hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	London South Bank University
Programme name	PG Dip Social Work (Masters Exit Route Only)
Mode of delivery	Full time Work based learning
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	13 – 14 March 2013

Contents

Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Social worker' must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 6 June 2013. At the Committee meeting on 6 June 2013, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as the Social work profession (in England) came onto the register on 1 August 2012 and a decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing programmes from this profession. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered a BA (Hons) Social programme. The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	John Taylor (Social worker)
	Jane McLenachan (Social worker)
	Gordon Burrow (Chiropodist / podiatrist)
HCPC executive officers (in attendance)	Nicola Baker
HCPC observers	Benjamin Potter
	Louise Devlin
Proposed student numbers	50
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2013
Chair	Shushma Patel (London South Bank University)
Secretary	Sally Skillett-Moore (London South Bank University)
Members of the joint panel	Michelle Spruce (Internal Panel Member)
	Hazel Willis (Internal Panel Member)
	Jill Davey (External Panel Member)
	June Sadd (The College of Social Work)
	Gary Hickman (The College of Social Work)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

During the visit the HCPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 34 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 23 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors did not make any recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the information available to applicants to explain the application process and requirements of the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme documentation prior to the visit and were made aware of the entry requirements for the applicants to the programme. The programme team provided links to the prospectus page for the current MSc Social Work and to the education provider's generic admissions pages, but did not submit any further evidence of information provided to applicants. The programme specification states that applicants will need to meet academic entry criteria, as well as demonstrating a general suitability for social work. The latter requirement is assessed through checks with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), a self certification for medical fitness to practice, an interview and written tests. The prospectus page notes that students will be required to attend an interview, but does not detail what this will specifically be assessing and therefore what criteria applicants will have to meet. The visitors could not determine what additional information was provided to applicants wishing to complete the employment based route of the MA. In particular they could not determine information about the additional criteria that they will be required to meet (as specified in the programme specification, p12). The visitors could also not determine where any information was provided to applicants wishing to complete a PG Dip in Social Work and therefore if students could apply to this programme directly. The visitors therefore require further evidence that potential applicants to the programme will be given sufficient information they need around the entry requirements to make an informed decision about applying to the programme.

2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the information available to potential applicants, to include what will be required in terms of occupational health and criminal record checks.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme documentation prior to the visit and were made aware of the entry requirements for the applicants to the programme. The programme team provided links to the prospectus page and to the education provider's generic admissions pages, but did not submit any further evidence of information provided to applicants. The programme specification states that applicants will need to meet academic entry criteria, as well as demonstrating a general suitability for social work. The suitability is assessed through CRB checks, a self certification for medical fitness to practice, an interview and written tests. It was confirmed at the visit that the CRB check would be an enhanced CRB check (now the Disclosure and barring service (DBS)). However the documentation and information to students is not always consistent in specifying this. It was also confirmed with the programme team that the students will be required to pay for their enhanced DBS check. The visitors could not

identify where the information about these requirements are included on the prospectus webpage, or elsewhere, or where the requirement for the completion of a health declaration is made clear. The visitors therefore require further evidence that applicants to the programme will be given sufficient information about entry requirements and what will be required from them to successfully apply to the programme.

2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the information given to potential applicants around the requirements of placement providers.

Reason: Students are required to attend placements at various stages throughout the programme. In discussions with the programme team, practice placement providers and students, the visitors learned that the placement providers will frequently require students to pass an interview or other application procedures, prior to being accepted on their placement. The panel also noted that students going on placements may need to travel long distances to placements, and incur the costs of this. In discussions at the visit, the programme team also clarified that if a student fails to achieve the required learning outcomes during placement, this may have implications on their progression. This may result in their not having a full summer vacation as they work to demonstrate that they have met all of the criteria necessary to pass. The visitors therefore require further evidence that applicants are clearly informed of these additional requirements and potential costs of going on placements throughout the programme. In this way the visitors can be sure that applicants will be equipped to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the admissions procedures for implementing occupational health requirements.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme documentation prior to the visit. The entry requirements for the programme specify that students must complete a 'Self-declaration of suitability for social work' form. At the visit, the visitors enquired as to how the information from the self-declarations will feed into the established procedures for dealing with any occupational health issues. The programme team stated that declarations would be followed up with investigations as necessary. They also confirmed that there was an onus on the students to keep the education provider informed if there were any changes to their occupational health throughout the course of the programme. However, from the evidence provided, the visitors were unable to ascertain how the students are made aware of this, or what the formal procedures are for determining which declarations will need to be followed up. They therefore require further evidence that there is a robust process for dealing with the information given in the students' self-declaration of suitability for social work forms and follow up procedures.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the process for applying accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) to students transferring from other social work programmes.

Reason: The programme documentation states that students wishing to transfer from another social work programme will be considered on a case by case basis. The programme team expanded on this at the visit, explaining the education provider-wide policies in place for mapping credit and exemption for modules. Students will also be subject to the programme's selection procedures and an assessment to prove that they have met the required learning outcomes. The visitors were therefore content that robust procedures for applying AP(E)L are in place at education provider level. However, they were unclear about how the programme team utilises this process to ensure that students who are exempted from certain parts of this programme will be able to meet all of the standards of proficiency for social work. The visitors therefore require the programme team to revisit the documentation to ensure that the formal processes as articulated at the visit are clearly in place.

2.7 The admissions procedures must ensure that the education provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how the equality and diversity policies in relation to students are implemented and monitored.

Reason: At the visit, the programme team indicated that equality and diversity and widening participation matters are monitored by the education provider centrally by the admissions team. The visitors also noted from the documentation that training has been undertaken for social work academic staff to ensure equality and diversity in the interviewing process. However, the visitors did not see sufficient evidence as to how the programme team will implement the education provider's overarching equality and diversity policies in relation to students on the programme. The visitors could also not determine, from the evidence provided, what process is in place for collecting information on the application and monitoring of the policy. The visitors therefore require further evidence to determine how the equality and diversity policy is implemented and monitored to ensure this standard is being met.

3.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used.

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation to ensure the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation for social workers and contains accurate information about the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation prior to the visit. They noted areas across the resources available to students that were inaccurate, inconsistent or were not reflective of the current setting of regulation for social workers in England. There are various references throughout the documentation to the General Social Care Council (GSCC) where the HCPC should be referenced instead. Similarly there are also

references to documents and guidelines attributed to the HCPC, which are either incorrect or have not been updated since the change in regulatory body from the GSCC to the HCPC. For example, the 'Standards of Learning and Training' (Document E, p20), the 'HCPC (2009) Code of Conduct and Ethics' (Validation document, p26) and the HCPC/TCSW Code of Practice (2002) (Appendix A, Course Guide). At the visit, the 'Practice learning guide' was discussed. This document has not been effectively updated to reflect changes to the programme and in places is incomplete. The programme team clarified that they are in the process of drafting a pan-London practice learning document and hope to have it ready by the end of this academic year. The visitors therefore require further evidence that all programme resources and documentation will support student learning in all settings. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether this SET has been met. The visitors will need to see appropriate documentation; either the pan-London document or, if this is not complete, a contingency set of documentation to support placement learning to determine that the visitors can meet this SET.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence that, where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols are in place to obtain consent.

Reason: Through documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitors noted that consent was obtained verbally from students when participating as service users in practical teaching. The programme team clarified that they emphasise to students only to share what they feel comfortable with. However, the visitors were not presented with clear protocols to demonstrate that a formal system is in place for explicitly gaining students' informed consent before they participate as service users in practical teaching. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence of formal protocols for obtaining consent from students and for managing situations where students decline from participating in practical and clinical teaching.

3.15 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The programme team must revise the programme documentation to ensure that the attendance requirements are clearly identified, and provide further information as to the action taken for low attendance.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation prior to the visit, and were made aware that student attendance is mandatory for practice and academic modules. The programme's 'Course guide' states that students are expected to attend all lectures, and that an attendance level of 100% has been set for the programme. However, the 'Course guide' states that where attendance falls below 80%, the student may be required to retake a module "…if their academic performance is deemed to have been adversely affected by their low attendance". The visitors were unclear as to how this policy is implemented, and how it is determined whether a student's academic performance has been adversely affected. The documentation is clear around attendance at skills days and the processes in place for students who fall ill. On p31 of the 'Course guide' it states that absence of more than three placement days would later

need to be made up to make the full 100 placement days. However, the main attendance information in the 'Course guide' does not distinguish between the attendance requirements for theory modules and placements. The visitors articulated that this variance in information could be misleading to students; they could understand that an attendance of 80% on placement would be satisfactory. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the attendance policy, what will constitute low attendance in each setting, and what action will be taken in such cases. They also require evidence that this policy is sufficiently communicated to students on the programme.

3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Condition: The programme team must clarify in the documentation the processes that students will be subject to if there are concerns about their profession-related conduct.

Reason: In discussions at the visit and from the documentation, the visitors were made aware that there are processes in place which deal with concerns about students' profession-related conduct. The students are required to sign a 'Statement of professional conduct', and the 'Practice learning guide' demonstrates that students are expected to respect various codes of conduct (however, there are incorrect references to an 'HCPC Code of Practice'). However, the visitors were unable to determine a clear, definitive, formal procedure for dealing with issues around student professionalism. The visitors were also unclear about how the criteria for the referral of any issue to a disciplinary committee are communicated to all relevant parties. In discussions with the placement providers, it appeared that they were unclear as to the procedures or lines of reporting for concerns around students' profession-related conduct. Therefore the visitors require clear evidence of the formal procedure in place to deal with any issues around students' profession-related conduct. This evidence should also highlight explicit information for students and placement educators around this process and what criteria will be used to determine if the formal process must be implemented. In this way, the visitors can determine if this SET is met.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence that pinpoints specifically where each of the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for social workers are met throughout the programme.

Reason: The SOPs mapping document submitted with the documentation referenced a large number of different modules within the programme against each SOP. Due to the number of references given, the visitors were unable to determine where the programme curriculum would explicitly teach or address each SOP. The visitors noted that several elements of the documentation still referred to the previous regulator's frameworks, and they therefore need to be updated to explicitly reflect how and when the SOPs will be met. Discussion at the visit also indicated the programme team may amend the module descriptors' learning outcomes as part of the post visit process for the education provider or professional body. If changes are to be made to the descriptors the visitors will need to review them to ensure changes will not adversely affect the learning outcomes or how the programme ensures students can meet the SOPs upon completion of the programme. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence to demonstrate how and where the programme will

ensure that students will be able to meet the SOPs for social workers on graduation. The visitors also require the education provider to resubmit the programme module descriptors if changes are made which will affect the way in which SOPs are addressed.

4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence in the curriculum that students completing the programme understand the implications of the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: As evidence for this SET, the programme team referenced the course guide, module descriptors, practice learning guide and definitive guide. Apart from one reference to the HCPC guide for standards of conduct, performance and ethics, stating that it will influence admissions, there did not appear to be any references to where the standards of conduct, performance and ethics will be addressed in the programme. The visitors were unable to find evidence to outline where HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics were referred to in the curriculum and how the education provider ensures that students understand these standards. The visitors therefore require additional evidence to identify how the programme team will ensure that students on the programme understand the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics, and their implications for the regulation of social workers.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to the number and range of placements, the duration and timing of placements and how this supports the meeting of learning outcomes in the delivery of the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme documentation provided prior to the visit including the 'Practice learning guide', and the programme specification. There was information about the number of days students will spend on practice each year and what competencies (mapped against the professional body (PCF) framework, but not the SOPs) are expected to be met, and to what level, in each placement. The programme documentation also stated the type of practice placements that students might get in each placement. However, the information provided (particularly in the Practice learning guide) was fragmented and sometimes inconsistent, and it was difficult for the visitors to gain a clear understanding of the requirements relating to the placements that students must undertake. Discussions at the visit also highlighted that there was a flexible start date for the placements, which was accommodating for placement providers and may enable more places to be available to students. However, this may mean that students are not getting the same experience of doing the placements alongside relevant academic modules and could mean that students have to finish their placement late into the vacation period. This could have implications on their plans, as well as the costs associated with placements and the potential support available from the education provider. The visitors therefore require the education provider to clearly articulate the requirements relating to the number, timing, duration and range of practice placements that students must undertake in order to achieve the programme's learning outcomes. This should include information as to how the

education provider ensures that the standards of proficiency are met through the placement experience.

5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence as to the formal process for approval and monitoring of placements for the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that a 'Partnership agreement form' and the Quality Assurance for Practice Learning (QAPL) framework were used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around this process and its implications as to approving and monitoring placements. At the visit, the programme team articulated the effective system that is in place for sourcing, approving and auditing new placements, and the procedures for monitoring placements. It was confirmed that all placement opportunities are subject to appropriate education provider monitoring and support systems. The programme team also confirmed that they have a database which holds information as to the placements they currently engage with. This includes information such as the student profiles, experiences on placements, details of placement educators and levels of training. However, no evidence as to the policies or procedures in place to ensure that the education provider is approving and monitoring all placements were provided in the documentation. The visitors therefore require further documentation to demonstrate that there is an effective and robust system in place for the approval and monitoring of all placements.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must clarify how the equality and diversity policies will be implemented and monitored in relation to students on practice placements.

Reason: The 'Practice learning guide' was referenced as evidence as to how the programme will meet this SET. The guide, p102, states that "Disabled students will have a full assessment of their support needs before placement and any adjustments will be agreed and incorporated into the learning agreement…". However, the visitors were unable to determine from this guide or the partnership agreement documents, where the education provider would confirm with the practice provider that they have comprehensive equality and diversity policies in place. The visitors were unable to determine from the evidence provided, what mechanisms were in place to mitigate risk pertaining to equality and diversity matters in placement situations, and what procedures are in place if something were to go wrong. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that the education provider will ensure that equality and diversity policies in place at placement providers will be effectively implemented and monitored.

5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to their processes to ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at placement settings.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that a 'Partnership agreement form' and QAPL framework were used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around this process and its implications as to how they ensure that there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff on placements. The 'Partnership agreement form' states that agency signatories agree to "Provide sufficient suitably qualified and experienced staff to practice assess students on the programme". This indicates that the placement provider will determine what is deemed as adequate supervision for assessment. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that they have a database which holds information as to the placement educators available on placements. However, from the documentation, the visitors did not see sufficient evidence of the policies the education provider uses to ensure that there is an adequate number of staff, with the relevant qualifications and experience to support the students in placements. The visitors therefore require further evidence that clearly articulates the criteria for practice placement providers, in terms of the requirements for appropriately qualified and experienced staff, and the steps taken by the education provider to check that these criteria are met by each placement provider.

5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to their processes to ensure that practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to supervise and support social work students.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that a 'Partnership agreement form' and the QAPL framework were used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around this process and its implications as to how they ensure that practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. As noted in the condition against SET 5.6, the visitors did not see evidence of formal policies to ensure that suitable practice placement educators were in place, including whether they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. To ensure that this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to articulate clearly the criteria for placement educators, in terms of the required knowledge, skills and experience, and the steps taken to check that these criteria are met.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to their processes to ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that a 'Partnership agreement form' and the QAPL framework were used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around this process and its implementation in how they ensure that practice educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training. The SETs mapping referred to "…LSBU records of Practice Educator training…", though the visitors could find no evidence or further information around this in the documentation. The programme specification (p26) briefly details the various practice educator training that is in place and what level of qualification is required from the practice educators for each placement. In discussions at the visit, the placement providers emphasised how supportive the programme team were in terms of providing training for practice educators. The visitors acknowledged that there were several training opportunities and workshops provided by the education provider for placement educators but were unable to see how each placement educator's training is monitored, or how the requirements for training feed into partnership agreements with the providers. The visitors were also unclear about the steps taken to ensure that suitably trained placement educators were in place for students. To ensure that this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to articulate clearly the training requirements for placement educators and the processes in place for ensuring these requirements are met and monitored in practice.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to their processes to ensure that practice placement educators are appropriately registered.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that a 'Partnership agreement form' and the QAPL framework were used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around this process and its implications so as to how they ensure that practice educators are appropriately registered. The SETs mapping referred to a register but provided no further information. The programme specification (p26) briefly details what is required from the practice educators for each placement, stating that final placement students will be assessed by qualified social workers. However, first placement students are to be assessed by placement educators who are not HCPC registered. The visitors were subsequently unclear about the steps taken to ensure that suitable practice placement educators were in place, including whether they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. The programme team must therefore specify the arrangements that are in place to ensure that the placement educators are sufficiently able to support and assess social work students. To ensure that this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to articulate clearly the requirements for registration or other arrangements for placement educators at each placement, and the processes in place for ensuring these are implemented and monitored.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:
* the learning outcomes to be achieved;
* the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;
* expectations of professional conduct;

- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence that students are fully prepared for placements.

Reason: The visitors were directed to the 'Practice learning guide' as evidence that this SET will be met. At the visit, the 'Practice learning guide' was discussed with the programme team and it was highlighted that it has not been effectively updated to reflect changes to the programme and in places is incomplete. The programme team clarified that they are in the process of drafting a pan-London practice learning document and hope to have it ready by the end of this academic year. The visitors will need to see appropriate documentation; either the pan-London document or, if this is not complete, a contingency set of documentation to support placement learning. At the visit, the programme team outlined the 'Readiness for practice' module which has to be passed by students prior to commencing placements. The visitors heard how this module will ensure that students are equipped with the theoretical foundations for placement settings. However, they were not clear as to how the students will be informed of placement timings and durations, expectations for professional conduct, learning outcomes, assessments and lines of responsibility. As noted in the conditions against SET 4.1 and 6.1, the information provided to students regarding assessments and learning outcomes has not been updated to reflect links the HCPC's SOPs. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate how the information provided to students will provide them with sufficient understanding of the placement timings and durations, expectations for professional conduct, learning outcomes, assessments and lines of responsibility. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether this SET has been met.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:
- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The programme team must further evidence how they will ensure that placement educators and placement providers are fully prepared for placements.

Reason: The visitors were directed to the 'Practice learning guide' as evidence that this SET will be met. At the visit, the 'Practice learning guide' was discussed with the programme team and it was highlighted that it has not been effectively updated to reflect changes to the programme and in places is incomplete. The visitors noted that the practice elements of the programme are pass or fail, as decided by the practice placement educator, in liaison with the programme team's link tutor. However, the visitors were unable to determine from the documentation how the practice placement educators would be sufficiently informed as to the criteria for passing students so as to make this assessment. The programme team clarified that they are in the process of

drafting a pan-London practice learning document and hope to have it ready by the end of this academic year. The visitors will need to see appropriate documentation to support placement educators in placement teaching and assessing. The visitors did not see sufficient evidence to demonstrate how the current documentation, communication and training provided to placement educators will provide them with sufficient understanding of the placements. They therefore require further evidence as to the steps taken to ensure that placement providers and educators will have a sufficient understanding of placement timings and durations, expectations for professional conduct, learning outcomes, assessments and lines of responsibility.

5.12 Learning, teaching and supervision must encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to how they will ensure that the learning, teaching and supervision on placements will encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Reason: The visitors were directed to the module descriptors for assessment of practice learning as evidence for this SET. This documentary evidence does not indicate how the programme team will ensure that all practice experiences will encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct. At the visit, the programme team articulated the system that is in place for auditing and monitoring placements. It was confirmed that all placement opportunities are managed through the appropriate systems at the education provider. The programme team also confirmed that they have a database which holds key information as to the placements they currently engage with. However, no evidence was provided as to the steps the education provider will take, in auditing placements, to ensure that learning and teaching on placements will effectively encourage the expected qualities as detailed in this SET. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that the practice learning, teaching and supervision will encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence that the assessment strategy will ensure that a student graduating from the programme will have met all of the SOPs for social workers.

Reason: The SOPs mapping document submitted with the documentation referenced a large number of different modules within the programme against each SOP. Due to the number of references given, the visitors were unable to determine where the programme curriculum would explicitly assess each SOP. The visitors noted that some of the documentation still referred to the previous regulator's frameworks, and they therefore need to be updated to explicitly reflect how and when the SOPs will be met and assessed. The visitors questioned the placement educators and programme team around the criteria for assessment of students in practice. It was noted that the practice elements of the programme are pass or fail, as decided by the practice placement educator, in liaison with the education provider's link tutor. However, the visitors were unable to determine from the documentation how the placement educators would be suitably informed as to the criteria for passing students so as to make this assessment.

The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence to demonstrate how and when the programme will assess students to ensure that they will be able to meet each of the SOPs for social workers on completion of the programme.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence that the assessment methods employed will measure the learning outcomes.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme module descriptors prior to the visit. They noted that for several modules, the assessments employed did not appear to measure the learning outcomes as specified in the relevant section of the module descriptor. One example of this can be found in the 'Human growth and development' module (Module descriptors document p8), where the visitors noted that a child observation presentation would be used to assess the whole module. The visitors could not determine how the assessment activity in this module will sufficiently measure the learning outcomes outlined in respect of the full human lifespan. For this reason, the visitors were unable to determine how this SET will be met. They therefore require the programme team to revisit the documentation for the modules to ensure that the assessment methods employed will appropriately measure all of the learning outcomes.

6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The education provider must provide information as to the marking procedures and internal moderation processes in place to ensure that appropriate standards of assessment are met.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the assessment strategy as outlined in the programme documentation. The visitors were satisfied that a robust system for the appointment and use of external examiners was in place. However, they were unable to determine from the documentation provided, the internal moderation systems that were in place for ensuring consistency in marking. The 'Validation document' (p31) states that "All scripts are marked and moderated in accordance with University regulations". However, no further information as to the education provider's regulations and their implementation within the programme's marking procedures was provided. The visitors therefore require further evidence as to the marking procedures and internal moderation processes in place to ensure that appropriate standards of assessment are met.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The programme team must clarify the requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme, to include the arrangements and timings for resits and reassessment, particularly for placements.

Reason: The documentation states that the programme will 'normally' follow the 'University Academic Regulations'. However, no further information was provided as to the education provider's regulations and their implications for progression of students throughout the programme. There are details as to protocols specific to pre-registration social work programmes in the programme specification and course guide. These specify that students will have one attempt at retrieval if they fail the 'Readiness for

Practice' module, and will not be permitted to progress to the practice learning if they have not passed. They also specify that any failed practice elements will need to be reassessed, and that students have a maximum of three placements for the whole programme. However, there is no information as to when academic or practical reassessments will take place, whether this will continue outside the academic year, and how this will fit in with examination boards at the education provider. There is also limited information as to the details of reassessment for students failing placements, such as whether this will be in the same placement setting. As such the visitors could not determine, from the documentation, the requirements for progression and achievement, in practice or academic elements within the programme. They were also not clear about how and when reassessments would be undertaken, and how this will fit in with the education provider's assessment boards. The visitors therefore require further evidence that requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme are clearly specified to students.

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