

Inspection Report

Course provider: Leeds Beckett University

Course approval: MA Social Work and PgDip
Social Work masters exit route

Inspection dates: 10/05/2022 – 13/05/2022

Report date:	22 July 2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved
Regulator decision:	Approved
Date of Regulator decision:	01 December 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. Leeds Beckett University MA Social Work and PgDip exit route 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	LBUR2
Course provider	Leeds Beckett University
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	MA Social Work and PgDip Social Work exit route
Mode of study	Full time and part time
Maximum student cohort	25
Date of inspection	10/05/2022 – 13/05/2022
Inspection team	John Armitage, Education Quality Assurance Officer Gary Dicken, Registrant Inspector Sarah McAnulty, Lay Inspector
Inspector recommendation	Approved
Approval outcome	Approved

Language

16. In this document we describe Leeds Beckett University as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the MA Social Work and PgDip Social Work exit route as ‘the course’

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place from 10 May to 13 May 2022 across the City campus in Leeds where Leeds Beckett University is based. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

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

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with MA Social Work students across two years of study. Discussions included students' experience of applying for the course, their overall experience of the course, teaching and learning, preparation for study and placement provision, student support services, feedback from and to university staff, and their experiences of interprofessional learning.

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 School of Health.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with the university ABEL group of people with lived experience of social work who have been involved in the course. Discussions included their experiences of working with the course team and students and the specific activities they have been directly involved in the current course, opportunities to provide feedback to the university, and their experiences of training and development in their activities.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including Leeds, Wakefield and Kirklees councils.

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 of a multi-dimensional assessment process involving an individual interview, a written assessment and a group work exercise. The course website clearly presented the course entry requirements including English language and IELTS skills requirements.

26. Inspectors heard from the course team that interview sessions have been held online since the COVID-19 pandemic and involve an individual interview, a written assessment and a group work exercise. The interview panel involves practitioners via the university's links with the Leeds and Wakefield Social Work Teaching Partnership (LWSWTP), and also involves people with lived experience of social work. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

27. Inspectors considered documentary information prior to inspection including the university's Recognition of Prior Learning policy to consider recent relevant work experience and professional qualifications, highlighted to mature student applicants. Inspectors confirmed the details of this with the course team who also clarified the processes to ensure consistency of decision making within this and the relevant interview questions.

28. From meeting with students, inspectors heard how some students entered through clearing and had suitable opportunities to talk to university staff about relevant work experience, with examples provided of this when speaking to a course tutor during their application. Students described how prior learning was considered in the case study and interview stages with one commenting that the challenging nature of this process spurred her on to accept their offer of a place on the course. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

29. Inspectors met with the ABEL group of people with lived experience of social work, an established group within the School, comprised of individuals with a wide range of personal experiences. The inspection team heard from the ABEL group members that they are involved in interviews and are given a pre-briefing for these as well as post-interview

discussions. Inspectors were told that this group provided input into the case study questions and scenarios alongside their involvement in the interview itself.

30. Employers confirmed to inspectors that they are involved in the admissions process. The interview panel involves 'Teaching Ambassadors' supplied by the teaching partnership for interviews as required; these practitioners also represent the placement providers. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

31. The university demonstrated the process to assess suitability of applicant's character, conduct and health through evidence submitted, and during the inspection meetings. This included evidence of DBS checks and health and conduct checks and declarations, including particular checks for international applicants.

32. The inspection team confirmed with the course leader details of the timeliness and robustness of the DBS process. Students confirmed their awareness of support available during the process for applicants who may have particular health or learning needs. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

33. The course provider provided documentary evidence relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies prior to inspection which was reviewed by the inspection team. This included how the university's equality policy is monitored, and EDI-specific interview guidance for external panel members which was clearly linked to the wider equality policy. The ABEL group of people with lived experience of social work confirmed their knowledge of this guidance and told inspectors that they receive 3 yearly online interview training sessions covering EDI and unconscious bias.

34. The inspection team heard from admissions staff about the range of potential reasonable adjustments provided to applicants including extra time, oral instructions and pre-interview phone calls. Inspectors heard that whilst interviews and assessments were held online, in person taster sessions were being introduced. Feedback from applicants obtained by the university about the admissions process includes such as there being cost involved in attending virtually will influence the decision about how to proceed with this process going forward.

35. Inspectors heard from students that they were aware of disability services and support available. The inspection team heard from a student who had maternity leave and how her tutor had managed the process in line with the policies and procedures. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

36. The university's webpage for the MA Social Work course highlighted entry requirements and additional information such as DBS and health checks. The inspection team were also told of additional ways that applicants could obtain information, such as requesting a prospectus, open days and direct enquiry.

37. Students confirmed to inspectors that the admissions process provided enough information to allow them to make an informed choice to apply for the course. The inspection team heard from students that those who came through clearing were able to speak to a tutor about the course and their suitability for it. Students described a clear understanding of course structure, including placement requirements and their progression to ASYE. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

38. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence of placement information provided to students including that outlined in the course specification, course handbook and the applicant information leaflet during the admissions process. Inspectors met with the course team who described their good working relationship with placement providers within the teaching partnership. Almost all placements for MA students are in statutory settings, are in contrasting working environments, with 30 skills days providing preparation for direct practice.

39. All students the inspectors met with were in statutory placements and felt their responsibilities were appropriate. Students in their second year of the MA felt that their second placement was an appropriate progression for their development. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

40. The course provider provided documentary evidence relating to practice learning opportunities, how placement learning experiences are confirmed in initial placement auditing and within Quality Assurance Practice Learning Evaluation forms used by students, staff and placement providers during placement. 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.

41. Inspectors heard from the course team that almost all students are offered two statutory placements, with the only exceptions being occasions where one of the usual placement providers may not be able to meet the needs of particular students. Inspectors met with students who described that the learning opportunities on placement were suitable for their needs and interests. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

42. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection visit. This included the placement handbook setting out the responsibilities of students, staff and practice educators when a student encounters difficulties, and the Practice Learning Agreement content and meeting requirements. Information was provided that recall days cover induction review and support, and the placement handbook also covered induction, supervision, caring needs and flexible working needs.

43. The teaching partnership employers and practice educators that inspectors met with confirmed the range of learning opportunities available and the structure of the supervision and support available. Students told inspectors that they felt well prepared for placement and that they had a good induction during placement. Inspectors heard from students that they felt the duties were appropriate and workload reasonable. All were in statutory placements. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

44. Inspectors reviewed documentary evidence about student responsibilities provided in the practice educator handbook and placement handbook, and outlined in the Practice Learning Agreement. Inspectors were provided with placement audit forms and confirmed during the inspection visit that a further annual audit is completed by university tutors at the commencement of the placement at the Practice Learning Agreement meeting as part of the Quality Assurance Practice Learning (QAPL) process.

45. The placement application form sets out students' experience and learning needs to be taken into account by the placement provider and feedback from students and practice educators is obtained at the end of placement via an electronic QAPL form. Students, employer representatives and practice educators described how they felt this process worked well and enabled them to meet the needs of students.

46. Inspectors heard from students that they felt their responsibilities on placement were appropriate and second year students felt that their second placement was an appropriate step up in terms of their responsibilities. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

47. Inspectors reviewed documentary evidence within the module handbook regarding the assessment of preparation for practice. Inspectors were satisfied that the first semester module Preparation for Practice includes an assessment of a broad mix of communication skills, law and social perspectives, with assessment conducted by role play and written work. Assessment is by university staff, practitioners and people with lived experience.

48. When meeting with students they expressed to inspectors that they felt prepared for placement. Students thought that the skills day focused on communication was particularly helpful, as was their interaction with the ABEL group of people with lived experience of

social work in the skills day and from other sessions on the course. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

49. The inspection was informed by documentary evidence prior to inspection about how the course made use of practice educators who are employees of the university's local authority partners and managed together with the university as part of the teaching partnership structure. The inspectors reviewed quality assurance processes to ensure that practice educators are registered social workers as part of their employment and their progression as practice educators is built into the teaching partnership practice educator training which meets the Practice Educator Professional Standards for Social Work.

50. During the meeting with the course senior management team, the inspectors were told that practice educator development is part of employment progression in their local authorities. There is a system for developing new practice educators and maintaining the knowledge and practice of existing practice educators: there is regular in-house training and participation in mentoring of new practice educators.

51. Inspectors heard that there is a placements record held by the teaching partnership with information about practice educator skills and training, and that there is a clear progression route whereby to be a senior social worker they need PE1 and are expected to progress to PE2 on appointment. For PE2 there is a university panel assessment. Issues with practice educators assigned to students are dealt with by the university and teaching partnership. Practice educators are required to mentor a university student every 2 years. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

52. The inspection team reviewed the whistleblowing policy document and the practice educator handbook and placement handbook which included information about relevant policies and procedures. Students stated their awareness of whistleblowing policy from course material, and expressed confidence in how they would raise a concern if needed.

53. There were no examples to date that the course team could provide of whistleblowing concerns raised by students on this course. Inspectors heard from the Safeguarding lead about the support provided to a student on placement on a different course who raised a whistleblowing concern. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

54. The inspection team reviewed documentation provided by the university including the university strategic plan, School and University structure charts and the teaching

partnership memorandum of understanding. Inspectors agreed that the school of social work was clearly embedded in the university strategic plan. Lines of accountability were made clear to the inspectors, and a new Level Lead role is in place intended to even out workloads amongst staff.

55. Inspectors were provided a clear explanation of the course governance structure with clearly set out leadership and course management roles. The teaching partnership memorandum of understanding sets out its governance and lines of responsibility, and the course specification document was considered as suitably describing the course management including the role of the course director and ongoing staff research interests. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

56. Prior to the inspection visit, inspectors reviewed documents regarding the organisation and monitoring of placements. Local Authority and statutory placements are managed through the teaching partnership as set out in the memorandum of understanding. The teaching Partnership seems well established and contingencies for placement breakdown are outlined in the Placement Handbook as well as the course specification.

57. From discussion with the course team and senior management team the inspectors learnt about the course leadership having a long-standing relationship with the teaching partnership. An example was provided of how the university course tutors and staff from Leeds and Wakefield councils worked together using agreed processes to meet a particular student's needs and ensure an alternative placement was available if required. When meeting with students and Practice Educators, they were also able to give specific examples of university support and placement processes and adjustments to ensure that student learning needs and employer needs were met. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

58. The inspection team reviewed the Practice Learning Agreement which outlined how students should work to placement provider's policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk and what support is available for students. Inspectors were informed that the teaching partnership Practice Development Group monitors placement protocols and processes. Voluntary sector partners are audited for their policies and procedures relating to health and safety issues and requires confirmation that the placement organisation has key policies such as anti-oppressive practice and whistleblowing. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

59. The inspectors agreed from discussions with the course team and employer representatives that teaching partnership employer members are involved in multiple aspects of the course: in interview panels in the admissions process; in student practice assessment panels, in involvement in teaching sessions on the course; and the curriculum review group feeding into course management, monitoring and development.

60. Inspectors saw from documentary evidence that via the teaching partnership, employers, including a representative from the voluntary sector meet to oversee the management of placements in a practice education group. The course specification sets out involvement of employers in to the Practice Assessment Examination Committee (PAEC) which meets several times a year and explores placement related matters.

61. The course management team told the inspectors about some of the workstreams under the teaching partnership including the curriculum development workstream. We heard that employer representatives from the partnership are invited to annual reviews and also the links via the teaching partnership allow for staff to teach on several of the modules. Inspectors had a discussion with the course director and employer about the course numbers and considerations about social work vacancies in the region. The teaching partnership curriculum review group meets bi-annually to look at local context and specifics of curriculum to feed into the course review processes. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

62. Documentation provided to inspectors showed that the university employs the Annual Review and Monitoring (MARE) system of review and evaluation which incorporates feedback from students, employers and ABEL group members. National Student Survey data is also incorporated into the course review and evaluation process.

63. Students feed back to course staff at the mid point and end of each module and student representatives sit on various review boards. QAPL forms are completed by students and practice educators at end of placements. The PebblePad system is used to monitor the progress of student through placement. Practice assessment panels consist of practitioners and people with lived experience of social work. The School academic review board also maintains an overview of progress.

64. During the inspection visit the inspection team heard more about MARE and the input of the ABEL group, student representatives and employers into this. The ABEL group confirmed their attendance at annual reviews. Inspectors heard about the inclusive course design tool and how feedback is gathered by student representatives. We heard about the 'you said we did' model being used, such as how a particular module had been changed in terms of where it appears in the course following feedback from students, and their processes meant that this change could be made promptly.

65. Practitioners told the inspection team that they have avenues to provide feedback. We heard about the work of the teaching partnership curriculum review group, and about how the QAPL forms are reviewed and used. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

66. As mentioned in standard 3.1, inspectors were able to review documentary evidence about the strategic direction of the course and how workforce planning with the teaching partnership established student numbers and placement capacity. This information was discussed when meeting with relevant individuals during the inspection visit.

67. The teaching partnership memorandum of understanding sets out placement capacity strategy. The student cohort numbers on the course was described to inspectors as being suitable for regional employment needs. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

68. Prior to the inspection visit the inspection team reviewed the Head of Social Work and Course Director's CVs and confirmed they are registered social workers. Discussions with these staff throughout the inspection assured inspectors that they had recent and relevant knowledge of contemporary social work practice and were supported by the university to maintain and develop this. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

69. 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 specialist knowledge and expertise of each of the team was described in the documentation and course team presentation including how this fed into module design and development of the course.

70. The inspectors were satisfied from speaking with the course team that teaching staff had a wide breadth of experience and knowledge. Several were still practicing including 2 as AMHPs, and their CPD is maintained internally as well as through their input into the teaching partnership CPD programme for practice educators. Inspectors heard from a member of the team who is on their AMHP rota and from a second lecturer who had been successfully given a research grant. Inspectors heard from the course team and the senior management team that course staff have dedicated time for research: several staff have PhDs and others are working towards them. Some of this research work was enhanced by their links with the teaching partnership. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

71. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted about how the University provides academic staff with access to data and metrics to enable staff to

monitor student performance including EDI data, which are used to inform annual monitoring and review of student performance, progression and outcomes including employment.

72. Inspectors determined that there was a clear process of progress data feeding into wider information review which itself fed into the teaching partnership curriculum review group. The course team and central support staff described the use of an equality action plan to highlight areas for attention, such as underachievement of BAME students. The inspection team heard examples of how the MARE data and other feedback is suitably collected and acted on including actions based on EDI information. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

73. As described in Standard 3.8, inspectors heard from meetings that there are various routes available for staff to remain current in knowledge and skills by interacting with the local authorities in the teaching partnership. 200 hours are allocated to course staff CPD which enabled 2 staff to practice as AMHPs as well as several staff working towards PhDs. There is training supplied by the School and teaching partnership and annual professional development reviews. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

74. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection which shows how the course learning outcomes are mapped to Social Work England's Professional Standards and the Professional Capabilities Framework.

75. The inspection team discussed the structure and content in more detail with the course team during an initial presentation by the course team around their curriculum and assessment strategy. The course team were able to demonstrate how each module builds knowledge, skills and reflective practice and how the assessments are designed to link with module and course learning outcomes that link to the professional standards.

76. When meeting with the MA 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 therefore satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

77. As described in Standard 3.5, the university employs the, Annual Review and Monitoring (MARE) system of review and evaluation which incorporates feedback from students, employers and ABEL group members. When meeting with course staff and employer

representatives, this was confirmed by inspectors as an avenue of developing the course based on the input of employers and people with lived experience of social work.

78. Inspectors heard about the work of the teaching partnership curriculum review group in directly influencing the course structure and content based on student and workforce data and employer needs. The inspection team heard from the course team that specialist practitioners are involved in the Childrens module, bringing Child Sexual Exploitation and fostering expertise.

79. The inspection team met with the ABEL group of people with lived experience group. Inspectors heard that they were closely involved in admissions, with the teaching and development of the curriculum, with interprofessional learning content, plus assessment of student's progress such as readiness for practice assessments. Inspectors heard from the ABEL group about their input into annual reviews: the work they are doing to review their involvement across the course with students.

80. Inspectors heard that the ABEL group members felt their feedback was taken on board by the course team and they had examples of how it had been acted on. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

81. 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. There is a range of accommodation made to assist students with physical or mental health issues, outlined in Course specification and handbooks.

82. Information was provided to inspectors about the cross-university inclusive design framework used to design the course. This poses a range of questions to prompt course design to take account of diversity and equality issues relating to students. Upon meeting with students, they expressed to the inspection team that they considered the course was inclusive and accessible to all with positive comments about levels of support from tutors.

83. Inspectors heard from the course team and central support staff about the course offering a range of reasonable adjustments for learning sessions and assessments and were given multiple examples of students on this course having these adjustments applied. Inspectors heard from the Disability Service and how reasonable adjustment plans and individual support plans are offered to support students together with funding for initiatives that are not able to be DLA funded. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

84. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence and spoke to the course team and senior management to determine that the course is continually updated. The course team provided a presentation about the course and influences into its development. The inspection team agreed that the programme and modules appear constructed in a way that enables the incorporation of new material on a routine basis. Inspectors noted that the University Validation Board considers course annually and assesses its curriculum and content as 'good standing'.

85. Evidence was provided that modules are convened by specialists in their fields, drawing on research, policy, and practice expertise, and evidence that the course regularly reviews their curriculum through academic standards and quality assurance processes. The curriculum review group meets twice per year and its membership includes employee representatives from the teaching partnership, university staff, people with lived experience of social work and students, feeding contemporary issues into course development. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

86. The inspection team reviewed the individual module specifications that track across the course how theory and practice would be explored. Inspectors considered that theory and practice was demonstrably linked to assessment and the associated learning outcomes. Skills day content was reviewed prior to the inspection and discussed during inspection meetings. Inspectors agreed these showed a clear integration of theory and practice and recall days. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

87. The inspection team reviewed evidence of placement opportunities to work in a multi-agency context and with colleagues from other professional disciplines, and how the placement handbook described multidisciplinary work experiences against learning objectives.

88. The inspectors heard from students, course tutors and people with lived experience of social work about the opportunities for them to work with others about the Interprofessional Learning (IPL) days where they join students from other professional courses across the School. Students described that they valued these days as did the ABEL group who are involved in developing and undertaking multi-professional scenarios with students. Inspectors also determined that there were other clearly defined opportunities over the course modules to learn with and from students and lecturers from other professional courses. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

89. Inspectors were able to confirm that the course specification document clearly set out the purpose, credits and hours of teaching and learning with a breakdown by module and including placement information. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

90. The inspection team reviewed the MA assessment information in the course specification, and the course team presented examples of how the range of different assessment methods would test different skills and competencies. The documentary evidence demonstrated clear guidance in relation to assessment, marking, moderation and quality assurance processes.

91. The module assessments are mapped against the curriculum, learning outcomes, PCF and relevant Social Work England Professional Standards. Inspectors determined evidence of the review of assessment tools and methods in the Inclusive Course Design tool. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

92. As with standard 4.8, the inspection team reviewed documentation including module handbooks and the course specification 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 current and updated course.

93. The inspection team met with students at different stages of the course who expressed an appreciation of how the assessments prepared them for placements, including the initial admissions process. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

94. The inspection team reviewed documentation about how the course team fed back to students including the course specification and course handbook. Summative feedback was stated as being made within 4 weeks, and this was confirmed by talking to staff and students. Students told inspectors that on the occasion this was not met, prior notice was clearly given from course staff. Students are provided feedback on placement by weekly supervision and in meetings with personal tutors, and in these they obtain support on any learning needs disclosed from an academic advisor or tutor at the start of each year.

95. Inspectors learnt from the course team how tutors new to marking are given training and support to ensure fair assessment standards are met. 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. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

96. The inspection team reviewed documentation including staff CVs, External Examiner information including procedures and policy. Documents provided a detailed explanation of how external examiners are recruited and trained and the governance supporting this. The inspection team also reviewed the course team suitability as described in previous standards above and confirmed their approval. Inspectors considered that course staff are suitably experienced in assessment and the university provides training and support for new staff members. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

97. The inspection team considered various documentary evidence of systems in place to manage students' progression, including assignment feedback, supervision and direct observation on placement, personal tutor meetings and the use of the MyBeckett system to monitor engagement of students. The Module, Progress and Award boards provide a layer of scrutiny to ensure fair and accurate assessment of work produced by students. The academic engagement policy clearly set out student expectations, and the progression and awards fact sheets described the process for repeating and reassessment.

98. Inspectors considered this clearly evidenced from documentation with appropriate moderation processes such as the External Examiner report. Discussions with the course team, students and placement partners further assured the inspection team that there are systems to manage students' progression. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

99. From the programme specification documentation, course team CVs and a presentation by the course team the inspection team agreed that an evidence informed approach to practice was demonstrated throughout the course and that the course team had suitable skills, knowledge and understanding of research and evaluation. Modules on Social Work research and Legislation in Social Work focus and encourage students to be evidence based in their practice.

100. MA students work towards a research-based dissertation. Direct practice on placement is evidence based with an emphasis on reflective practices. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

101. The inspection team were provided with documentary evidence and university website 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. As well as the roles of Personal Tutors and Practice Educators, these services include confidential counselling services and

student wellbeing, occupational health, careers advice, disability support, and student finance and funding.

102. There is a dedicated disability advice team offering support to those with conditions like dyslexia and mental health conditions. There is also a student wellbeing team staffed by counsellors and mental health practitioners. Inspectors heard from central support staff about the disability and wellbeing advice service and how these remained operational during the pandemic. The inspection team heard about the role course and personal tutors play in this, as well as the student advice team.

103. Students were very positive about the range of support available, from the disability and wellbeing services to financial support and advice, and also the pastoral support of personal tutors. Support staff service leads provided examples of interventions with students including reasonable adjustments for students with maternity issues, financial problems and mental health issues. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

104. The inspection team reviewed information about a system of academic advisors (personal tutors) in place for students. The guidance for tutors is that they should remain with a student for course lifetime and all students should have a meeting (online or face to face) once a semester.

105. Personal tutors have access to a training module on the MyBeckett system and the guidance documentation has details of what Academic advisor meetings should cover. Tutors can signpost to lots of pastoral and additional support including money, wellbeing, counselling and disability. All of the course team are personal tutors. The inspection team heard from a member of staff who had recently become a personal tutor who was able to access training for this element of the role, Level support and supervision to support this role as described in the documentation.

106. The inspectors heard from the Library team about a range of resources and accessibility considerations such as an alternative format service and ebook licensing considerations. There is a laptop loan scheme, 24/7 library and Information Systems support desk. There is an open workshop programme and weekly drop in for academic skills and students with English as a second language. The inspectors viewed a MyProgress demonstration video that was available to staff and students to see what support mechanisms that students had access to from this system. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

107. The inspection team reviewed documents including the Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedure and DBS checking documentation and were satisfied that there is a thorough and

effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health. There are numerous alerts in documentation to emphasise need for good conduct and for students to meet the professional standards expected of them. There were no examples of its use recently: inspectors were told that issues had been resolved before formal action became necessary.

108. Inspectors heard from the course senior management team that the DBS and health declarations are processed at admissions and then annually with the Character Conduct and Health declaration. When meeting with students they were able to confirm their awareness of the processes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

109. From reviewing documentation including the course specification and the Placement Individual Support Plan the course provider was able to demonstrate that they are supportive of any reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments.

110. As mentioned in Standard 5.1, when meeting with students, Practice Educators, placement providers and specialist support staff the inspection team were given different examples of support that had been made available to students. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

111. Students are provided with course and placement handbooks which contain information about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker, and students expressed clear knowledge and understanding of this information which is clearly provided on the VLE. Inspectors considered there to be adequate information provided before admission and during course in the placement and course handbooks, as well as regular feedback on progress through course.

112. The inspectors heard from the second year MA students that they had attended an AYSE preparation day also attended by practitioners and had found this useful. The course team confirmed details about academic appeals. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

113. The inspection team reviewed prior to inspection information provided to students about mandatory attendance. The inspectors agreed that the course handbook clearly set out mandatory elements, placement requirements, how absences are monitored and how days missed should be made up. There is also a clearly documented process for a student to notify a placement provider of sickness or similar. Two weeks of non-attendance automatically triggers a pastoral session with the student's personal tutor.

114. Tutors regularly review attendance data. The School is trialling the use of an electronic app to track and monitor student attendance but the course team expressed that this has not really worked for them so far. The course team considers this as an area for improvement.

115. Students confirmed their awareness of the mandatory elements of the course and consequences of non-attendance, as well as how to access support available to students if they are concerned about personal issues that may have an impact on attendance. The inspection team agreed this standard was met. However, the inspection team understands that there is currently work being done on a new system to monitor attendance and allow for appropriate action to be taken. The inspection teams recommends that this work continues and the system is formalised. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 5.7

116. As highlighted under standard 4.10, the inspection team reviewed the documentary evidence provided and discussed the feedback mechanisms with current students. The inspection team heard from students that feedback was provided clearly and when expected, with options provided to students about following up on the feedback given.

117. The inspection team heard from the course team and students various activities where formative feedback took place, including reflective entries in their e-portfolio. Module tutors offer specific support regarding learning and assessment in their specific modules. Practice educators confirmed that they provide ongoing feedback via weekly supervision. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

118. The inspection team reviewed the university Academic Appeals Policy that is available to students on the university website and electronic course resources, though the course team could not provide recent examples of its use. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

119. Since the qualifying course is a MA Social Work and The PgDp exit route is for students who do not choose to submit a dissertation, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

The inspection team recommend that the course be approved.

Recommendations

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 inspection team understood that there was currently work being done on a new system to monitor attendance and allow for appropriate action to be taken. The inspectors are recommending that this work continues and the system is formalised.	Paragraph 115

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.