

Course provider:
Anglia Ruskin University

Course approval:
BA (Hons) Social Work Degree
Apprenticeship

Report date:	10 December 2021
Inspector recommendation:	Approval with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	28 February 2022
Date conditions met and approved:	24 May 2022

Contents

Introduction	3
What we do	3
Summary	5
Language	5
Inspection.....	6
Meetings with students	6
Meetings with course staff.....	6
Meeting with people with lived experience of social work	6
Meetings with external stakeholders	6
Findings	7
Standard one: Admissions.....	7
Standard two: Learning environment	10
Standard three: Course governance, management and quality.....	12
Standard five: Supporting students	19
Standard six: Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register	21
Proposed outcome.....	22
Conditions	22
Recommendations	23
Annex 1: Education and training standards summary.....	25
Regulator decision	31
Annex 2: Meeting of conditions.....	32
Findings	Error! Bookmark not defined.

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.
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.
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.

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

10. Once the inspectors and officer are satisfied that an inspection can take place, this is usually undertaken over a two to three-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 standards 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

Inspection findings from Anglia Ruskin University course reapproval

11. Anglia Ruskin University ('the education provider') are seeking reapproval for their BA Social Work Degree Apprenticeship course delivered at both the Cambridge and Chelmsford sites. Social Work England are considering the approval against the Education and Training Standards 2021.

Inspection ID	ARUR1
Course provider	Anglia Ruskin University
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship
Date of inspection	12 th - 15 th October 2021
Mode of study	Full Time
Proposed first intake	N/A
Maximum student cohort	30
Inspection team	Rebecca Mulvaney Education Quality Assurance Officer Helen Challis Education Quality Assurance Officer Chris Stogdon (Registrant Inspector) Aidan Worsley (Lay Inspector)
Inspector recommendation	Approval with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

12. In this document we describe Anglia Ruskin University as 'the education provider' or 'the university' and we describe the BA Social Work Degree Apprenticeship as 'the course'.

Inspection

13. A remote inspection took place from 12th to 15th October 2021. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, senior managers, employers, practice educators and people with lived experience of social work involved in the course.

14. 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

15. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

16. The inspection team met with a group of apprenticeship students currently enrolled on the course. Discussions with the inspection team included the students' experience of applying for their courses, their overall experience of their courses, teaching and learning, preparation for placement, student support services, awareness of the regulatory body and the resourcing of their courses.

17. The inspection team also encouraged the students to reflect on the feedback they and their fellow students had given to the university and whether they felt it had been valued and acted upon.

Meetings with course staff

18. During the inspection the inspection team met with university staff members from the social work course team, members of staff from the Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine and Social Care (HEMS) and several central teams within the university.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

19. The inspection team met with the Service User and Carer Involvement (SUCI) group, who are people with lived experience of social work and are involved in the design and delivery of the course.

Meetings with external stakeholders

20. The inspection team met with representatives from the Greater Cambridgeshire Social Work Teaching Partnership (GCSWTP), practice educators and staff members representing apprenticeship employer partners including Essex, Southend and Thurrock County Councils.

Findings

21. In this section we set out the inspectors' findings in relation to whether the university 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

22. The inspection team were able to meet with key members of staff involved in the admissions process which allowed them to triangulate the documentary evidence they had received prior to inspection and gain an overview of the multiple stages that an applicant would have to progress through to be offered a place on the course. The inspection team also met with apprenticeship students who gave examples of the various tasks involved in the admissions process for their course, including a written task and an interview.

23. At inspection, the inspection team further explored the role of employer partners in the initial selection of apprenticeship candidates to ensure that the education provider had sufficient oversight of these processes. The inspection team were assured by the information provided prior to inspection and through their discussions with key stakeholders involved in the admissions process that this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

24. The inspection team were satisfied that the admissions process includes the consideration of applicant's prior relevant experience, for example via the application form and the interview process, and that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

25. The inspection team were satisfied that the admissions process routinely involves employers, people with lived experience of social work and social work practitioners in both the design and delivery of admissions activities. This was further explored with employer partners to establish whether stakeholders were involved in the initial selection process for apprentices.

26. However, the inspection team were not assured by the evidence provided that the training offered for those carrying out interviews, including training for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, was comprehensive or mandatory. Examples of opportunities for people with lived experience of social work to shadow selection day exercises and interviews were provided, but it was understood that not all stakeholders were invited to attend these sessions.

27. Therefore, following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 1.3 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. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found [in the conditions table](#).

Standard 1.4

28. The inspection team were assured by the documentary evidence provided and their discussions with members of the admissions team that enhanced criminal record checks are carried out at the point of application by the university. Likewise, examples were provided which illustrated when and how successful applicants and newly enrolled students would be encouraged to disclose information which could have an impact on their health or suitability for social work. These included signposting care experienced students to a dedicated Care Experienced Group within the university and helping students with health conditions or impairments to access the relevant disability support services.

29. However, the inspection team was not assured by the evidence provided that there is currently a process through which students make a formal and documented declaration of suitability for social work at the point of application or enrolment onto the course. In discussions with the course team, they reflected that historically there had been an additional form addressing suitability for social work which had not been used for recent intakes. The inspection team agreed that the reintroduction of a form would be necessary in order for the education provider to meet this standard.

30. Therefore, following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 1.4 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. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found [in the conditions table](#).

Standard 1.5

31. The inspection team were able to hear examples of how apprenticeship students who required reasonable adjustments or additional help to navigate the admissions process were

supported by university staff from both within the social work team and the wider institution. Examples were provided of how staff had adapted the admissions process in specific circumstances to accommodate applicants with a range of impairments and health conditions. Specifically in relation to the apprenticeship, this process had sometimes involved helping applicants to express their need for additional support for the first time after spending many years in employment, for example in relation to new diagnosis of dyslexia. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

32. However, the inspection team also noted that there was a difference between the demographics of the apprenticeship cohort and other cohorts of social work students at the university in terms of racial and ethnic diversity. This was explored with employer partners who did not believe that the lack of diversity in the apprenticeship cohorts was unusual and felt that the cohorts reflected the current demographics of their workforce. The inspection team were not satisfied by this account and wanted to explore this further with course staff but were made aware that at a course level within the university staff do not have access to equality, diversity and inclusion data about their cohorts as this information is held centrally.

33. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a recommendation in relation to Standard 1.5. We recommend that the education provider consider how they will improve the monitoring, analysis and interrogation of equality, diversity and inclusion data in relation to social work cohorts in order to ensure that relevant policies in relation to applicants are being effectively implemented and monitored, particularly in relation to courses involving external partnerships.

Standard 1.6

34. The inspection team were broadly satisfied that the information provided to applicants via the admissions process was clear, accessible, and comprehensive. However, it was noted that not all messaging on the university's website reflects the fact that completion of a qualifying social work course leads to a successful student being *eligible* to register with Social Work England, and not automatic registration.

35. Therefore, 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. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found [in the conditions table](#).

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

36. The inspection team agreed based on the documentary evidence provided, and from detailed discussions with the placement team and employer partners, that all students would be able to access suitable practice-based learning opportunities totalling the required number of placement days. This includes 30 skills days, an initial placement of 70 days followed by a final placement of 100 days, in two contrasting settings as agreed with the employer partners for the apprenticeship, who are the placement providers. In discussions with students, it was affirmed that the apprenticeship course ensures sufficient contrast and that both placements are based within a statutory setting. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

37. The inspection team found no evidence to indicate that practice learning opportunities would not enable students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the Professional Standards and were assured by the processes the university had put in place to assess the suitability of placement settings.

38. The inspection team were assured by the confidence of students who, with the support of university staff, were prepared to challenge their employers if they felt that they were not being provided with the practice learning opportunities that they needed to develop and meet the professional standards. There was a clear understanding across staff and employer partners that apprentices were not only staff but also students, and that their learning was the priority across the course of their apprenticeship. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

39. The inspection team were able to review the Learning Agreement Form, Placement Agreement Form and Placement Guide which provided evidence of how students would be inducted, supervised, and supported during their practice placements. During the inspection week, meetings with Practice Educators and students provided the inspection team with an opportunity to explore this area in further detail and were satisfied by the work being undertaken by the Placement Team to ensure that these expectations were met across the broad range of placement providers working in partnership with the university. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

40. Through the documentary evidence provided the inspection team were able to understand that expectations around students' responsibilities on placement are agreed

and set through a joint meeting with the student, Practice Educator and Practice Tutor to ensure that they are appropriate. This is documented in the Learning Agreement, Placement Agreement and information about this process was further documented in the Placement Guide.

41. Further detail was provided of the matching of placements for apprenticeship students, to ensure that apprentices with a background in adult social care were able to gain experience in a children and families setting, and vice versa. There was suitable consideration of the need to support students who were transferring between different work settings to ensure that they had time to adapt to new teams and new contexts. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

42. In preparation for inspection, the inspection team were able to review the Module Descriptor for the Standards and Skills for Practice 1 module which all social work students must pass prior to their first practice placement. This included detail of the taught content of the module, learning outcomes and the required assessments, mapped against the Professional Standards. At inspection the SUCI Group provided further evidence of their involvement in the ongoing design and delivery of the module, including engaging in role plays with students and providing feedback in relation to their communication skills. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

43. The inspection team were keen to establish how the education provider would ensure that Practice Educators were on the register and whether there was a process in place to check this on an ongoing basis. This was discussed with the Practice Learning Team and Practice Educators, who affirmed that this information is requested on an annual basis and recorded by the team in a spreadsheet which can then be used to identify if a Practice Educator's registration status has changed. This tool is also used to track engagement in workshops and training sessions. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

The inspection team were able to review the guidance and policies provided to students on whistleblowing and raising concerns around organisational wrongdoing within the Placement Guide, which they felt were appropriate and clear. This was further explored during the inspection in meetings with the Course Team and students, who were able to provide examples of this topic being discussed as part of their preparation for practice. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

44. The inspection team were able to review several documents in relation to the governance and management of the course, including terms of reference and minutes from various internal committees, staff CVs and an organisational chart detailing the roles and responsibilities of staff. From the documentary evidence provided it was established that the current Deputy Heads of Schools and Course Leaders are registered social workers with recent and relevant experience of social work practice.

At inspection a presentation was delivered by senior staff which explored the structures and processes within the Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine and Social Care (HEMS) and how these impact, shape and inform the delivery of social work education at the university. This provided the inspection team the opportunity to further understand the quality assurance structures and processes within the university, in addition to the roles and responsibilities of senior staff in relation to decision making. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

45. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met and that the university has the necessary agreements in place to ensure that employer partners are providing placements which meet the required standards. However, in meetings with Practice Educators the inspection team observed some dissatisfaction in relation to the communication from the university specifically in relation to the outcomes of Practice Assessment Panels.

46. In the case of placement breakdown, this then left the Practice Educator in a position where they felt that the university had not kept them satisfactorily updated as to the students' progress. This was discussed with the Practice Learning Team and Deputy Heads of Schools who confirmed that although representatives from employer partners (inclusive of Practice Educators) are invited to attend the Practice Assessment Panels, information is not routinely shared with Practice Educators in relation to the outcomes for individual students, but that it would be possible to improve this communication loop.

47. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a recommendation in relation to Standard 3.2. We recommend that the education provider further consider how Practice Educators are engaged in and informed of the outcomes of Practice Assessment Panels, such as the outcomes for the individual students that they have supervised and assessed on placement.

Standard 3.3

48. Prior to inspection, the documentary evidence provided in the form of the Learning Agreement and Placement Agreement indicated that the university were routinely making students and Practice Educators aware of the policies and procedures that should be in place within the placement environment. The education provider described that these policies and procedures were checked as part of an annual audit process overseen by the Placement Team.

49. At inspection this was explored further in meetings with the Practice Learning Team, Practice Educators and employer partners who were able to assure inspectors that checks of relevant policies and procedures were in place. The inspection team were also able to further understand the role of the Practice Tutor in ensuring that support systems are in place for students and that Practice Educators are appropriately prepared and supported should a student encounter issues in relation to their health or wellbeing. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

50. During inspection, the inspection team met with representatives from the Greater Cambridgeshire Social Work Teaching Partnership (GCSWTP) to further discuss how employer partners work with the university and the structures in place for regular meetings, ongoing contact, and engagement. Additional meetings were held so that the inspection team could talk with a broader range of employer partners, including representatives from local authorities, schools, and private and voluntary sector organisations.

51. Employer partners reported examples of engagement with the Practice Learning Team in relation to placement allocation, the provision of training and support by the university for Practice Educators, and opportunities to get involved with the curriculum development of courses beyond the formal structures of the teaching partnership. This affirmed the evidence provided prior to inspection by the university, which described monthly meetings with employer partners and regular, active engagement by course staff in the regional Social Work Area Network hosted by Skills for Care.

52. For the apprenticeship specifically, the inspection team were able to meet with employer representatives from Essex, Southend and Thurrock Councils who all reported positive working relationships with the education provider. These relationships are facilitated through formal monthly meetings and more informal, relationship-based contact between staff who feel comfortable approaching one another if there are any matters to discuss. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

53. The inspection team were able to meet with staff involved in the internal quality management of university courses, to better understand the annual and ongoing audit/feedback mechanisms in place for both taught elements of the course and practice

placements. From conversations with stakeholders such as employers, students, and people with lived experience of social work, the inspection team were able to identify how stakeholder feedback is included in these monitoring and evaluation processes. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

54. The inspection team were able to identify that student numbers for the course were considered and informed by meetings with employer partners, particularly Essex, Southend, and Thurrock Councils. The university described that when challenging circumstances arise in relation to student recruitment or sudden changes in workforce pressures, solutions are agreed and implemented jointly between the Practice Learning Team and representatives from local authority Workforce Development Teams. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

55. It was confirmed prior to inspection that the Deputy Heads of Schools and Course Leaders for social work at the university are all registered social workers with relevant qualifications and experience, including experience of recent social work practice. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

56. The inspection team were able to review the CVs of staff within the course team and discussed the resourcing of social work provision, across campuses and routes, with senior managers during the inspection week. This included discussion of how resourcing would be linked with student numbers, in addition to further understanding how associate teaching staff were used across provision to support the substantive staff team or provide suitable contingency in the event of staff sickness or absence.

57. The education provider demonstrated that previous advice from Social Work England in relation to the education and training standards had informed decision making in relation to course resourcing, leading to the recruitment of an additional three members of academic staff and the permanent expansion of the Practice Learning Team to ensure stability and maintain the quality of support that staff can provide to social work students. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

58. The inspection team were able to review evidence in relation to structures such as institutional Annual Monitoring, Staff Student Liaison Committees, Module Evaluations and Assessment Panels which demonstrated that the university was routinely collecting and evaluating information about students' performance and progression. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

59. The inspection team were provided with a comprehensive overview of the opportunities for staff to engage in research, undertake relevant training, engage in continuous professional development, and to spend time back in practice. This was evident in meetings with the Course Team, who were able to reference and speak about the activity that they were involved in undertaking in relation to professional practice. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

60. The inspection team were able to review Module Descriptors and a Programme Specification mapped to the professional standards and agreed that there was clear evidence of how the course had been designed and structured to prepare students for professional practice as social workers. This was further evidenced by students articulating their understanding of the Professional Standards in discussions with the inspection team, who were able to hear examples of how the standards are taught and embedded throughout the course in academic sessions, in reflective assessment and on placement. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Standard 4.2

61. The inspection team were assured by the documentary evidence provided and in meetings with stakeholder groups that people with lived experience of social work are involved in activities throughout the course as part of a service user and carer group (SUCI Group). This includes involvement in the admissions process and in the design and the delivery of the Skills and Standards for Practice 1 module. It was clear from discussions with people with lived experience involved in the course that they are supported to participate and highly engaged in offering their time, ideas and feedback as a group in relation to the activities that they undertake.

62. However, the inspection team did not identify evidence of people with lived experience of social work having membership of committees or boards, or being included collaboratively and collegially in course design and development activity across the wider social work team. The people with lived experience of social work that the inspection team met with described how they would like to be involved at a more strategic level which they felt would allow for greater input and insight into the course.. Overall, the inspection team concluded that members of the SUCI Group felt that their involvement was a work in progress and that they were not yet being treated as equal partners in the design, development and review of the curriculum.

63. The inspection team heard that there was a reliance on a single member of staff to facilitate the involvement of people with lived experience in social work education at the university whose work was considered integral to the continued engagement of the current membership of the SUCI Group. The inspection team noted that although the group was appreciative of the dedicated support provided, they also appeared to feel isolated from the wider course team and structures within the university. It was clear that members of the SUCI Group had not been offered access to some of the resources or development opportunities which might be offered to university staff or students, such as access to training courses or use of university facilities and services.

64. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 4.2 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. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found [in the conditions table](#).

Standard 4.3

65. The inspection team found evidence that demonstrated that the course had been designed in accordance with appropriate equality, diversity and inclusion principles, human rights and legislative frameworks. They agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

66. The inspection team were able to explore how recent developments in research, legislation, government policy, and best practice have informed the design of the curriculum and course content. This was reflected in documentation evidencing a recent curriculum review of all qualifying social work provision at the university, during which updates had been made to course content, reading lists and assessments. Examples were provided by the Course Team of how they embed current practitioners and case studies of current practice throughout taught modules, and of the opportunities available for academic staff to keep up-to-date with trends and developments in local practice environments. The inspection team was satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

67. The inspection team were able to review Module Descriptors for the course and an Assessment Strategy which had been mapped against the required learning outcomes. This evidence illustrated where and how theory and practice is explored and taught across the curriculum. This was also discussed with the course team and students during the inspection. The inspection team felt that the course team demonstrated clear integration of theory and practice throughout the course through their own engagement and research in local practice environments, the proactive involvement of current practitioners in teaching and learning. The inspection team was satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

68. The inspection team reviewed such documentary evidence which demonstrated opportunities for multi-disciplinary learning in course modules, such as part of the university-wide Ruskin module which was designed to bring students from different disciplines together in taught sessions and activities. At inspection the course team further described the work of the Interprofessional Learning working group and the newly appointed professional lead for inter-professional working, who is responsible for embedding multi-disciplinary teaching and learning activity across the Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine and Social Care (HEMS). The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

69. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team were able to examine Module Descriptors, the Social Work Delivery Plan, and an Assessment Schedule which detailed how structured academic learning and assessment was spread across the academic year. However, the inspection team were not able to review a timetable for the course which would demonstrate the structure of academic learning, including the hours spent under the director of an educator, on a weekly basis or within each semester of the course. This information would have enabled the inspection team to understand the balance of types of learning within the course, such as time spent in the classroom on campus in contrast with time spent undertaking blended, or distance learning. The inspection team agreed that they would require further evidence in order to be assured that this standard was met.

70. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 4.7 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. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found [in the conditions table](#).

Standard 4.8

71. With regard to assessment and progression, the inspection team were able to review the Module Definition Forms assessments mapped against the curriculum, learning outcomes, PCF and relevant Social Work England standards, the university's Senate Code of Practice on the Assessment of Students policies and the Assessment strategy. These were discussed with students during inspection who provided examples of how the range of different assessment methods would test different skills and competencies. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

72. The inspection team were provided with an Assessment Schedule, Assessment Strategy and Module Definition Forms which outlined a range of assessment strategies matched to module content appropriate for an undergraduate social work course. Further detail on progression requirements and assessment was provided through discussion with students and the course team. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

73. When meeting with students, the inspection team heard how about the feedback they had received helped their progression and access to markers. Students also spoke about the assistance available to enable their progression both during the module delivery and access to support services to help with study skills and their academic progression. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

74. Documentary evidence considered by the inspection team included Staff CVs, External Examiner CVs, the university's Academic Regulation - External Examining and Senate Code of Practice for External Examining. From the evidence provided the inspection team was assured that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

75. From the documentary evidence provided, the Social Work Practice Placement Portfolio the assessment strategy, and the university's Academic Regulations, the inspection panel were assured that there were clear mechanisms regarding student progression that included direct observation by staff, practice educators and people with lived experience of social work. In addition, through discussions with the course team, employer and practice educators, the inspection team was assured that this standard was met.

76. However, during the meeting with the Practice Educators, it became evident that there was some dissatisfaction that the outcomes of Practice Assessment Panels (PAPs) were not being routinely communicated to Practice Educators who felt that they were often uninformed about whether their students had passed or failed their practice placements. Although the inspection team heard that there were opportunities for Practice Educators to observe the PAPs, it would not be possible or practical for all involved to accept this opportunity.

77. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a recommendation in relation to Standard 4.12. The inspection team recommends that the education provider

consider how feedback in relation to student assessment and progression is provided to Practice Educators so that they feel more involved in these processes.

Standard 4.13

78. Evidence for this standard was provided across the learning outcomes and Module Descriptor for the Applied Social Work Theory module prior to inspection. However, the inspection team further explored this topic in discussions with the course team and students. From this the inspection team was assured that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

79. The inspection team were provided with a Welcome Week timetable prior to inspection which outlined how students are introduced to the support services available across the institution, such as those provided by the Students' Union, Counselling and Wellbeing services, and Study Skills support. Meetings with representatives from these services during the inspection week assured inspectors that support is accessible to students across campuses and while they are on placement as many resources, workshops and 1-2-1 appointments are available both onsite and online. It was confirmed that apprenticeship students have equal access to support and resources compared to students on other routes, which they can access during their day on campus/at university or remotely.

80. Further meetings with the Course Team enabled inspectors to explore the role of the Personal Development Tutor, who is available to support students with their personal and professional development as well as their health and wellbeing throughout their time at university. The inspection team heard that where possible students will have the same Personal Development Tutor across each year of their course, from enrolment to graduation, to help grow and embed a supportive pastoral relationship. All apprenticeship students have the same Personal Development Tutor as the education provider identified that due to the specific nature and demographics of this cohort, having a single point of contact would be the best way to ensure consistency and develop an understanding of the issues which are more likely to impact apprentices, and how to manage them.

81. The provision of responsive and effective support services was affirmed in discussions with students, who felt that even through the disruption and difficult circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic staff had been available to support their studies and signpost them to relevant specialist services. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

82. From the evidence provided the inspection team were able to understand the range of resources in place to support students' academic development, including the sessions provided Study Skills service and the ongoing advice and guidance offered by their Personal Development Tutor. In discussions with students' examples were given of the role of the student Social Work Society in providing informal opportunities for peer support, engagement in the local community and mentoring, which had built camaraderie between cohorts of future social work professionals.

83. Situated within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the inspection team also heard examples from students and Practice Educators of how individuals had been supported through periods of unplanned leave due to bereavement, sickness and unforeseen changes to their personal circumstances. Overall, the inspection team felt that the support provided by the university and the course team to students in difficult circumstances had been responsive, constructive and tailored to consider people's individual needs or requirements. The inspection team were assured by the evidence provided that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

84. Based on the documentary evidence provided, such as the Lapses in Professionalism Policy, and discussions with stakeholders such as Practice Educators, employer partners and students, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

85. Prior to inspection, the inspection team agreed based on the documentary evidence provided that the university was likely well equipped to meet the diverse needs of students who may require reasonable adjustments due to health conditions or impairments. This was tested at inspection as the Course Team and Practice Educators were asked to provide examples of how and why reasonable adjustments had been made, one such example included the support put in place for a student with a visual impairment, which required adjustment to both taught elements of the course and the placement environment. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

86. During the inspection week the inspection team was able to review the online information available to students via the virtual learning environment and discuss whether students felt that they had been provided with all of the information they needed in relation to their course. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

87. The inspection team were satisfied by the documentary evidence provided that students would be made aware of which parts of the course were mandatory and the consequences of missing mandatory parts of the course. Further to attendance monitoring, student engagement with their learning, both in taught sessions and self-directed learning in their own time, is tracked via a student engagement dashboard which can be accessed by a students' Personal Development Tutor. This helps to identify students who may be struggling so that the university can provide additional support.

88. There is a separate system dedicated for the logging and monitoring of apprenticeship students' time spent learning 'on the job' and 'off the job' which is required by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to ensure that these students have protected time for their academic learning and professional development. In discussions with students the inspection team did not identify any concerns from students that their time 'off the job' was insufficient to enable their academic development. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

89. From the documentary evidence provided and discussions with members of the course team and current students, the inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

90. The inspection team were able to identify the university policies and procedures in relation academic appeals from the documentary evidence provided, such as the Academic Regulations, Academic Appeal Form and information in relation to the Academic Appeals Panel and saw examples of how information about these processes would be made available to students. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

91. As the qualifying course is a BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

92. The inspection team recommend that the course be approved with conditions. These will be monitored for completion.

Conditions

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

94. 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 1.3	The education provider will provide evidence of the training that is provided to all staff and stakeholders who are involved in the admissions process, including but not limited to training in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principles. Evidence should also be provided of how attendance at these sessions will be monitored to ensure that all stakeholders involved in the admissions process are prepared to make decisions that meet the requirements of the standards.	31 March 2022	Paragraph 27
2	Standard 1.4	The education provider will provide evidence of the process in place for assessing whether an applicant's conduct, character and health are suitable for them to train as social workers. This process can be referred to as a 'declaration of suitability for social work' and should include the requirements outlined in the relevant guidance for the Education and Training Standards 2021.	31 March 2022	Paragraph 30
3	Standard 1.6	The education provider will ensure that all information provided to applicants accurately communicates that completing the course successfully is not a guarantee	31 March 2022	Paragraph 35

		that they will be able to register with Social Work England.		
4	Standard 4.2	The education provider will consider and provide evidence of how people with lived experience of social work will be engaged and involved in the design and ongoing development and review of the curriculum at a strategic level.	31 March 2022	Paragraph 64
5	Standard 4.7	The education provider will provide evidence of a course timetable for 2021 – 2022 academic year which demonstrates which elements of the course will be taught in person, or online through blended learning, in addition to the allocation of placement or skills days.	31 March 2022	Paragraph 70

Recommendations

95. In addition to the conditions above, the inspectors identified the following recommendations for the education provider. These recommendations highlight areas that the education provider may wish to consider. The recommendations do not affect any decision relating to course approval.

	Standard	Detail	Link
1	Standard 1.5	The education provider should consider how they will monitor, analyse and interrogate equality, diversity and inclusion data in relation to social work cohorts in order to ensure that relevant policies in relation to applicants are being effectively implemented and monitored, particularly in relation to courses involving external partnerships.	Paragraph 33
2	Standard 3.2	The education provider should consider how Practice Educators are engaged in and informed of the outcomes of Practice Assessment Panels, such as the outcomes for the individual students that they have supervised and assessed on placement.	Paragraph 47

3	Standard 4.12	The education provider should consider how feedback and information in relation to student assessment and progression, including university policies and processes in relation to decision making around progression, is provided to Practice Educators so that they feel more confident in their knowledge of these processes and their engagement in them.	Paragraph 77
---	---------------	--	------------------------------

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Table breakdown of standards met during preapproval and inspection.

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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.	☒	☐	☐
2.7 Ensure that policies and processes, including for whistleblowing, are in place for students to	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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 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	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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, ongoing development and review of the curriculum.	☐	☒	☐
4.3 Ensure that the course is designed in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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.	☒	☐	☐
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	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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.	☒	☐	☐
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.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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

Approved with conditions

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

This is in accordance with Social Work England's [education and training rules 2019](#).

This section of the report will be completed when the conditions review is completed.

1. If conditions are applied to a course approval, Social Work England completes a conditions review to make sure education providers have complied with the conditions and are meeting all of the [education and training standards](#).
2. Inspectors undertake the conditions review and make recommendations to Social Work England's decision maker.

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	Standard 1.3	The education provider will provide evidence of the training that is provided to all staff and stakeholders who are involved in the admissions process, including but not limited to training in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principles. Evidence should be provided of how attendance at these sessions will be monitored to ensure that all stakeholders involved in the admissions process are prepared to participate effectively and make decisions which meet the requirements of the standards.	Condition met
2	Standard 1.4	The education provider will provide evidence of the process in place for assessing whether an applicant's conduct, character and health are suitable for them to train as social workers. This process can be referred to as a 'declaration of suitability for social work' and should include the requirements outlined in the relevant guidance for the education and training standards 2021.	Condition met
3	Standard 1.6	The education provider will ensure that all information provided to applicants accurately communicates that completing the course successfully is not a guarantee	Condition met

		that they will be able to register with Social Work England.	
4	Standard 4.2	The education provider will provide evidence of how people with lived experience of social work will be engaged and involved in the design and ongoing development and review of the curriculum at a strategic level, for example through membership of relevant committees or governance groups.	Condition met
5	Standard 4.7	The education provider will provide evidence of a course timetable for 2021 – 2022 academic year which demonstrates which elements of the course will be taught in person, or online through blended learning, in addition to the allocation of placement or skills days.	Condition met

Findings

3. This conditions review was undertaken as a result of conditions set during course approval as outlined in the original inspection report above.
4. After the review of the documentary evidence submitted, the inspection team are satisfied that all of the conditions set against the approval of the BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship course are met.
5. In relation to standard 1.3, the course provider has submitted evidence of mandatory training for staff and partners which includes EDI training led by people with lived experience which will be recorded for those unable to attend. The provider has also submitted evidence to demonstrate strengthening of their admissions processes, guidance and training for all those involved. The inspection team find this standard is now met.
6. In relation to standard 1.4 the course provider has submitted a suitability declaration form which provides a clear check on the applicant's suitability and that will be used for their next round of recruitment. The inspection team find this standard is now met.
7. In relation to standard 1.6, the course provider has amended their marketing materials and website to accurately reflect the course position in relation to its approval by Social

Work England and that on qualifying in their award graduates can apply to join the social work register. The inspection team find this standard is now met.

8. In relation to standard 4.2, the course provider has submitted evidence to demonstrate several changes that have been implemented to meet this condition, which includes minutes of strategic meetings now held with the Head of School and an action to develop partnerships with the SUCI group as part of the School Action Plan. The inspection team find this standard is now met.
9. In relation to standard 4.7, the course provider has submitted a clear timetable to evidence this condition. The inspection team find this standard is now met.

Conclusion

10. The inspection team is recommending that the course is approved as all the conditions have been met.

Regulator decision

Approved