

Inspection Report

Course provider: Teesside University

Course approval: BA (Hons) Social Work

Inspection dates: 22/02/2022 – 25/02/2022

Report date:	19 April 2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	17 November 2022
Date conditions met and approved:	17 November 2022

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

9. During this time a draft plan for the inspection is developed and shared with the education provider, to make sure it is achievable at the point of inspection.
10. Once the inspectors and officer are satisfied that an inspection can take place, this is usually undertaken over a 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. As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, inspections are currently being carried out via remote virtual arrangements, and typically last three to four days.
11. The inspectors may recommend in this report that the course is approved with conditions, approved without conditions or that it does not meet the criteria for approval. Where the course has been previously approved we may also decide to withdraw 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 regulatory decision about the approval of the course.
13. The final decisions that we can make are as follows, that the course is approved without conditions, the course is approved with conditions or that the course does not meet the criteria for approval. The decision, and the report, are then published.
14. If the course is approved with conditions, we will write to the education provider setting out how they can demonstrate they have met the conditions, the action we will take once we decide that the conditions are met, and the action we will take if we decide the conditions are not met.

Summary of Inspection

15. Teesside University's BA (Hons) Social Work course was inspected as part of the Social Work England reapproval cycle; whereby all course providers with qualifying social work courses will be inspected against the new Education and Training Standards 2021.

Inspection ID	TUR2
Course provider	Teesside University
Validating body (if different)	n/a
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Work
Date of inspection	22/02/2022 – 25/02/2022
Mode of study	Full Time
Proposed first intake	n/a
Maximum student cohort	60
Inspection team	Naomi Barrett - Education Quality Assurance Officer Dr Catherine O'Sullivan (Lay Inspector) Surj Sall-Dullat (Registrant Inspector) John Armitage - Education Quality Assurance Officer
Inspector recommendation	Approved with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

16. In this document we describe Teesside University as 'the education provider' or 'the university' and we describe the BA (Hons) Social Work as 'the course'

Inspection

17. A remote inspection took place from 22nd February 2022 to 25th February 2022. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers, Practice Educators and people with lived experience of social work.

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

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with five BA (Hons) Social Work students across second and third years of study, one of whom is a student representative. Discussions included students' experience of applying for the course, their overall experience of the courses, teaching and learning, preparation for placement, student support services, awareness of the regulatory body and the resourcing of their course.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course team, central support teams and senior staff members in the Social Sciences, Humanities and Law Department.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work who have been involved in the design and delivery of the course and interview process for applicants for the BA (Hons) Social Work course.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including Middlesbrough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council and Jesmond Gardens Primary School. At a later meeting the inspection team also met with independent Practice Educators who engage with Teesside BA students as placement supervisors.

Findings

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

Standard one: Admissions

Standard 1.1

25. The university provided documentary evidence relating to selection, interview questions and scoring and the wider university support mechanisms related to these processes which was reviewed by the inspection team. The inspection team, through meetings with admissions, course team, people with lived experience of social work and placement partners were satisfied that the university had a holistic approach to entry on to the course. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

26. Teesside University does not set prior experience as an entry requirement, but they were able to demonstrate how applicants are given the opportunity to include prior experience in the application process. This was further evidenced in the interview questions which are designed to capture relevant experience. The inspection team also reviewed the university's recognition of prior learning (RPL) policy for the formal process of assessing and transferring previous academic learning to this course. Therefore, the inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

27. The inspection team met with placement partners, practice educators and people with lived experience of social work, all of whom confirmed and discussed their involvement in the admissions process. Activities discussed included reviewing written tasks and interviewing candidates.

28. The inspection team also spoke with students who were able to reflect on their experience of engaging with people with lived experience of social work and other external interview panel members as part of their application and interview experience. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

29. Teesside University demonstrated the process to assess suitability of applicant's character, conduct and health through evidence submitted, and during the inspection

meetings. This included support available during the process for applicants who may have particular health or learning needs.

30. When meeting with members of the admissions team, the inspection team were told of the support mechanisms whereby applicants can seek advice and guidance. For example, if an applicant has something to disclose but might not come up on a DBS check and they are unsure if it will impact their application, the university has an upstream process to ensure the information is captured and is discussed with placement providers to determine if there is an impact on suitability from their perspective. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

31. The university provided documentary evidence relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies prior to inspection which was reviewed by the inspection team. The course team also gave a presentation on the first day of inspection which went into detail about their EDI processes, policies and support mechanisms.

32. The inspection team met with support staff who specialise in areas such as student disability who confirmed that anything raised during an application would be picked up immediately and passed to the relevant team. This is to ensure, wherever possible, support was already in place when the applicant enrolled and became a student. This included financial, learning and pastoral support.

33. When meeting with the students they confirmed to the inspection team that they had received individual support based on their needs and were happy that they knew where they could go should any additional support be needed. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

34. The university's webpage for the BA (Hons) Social Work course highlights entry requirements and additional information such as DBS and health checks. The inspection team were also told of additional methods that applicants could obtain information, such as requesting a prospectus, open days and direct enquiry.

35. When the inspection team met with the students, they confirmed that they had all the information they needed to make an informed choice about taking a place up with Teesside and discussed the different methods of finding information. This included social media outlets such as Instagram, which was positively received by the students. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

36. The inspection team agreed that based on the documentary evidence provided, and from discussions with the course team and placement partners that all students would be able to access a suitable placement that would meet the requirements of this standard.

37. The course team also discussed the ongoing work they are undertaking with the private, voluntary and independent sectors to grow placement capacity and placement type, to ensure there is a wide range of experiences available for students. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Standard 2.2

38. The university provided documentary evidence relating to practice learning opportunities and how each placement is audited to ensure ongoing suitability. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners to discuss the types of placements on offer, along with associated tasks and how students are matched to them.

39. The inspection team agreed it was evident that there are good working relationships with placement partners, and students have appropriate and wide-ranging placement experiences. The students echoed this in their meeting with the inspection team and were happy with their experiences and reasonable adjustments that had been put in place where necessary. Therefore, these discussions, along with the documentary evidence reviewed, satisfied the inspection team that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

40. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included a Practice Learning Agreement and Multi-professional Educational Audit of Practice Placements document, which covered the processes for induction, supervision and quality assurance. The inspection team were told how the processes were used by both the course team and placement partners. The inspection team were also given an example of changes to assessment hand in times by the course team and students alike. This change ensured a more balance workload for students on placement.

41. Regarding support, students have the support of their Personal Tutor and Placement Co-ordinator from the university, who they can contact directly should they require additional advice or guidance whilst on placement. Students also told the inspection team of how the reasonable adjustments and personal support they needed was positively met by the placement provider, who were able to implement the adjustments. The students said they were happy with the support they had.

42. Student support was also explored with Practice Educators, who were able to provide examples of how they had supported students with reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances whilst on placement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

43. The inspection team reviewed the documentary evidence and processes for auditing placements, to determine the level of placement and matching of student to placement with the course team. The placement co-ordinator has the ongoing responsibility to ensure the process is up to date and to ensure students are appropriately matched to Practice Educators and placements. Both the students and the Practice Educators whom the inspection team met, gave clear examples of these processes working effectively. The inspection team agreed that this standard was appropriately met.

Standard 2.5

44. The inspection team were satisfied with the evidence provided in relation to students assessed preparation for practice, such as the Introduction to Social Work module which includes a portfolio that replicates and links to the practice placement portfolio.

45. The inspection team were given an example of where the course team have received feedback from Practice Educators about improving student's readiness for practice in relation to a particular module. The course team are now reviewing that module with the Practice Educator and have invited them to deliver tailored sessions to the students. As a result, the inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

46. The Multi-professional Educational Audit of Practice Placements document, reviewed by the inspection team undertakes checks of the practice partners employment methods to ensure that there are appropriately qualified Practice Educators in place. Where a placement partner is unable to adequately provide this information, the Placement Co-ordinator will identify an appropriately qualified offsite Practice Educator and suitable onsite supervisor. This process was discussed with Practice Educators and placement partners with both confirming that these processes were working in practice. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

47. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy, Placement Handbook and the Multi-professional Educational Audit of Practice Placement. The Placement Handbook references the university's own whistleblowing and raising concerns processes, but also clearly states that students can use the policies of the practice placement to raise their concerns.

48. The audit document is the quality assurance mechanism whereby the university checks that policies and processes are in place for students to challenge unsafe behaviours, cultures and organisational wrongdoing and report concerns. The documents provided to the inspection team make it clear that students should not leave a placement without

consultation with the university and going through the formal procedures. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

49. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted, which included the course team CVs, information around the delivery of the course and module lead responsibilities. Discussions with the course team and senior management members highlighted a new role of Principal Lecturer which has recently been filled. This role has been created to strengthen the leadership for the course team.

50. There is also an additional two vacancies within the course team which they have shortlisted for and will be conducting interviews shortly. The inspection team were satisfied that they could see a clear course governance structure and support available for the course team and were therefore satisfied that this standard was met

Standard 3.2

51. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted, which included Placement Reference Group and Memorandum of Understandings. During the inspection, the inspection team were given a demonstration of the ARC system which houses all the information held about a placement provider. These demonstrated to the inspection team the ways that the university works with placement providers to ensure they can provide education and training that appropriately meets the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards.

52. Representatives from placement partners also detailed how their internal workforce development teams work to ensure they have multiple placement opportunities for students and contingency placements should they be needed. Therefore, the inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

53. The inspection team reviewed the Placement Handbook, Multi-professional Educational Audit of Practice Placements and Placement Learning Agreement, all of which contain policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk, and what support is available for students. Students also complete a Placement Profile which captures additional needs and is used when matching students to placements to ensure the placement partner can meet those needs. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

54. The inspection team, through the review of evidence alongside meetings held with practice placement partners were assured of working relationships between the university and placement providers. Placement partners are involved in the Placement Reference Group, and some of the Practice Educators the inspection team met with also spoke of being involved in interviewing applicants and being asked to take part in skills days. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

55. Documentation provided by the course team demonstrated how placement partners, students and people with lived experience of social work are engaged in monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems. The course team are also in the process of setting up a new Course Steering Group, which will have representation from all stakeholders above to mirror the same forum as the MA Social Work course which is already running a similar group.

56. The inspection team were also able to meet with each of those groups to hear how they are involved in practice and what impact they felt they had on evaluation and improvement. The feedback from each group was positive and included practical examples of changes made as a result of their feedback.

57. The inspection team also met with central university support 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. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

58. The university clearly demonstrated how they work with placement partners around placement provision, however given the placement saturation levels in the region the university is about to begin a review with placement partners to discuss and agree cohort sizes.

59. Cohort sizes have increased over the years and with the additional competition from apprenticeships, fast tracks and other provision taking up placement opportunities, placement partners have raised concerns over the current proposed cohort numbers. The university agreed to work with placement providers to agree a cohort size and those talks are due to begin from the beginning of March. Therefore, the inspection team are unable to confirm that this standard has been met until they have seen additional information and evidence to show agreement on placement capacity. Consideration was given as to whether the findings identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standards, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a

further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions section](#).

Standard 3.7

60. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed the course team CVs and a course structure identified the Course Leader and Module Leaders for the BA (Hons) Social Work course. The course leader is a registered social worker.

61. It was evident from discussions with the Course Leader and team that they had recent and relevant knowledge of contemporary social work practice, and had been supported by the university to maintain this knowledge and to grow relationships with key stakeholders such as employer partners and people with lived experience of social work. The inspection team was satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

62. The course team were able to demonstrate, through documentary evidence reviewed by the inspection team and in meetings, that they are adequately resourced and supported by senior management. The inspection team were told of additional recruitment currently being undertaken for an additional two members of staff.

63. Throughout the inspection, the inspection team heard of some of the contemporary teaching and assessment methods used. When the inspection team met with students, they also gave positive feedback about teaching and assessment methods and therefore the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

64. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the Continuing Monitoring and Enhancement Process, and Course Journal documents which the inspection team reviewed. During the inspection, the inspection team were provided with further information and evidence relating to audit mechanisms carried out by the central academic registry department, which then feed into forums such as the student voice committee.

65. A university decision to change the format of the Course Board meant that there was a gap in contributions from practitioners, placement partners and people with lived experience regarding the ongoing review and refresh of the course. As a counter measure, the course team introduced a steering group for the MA Social Work course, whose membership includes those groups again. The inspection team were provided membership information and minutes from previous meetings and were told that the course team are in the process of setting a similar group up for the BA Social Work course. The inspection team was therefore satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

66. The inspection team were told by the course team that they are fully supported by the university to undertake CPD and Professional Practice, with staff members given 25 days per year for scholarly activity. When meeting with senior staff members, which included the Dean of School for Education, Social Care and Social Sciences, the inspection team heard of the different budget allocations that staff can apply to for activities such as attending conferences. Research active members of staff can also apply to increase the 25-day allowance.

67. Anyone without teaching qualifications is given the opportunity to obtain a PGCE for teaching in higher education which is aligned to the UK Professional Standards for teaching. Completion of the course enables the person to obtain fellowship and can then work to senior fellowship and again, time will be provided for those undertaking these activities.

68. The course team also engage with the local teaching partnership Social Work Education North East (SWENE), the North East Social Work Alliance (NESWA) and with local and national Social Work forums. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

69. The inspection team reviewed the Course Handbook, Module Guides and Course Evaluation documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection which shows how the course learning outcomes are mapped to Social Work England's Professional Standards, the Professional Capabilities Framework and BASW's Code of Ethics for Social Work.

70. Students are introduced to the Social Work England Professional Standards as part of the module Social Work: An Introduction which provides links to the Professional Standards. This is then picked up again through assessment via a portfolio. When meeting with the BA students they were clear on the importance of being able to meet the professional standards prior to practise and CPD requirements. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

71. When meeting with each group of people from the representatives of placement partners, students, practice educators and people with lived experience, the inspection team heard positive examples of the good working relationship the university has with each group. The inspection team were told that each group felt they had a genuine voice and made a real difference to the ongoing activities they were involved with.

72. These conversations alongside the documentary evidence, which demonstrated how placement partners, students and people with lived experience of social work are engaged in the continuous review and development of the BA (Hons) Social Work course and the development of the steering group satisfied the inspection team that this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

73. The inspection team, having reviewed the university's overarching equality, diversity and inclusion policies were satisfied that the course had been designed in accordance with those policies and that the university had the necessary support mechanisms in place to ensure inclusion and reasonable adjustments in all settings. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

74. From the documentary evidence provided within the Course Evaluation Document, the inspection team were able to discuss in detail with the course team, placement partners, Practice Educators and people with lived experience all the elements where they provide feedback about the course. The course team were then able to demonstrate how those processes fed into the course being regularly reviewed, where feedback is captured, and action points created as a result. Therefore, the inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

75. The inspection team reviewed the individual module descriptors that track across the course how theory and practice would be explored. It was clearly demonstrated where theory and practice linked to assessment and the associated learning outcomes.

76. This was explored in more detail with the course team, the inspection team having been shown some practical examples during a demonstration of the virtual learning environment. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

77. When meeting with senior management, the inspection team were told of the long-term strategic plans to integrate cross learning opportunities within the Education, Social Care and Social Sciences school. Planned activities to support that integration were due to begin the following month, with a seminar and individual workshops already advertised. These were brought up by the students when the inspection team met with them and they particularly like that these were evening activities as this would allow more people to attend.

78. The seminars and workshops alongside documentary evidence about guest speakers and skills days activities satisfied the inspection team that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

79. The inspection team were able to review both the Course Specification and individual module descriptors, detailing the course structure with the required hours along with the

monitoring of attendance on campus and on placement information. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

80. The inspection team reviewed documents in relation to assessment and progression and were given practical examples of how the range of different assessment methods would test different skills and competencies. The module assessments are mapped against the curriculum, learning outcomes, PCF and relevant Social Work England Professional Standards.

81. The team also discussed support available regarding assessment and what reasonable adjustments were available for students with particular learning needs. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

82. As with the standard above, 4.8, the inspection team have reviewed documents in relation to assessment and progression. The inspection team agreed that the evidence reviewed demonstrated that assessments are carried out at appropriate stages during the course and did not cause undue stress for students. This was echoed by the students who gave a specific example of changes to assessment dates, which reduced assessment burden during placement which they said was a positive change. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

83. Feedback processes are aligned with the University Assessment and Feedback Policy which the inspection team reviewed along with External Examiner reports, the Course Evaluation Document and Placement Learning Agreement. Students are provided with written feedback on all summative assessments which is made available via the Virtual Learning Environment. Students will also get verbal feedback on formative assessments which can include feedback from people with lived experience of social work. Students will also be given feedback as part of placement activity from supervisors and Practice Educators.

84. The inspection team discussed feedback and its effectiveness with students and were given positive examples of where feedback had helped them to develop their knowledge and skills. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

85. The education provider confirmed to the inspection team both external examiner's names and linked to their profile at their own universities showing their expertise. As a result of some of the feedback from external examiners, a new Principal Lecturer has been

appointed who has specific responsibilities linked to the management of social work provision within the university.

86. The inspection team have already reviewed the course team suitability in the standards above and confirmed their approval. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

87. The documentary evidence provided in relation to the Assessment and Progression Boards, Direct Observation of Practice documents and Placement Portfolios in addition to discussions with the course team, placement partners and the course central administration team assured the inspection team that there are systems to manage students' progression and this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

88. The inspection team concluded that evidence informed thinking and practice could be clearly demonstrated throughout the course, and the inspection team agreed this was particularly evident in the Research Module. The support mechanisms for students, along with feedback from members of the SUCCESS group also encourages them to develop their skills and approach to practice. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

89. The inspection team were provided with documentary evidence and links prior to inspection that outlined a range of advice and support services designed to meet both the academic and pastoral needs of all students. Such services include confidential counselling services, careers advice, disability support, faith and reflection, student well-being and student finance and funding.

90. The inspection team agreed that from discussions with students, who shared their knowledge and positive experiences of using these services, and from discussions with Practice Educators and placement partners that this was identified as a strength of the university. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

91. Students are allocated a Personal Tutor to support them throughout their studies and who can refer students to wider specialist support within the university. That support is also available when students are on placement and the inspection team were told of specific adjustments made to support those students, such as lunchtime or evening meetings. Students had previously referred to these in discussion about support available to them.

When discussing access to resources with placement partners, the inspection team were given examples of reasonable adjustments and specialist equipment where needed.

92. As part of their offer to students, Teesside University provide all students with an Apple iPad that is pre-loaded with useful educational applications. They also receive £100 credit at the start of each academic session to spend towards key course texts and other learning resources. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

93. The course team demonstrated how student suitability of conduct, character and health is checked at the start of the course and throughout the duration of the course. The course team evidenced how the Fitness to Practise Regulations and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures are used for any students who do declare any changes, and when meeting with students they were able to confirm their knowledge of the processes and requirements.

94. The inspection team reviewed the policies and processes and were satisfied that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

95. The university was able to demonstrate that they are supportive of any reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments which was echoed by the placement partners the inspection team met with. Any needs indicated during a prospective student's application to the course would immediately be sent to the relevant support area to liaise closely with the applicant to ensure their needs could and would be met at the point of enrolment onto the course.

96. When meeting with representatives from specialist support team members, the inspection team were given examples of support available and of how this is continued for the duration of the student's studies including placements. The University is increasingly using learner analytics to identify and support any student who appears to be struggling at an early stage which the inspectors agreed was a particular area of strength. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

97. Students are provided with Course and Placement handbooks, along with the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy and Procedure, and Assessment Regulations Document all of which contain information about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker. The inspection team were able to review these documents and discuss them with the students. There is also an employability day for the students to talk about career pathways and ASYE. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

98. The inspection team reviewed the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy, School Handbook and module guides, all of which contain information related to attendance requirements for students. During the inspection, the team were also given a leaflet that is given to applicants as part of the admissions process which clearly lays out attendance expectations. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met, however they also agreed that the Course Handbook could be revised to include the information from the leaflet as this would make the information more central and include more detail in one place. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations section](#) of this report.

Standard 5.7

99. As highlighted under standard 4.10, the inspection team reviewed the documentary evidence provided and discussed the feedback mechanisms with current students. The students spoke positively about how and when they are given feedback in relation to assessment and placement and how it enabled them to improve in these areas. Therefore, the inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met

Standard 5.8

100. The inspection team were provided with the university policies and procedures around academic appeals that included links to where these processes are made available to students, which were via the student handbook and website. When meeting with the students they were able to confirm their awareness of the procedure and where to locate the relevant information. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

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

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

103. 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.

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	3.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how they have agreed the cohort size with placement partners that is sensitive to capacity issues in the region.	30 June 2022	Paragraph 59

Recommendations

105. 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	5.6	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider expanding information around attendance and progression in the course handbook. This is to provide more comprehensive information in a central place which is more easily located when needed.	Paragraph 98

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

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](#).

A conditions review has been undertaken and a recommendation made to Social Work England's decision maker.

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Recommendation
1	3.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how they have agreed the cohort size with placement partners that is sensitive to capacity issues in the region.	Standard met

Findings

The education provider submitted evidence to demonstrate how they have agreed the course cohort size with placement providers.

The course provider provided the following information and submitted evidence to substantiate activity.

Extensive consultation commenced from 1 March 2022, some of the activity included in this consultation included the following:

- Placement Reference Group members consulted on reducing the cohort size from 69 to 60 commencing from the September 2022 intake.
- The PSRB Governance Steering Group established governance, quality assurance and cross-discipline discussion; including placements. The group meets once a month to update, review and respond to leadership, management, learning and teaching and placement capacity-based risks and resources considered to enhance placement capacity and monitor risk of saturation internally and externally.
- On 9 March 2022 a briefing was held with the head of department and assistant director (Marketing & Recruitment) to consider rationale for reducing cohort size from 69 to 60 with immediate effect.

- The reduction in cohort size is based on profiling of student-staff ratio, satisfaction NSS outcomes and progression into employability comparisons made from (2013) outcomes to (2021) reflecting a similar staff/student ratio and with 60 student number cap applied. This briefing also considered the enhancing of Teesside University's CPD offer in terms of additional recruitment to both Practice Educator 1 and Practice Educator 2 courses to appropriately enhance; capacity, quality and quantity of practice placements in Local Authorities for 2022/23 intakes.
- In June 2022 a Regional Placement Co-ordinator meeting was held to consider common themes – non-car drivers, resitting students and International student placements. The meeting also considered Continuous improvement Funding (CiF) proposal for collective bid proposals to enhance the CPD offer, retention of Practice Educators beyond Stage 2 and approaches to integrating the perceived fragmentation of CPD offer locally/regionally moving forward to 2023.

Regulator decision

Condition met and approved.