

Education quality assurance – Course change review report

Report date:

08/09/2020

Contents

Documentary review details	1
About the review	1
Findings	2
Conclusions	3
Appendix 1 – Outcome by standard	4

Documentary review details

Inspection ID	BCU331
Course provider	Birmingham City university
Validating body (if different)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Course name	BSc (Hons) Social Work
Mode of study	Full time
Proposed first intake	14/09/2020
Maximum student cohort	120
Review type	Course change
Review team	Sophia Hunt - Lay Inspector Graeme Currie – Registrant Inspector
Review team recommendation	Approval
Outcome	Approved

About the review

Birmingham City University are looking to increase their September 2020 cohort by an additional 30 students for this intake only, taking the cohort from 90 to 120 students. The university believes that this increase is an effect from the Covid-19 pandemic where health and social care professions have been shown to not only be helpful professions but also secure ones. The university has committed to this increase for the 3 year duration of this cohort but not beyond, by providing additional funding and resources for fixed contracts.

A secondary change that the university is making is a change to their UCAS tariff points, from 112 to 120 from September 2021. A condition of their membership to the West Midlands Teaching Partnership (WMTP) is to raise the standards across the sector and making this

change will allow them to meet that condition. By making this change the university predicts a natural decline in applications from September 2021 meaning that they can more easily revert to their original cohort of 90 students.

Findings

The university has submitted a detailed strategic plan and supporting evidence on how they will manage the increase in numbers. The additional students have all gone through the university's full interview and admissions process which includes a written task, group work and an interview involving people with lived experience of social work.

Resources have been reviewed by the university and additional posts and funding are as follows:

- a new full-time lecturer on a two-year contract has been advertised, with interviews scheduled for 4 September for this position.
- existing teaching staff have had teaching hours increased
- three additional visiting lecturers recruited due to a £3500 increase to the allocated budget.
- Practice Partnership Lead post created to work alongside the Placement Co-ordinator to increase placement capacity.
- Additional Practice Tutor identified.
- off-site practice educators will also receive an increase in their daily rate.

The inspectors are satisfied that there are adequate numbers of staff and resources to support the additional 30 students for the duration of their course.

The university made the WMTP aware of the plans increase to their cohort for this academic session early on and will continue to work with and through them to manage the increased requirements for placements as well as with individual agencies on a one to one basis. As part of the management of placements the university is looking to move statutory placements to final year students only for academic sessions 2021 and 2022, freeing up approximately 30 places from first year students.

It is recognised that this means additional work in obtaining increased placement numbers in the voluntary and private sectors and have evidence how the placement co-ordinator will work to ensure these are fully in place for February 2022, which is when these additional students will go on their first placement.

The above plans along with the additional resources of the practice tutor and additional visiting lecturers, who will increase staffing availability as well as increase placements satisfy the inspectors that there will be enough additional placements for the increased student numbers and enough practice tutors, educators and supervisors to support them.

Therefore, the inspectors are satisfied that the proposed changes continue to meet Social Work England's Education and Training Standards and recommend that the changes be approved.

Conclusions

The inspectors are recommending approval.

Appendix 1 – Outcome by standard

Standards impacted by the change	Met	Met with conditions	Met with recommendations
Admissions			
2.1 The admissions process will 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 course.	☒	☐	☐
2.2 The selection and entry criteria will include appropriate academic and professional entry standards.	☒	☐	☐
Course governance, management and leadership			
3.1 The course will be sustainable and fit for purpose.	☒	☐	☐
3.5 There will be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and placement providers.	☒	☐	☐
3.6 There will be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice based learning for all students.	☒	☐	☐
3.9 There will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective course.	☒	☐	☐
3.13 There will be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of students in all settings.	☒	☐	☐
Practice based learning			
5.1 Practice based learning will be integral to the course	☒	☐	☐

Standards impacted by the change	Met	Met with conditions	Met with recommendations
5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice based learning will support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
5.3 The education provider will maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice based learning.	☒	☐	☐
5.5 There will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice based learning.	☒	☐	☐
6.4 Assessment policies will clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the course.	☒	☐	☐
6.5 The assessment methods used will be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.	☒	☐	☐
6.6 The education provider will ensure that at least one external examiner for the course is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the register.	☒	☐	☐