.			
4.3 Ensure that the course is designed in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion principles, and human rights and legislative frameworks.	☒	☐	☐
4.4 Ensure that the course is continually updated as a result of developments in research, legislation, government policy and best practice.	☒	☐	☐
4.5 Ensure that the integration of theory and practice is central to the course.	☒	☐	☐
4.6 Ensure that students are given the opportunity to work with, and learn from, other professions in order to support multidisciplinary working, including in integrated settings.	☒	☐	☐
4.7 Ensure that the number of hours spent in structured academic learning under the direction of an educator is sufficient to ensure that students meet the required level of competence.	☒	☐	☐
4.8 Ensure that the assessment strategy and design demonstrate that the assessments are robust, fair, reliable and valid, and that those who successfully complete the course have developed the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
4.9 Ensure that assessments are mapped to the curriculum and are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
4.10 Ensure students are provided with feedback throughout the course to support their ongoing development.	☒	☐	☐
4.11 Ensure assessments are carried out by people with appropriate expertise, and that external examiner(s) for the course are appropriately qualified and experienced and on the register.	☒	☐	☐
4.12 Ensure that there are systems to manage students' progression, with input from a range of people, to inform decisions about their progression including via direct observation of practice.	☒	☐	☐
4.13 Ensure that the course is designed to enable students to develop an evidence-informed approach to practice, underpinned by skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research and evaluation.	☒	☐	☐
Supporting students			
5.1 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their health and wellbeing including: i. confidential counselling services; ii. careers advice and support; and iii. occupational health services	☒	☐	☐
5.2 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their academic development including, for example, personal tutors.	☒	☐	☐
5.3 Ensure that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
5.4 Make supportive and reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments to enable them to progress through their course and meet the professional standards, in accordance with relevant legislation.	☒	☐	☐
5.5 Provide information to students about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker including information on requirements for continuing professional development.	☒	☐	☐
5.6 Provide information to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory.	☒	☐	☐
5.7 Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments.	☒	☐	☐
5.8 Ensure there is an effective process in place for students to make academic appeals.	☒	☐	☐
Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register			
6.1 The threshold entry route to the register will normally be a bachelor's degree with honours in social work.	☒	☐	☐

Regulator decision

192. Approved.