

Inspection Report

Course provider: Coventry University

Course approval: BA (Hons) Social Work
Integrated Apprenticeship

Inspection dates: 7 June 2022 – 10 June 2022

Report date:	26 August 2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	02/09/2022
Date conditions met and approved:	30/01/2023

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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. Coventry University's BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship 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. The inspection team also gave consideration to a revised BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship course looking for approval to run from September 2022, meaning both versions of the course would run concurrently.

Inspection ID	CUR1
Course provider	Coventry University
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of study	Full Time
Maximum student cohort	60
Date of inspection	07/06/22 – 10/06/22
Inspection team	Naomi Barrett (Education Quality Assurance Officer) Michelle Loughrey (Lay Inspector) Fran Leddra (Registrant Inspector)
Inspector recommendation	Approved with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

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

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place from 7 June 2022 to 10 June 2022 in Coventry where Coventry 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. The inspection team also had a tour of the university, saw facilities including the virtual learning rooms and the library.

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 apprentices

20. The inspection team met with eight students across all three years of study, including a student representative. Discussions included apprentices' experiences of applying for the course, their overall experience of the course, teaching and learning, having protected time for study and to extend their work beyond their current caseloads, raising concerns and preparedness for post-qualifying practice. There were also discussions around the student voice and responses to any issues or concerns they might have raised with the university.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course team, senior management team and central support teams, including from the library.

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 Degree Apprenticeship course.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including Solihull Council, Coventry Council, Warwickshire Council, Barnardo's and Change, Grow, Live. In later meetings the inspection team also met with independent Practice Educators, who engage with Coventry BA students as placement supervisors, and representatives of the West Midlands Teaching Partnership (WMTTP).

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 were reviewed by the inspection team. The inspection team were also able to see the information that the university provides to employer partners prior to applications being made through the SW Apprenticeship Recruitment and Selection Pack. The pack is used by employer partners as applicants go through their internal selection process prior to engaging in the university led processes.

26. The inspection team, through meetings with admissions, course team, people with lived experience of social work and employer partners were satisfied that the university has a holistic approach to entry on to the course. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

27. As this course is a degree apprenticeship, there is a requirement that the applicant be currently employed in an appropriate setting related to social work. Employers will, in the first instance, assess their employee's current role and experience. If they find this to be appropriate, then they will be put forward to engage with the university process.

28. The university admissions tutor will have the final say as to whether someone is eligible to continue through the admissions process, and the interview questions will provide applicants with the opportunity to give more detailed examples of their knowledge, skills and experience. The inspection team were provided with, and reviewed, the interview questions and agreed that these were suitable for considering prior relevant experience. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

29. 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. They provided some extensive information about the different ways they get involved and influencing the process. Activities discussed included reviewing written tasks and interviewing candidates.

30. The inspection team also spoke with apprentices who reflected 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

31. The responsibility to carry out the assessment of the suitability of the applicant's character, conduct and health sits with employers in the first instance. Employers are required to confirm these checks and enhanced DBS checks by completing a Faculty Pre – Enrolment Eligibility Check Declaration form.

32. Should any disclosures be made during this process, the university will follow their suitability process (Faculty DBS Policy and Procedure), which the inspection team reviewed.

33. When meeting with members of the admissions team, the inspection team were told of the support mechanisms whereby applicants can seek advice and guidance. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

34. The university provided documentary evidence relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies prior to inspection, which was reviewed by the inspection team. This included their Access and Participation Plan, Demographic Data, Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and a link to their Fair Access Scheme.

35. 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 that, wherever possible, support was already in place when the applicant enrolled and became a student. This included financial, learning and pastoral support.

36. When meeting with the apprentices, individuals confirmed to the inspection team that they had received 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

37. The university's webpage for the BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship course highlights entry requirements, funding and course overview information. Further details about a career in social work and eligibility to register as a social worker are provided in the SW Apprenticeship Recruitment and Selection Pack, which was reviewed by the inspection team but they were unable to locate any placement information.

38. When the inspection team met with the apprentices, they confirmed that they had most of the information they needed to make an informed choice about taking a place up with Coventry University and discussed the different methods of finding information. The two areas which applicants were not provided with information about were placements and any consequences of taking up the apprenticeship might have on their employment.

39. The inspection team explored this further with the apprentices and were told that the information about the impact on their employment varied, even within the same employer partners. Some had undertaken the apprenticeship not being made aware that they would go on to a temporary contract for the duration of the apprenticeship in one case, another had not been made aware that there would be a drop in salary as they were currently employed in a management position, which they would be expected to leave. Apprentices explained that had this information been provided upfront then they may not have taken up a place on the course as this would have a knock-on effect in their lives outside of the course.

40. The inspection team agreed that whilst it is not the university's responsibility to provide information about the individual applicant's employment terms and salary and other potential consequences, they do have a responsibility to ensure that the applicant has had that information from their employer prior to accepting a place on the course to ensure that the applicant is making a fully informed decision.

41. Regarding placement information, this will be picked up in more detail under standard 2.1 below but currently information about placement expectations is not sufficiently communicated prior to the start of the course.

42. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met. 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 two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

43. Information and evidence in support of this standard reviewed by the inspection team prior to inspection indicated that there is a dedicated 30-day contrasting placement but that the remainder of the days would far exceed the required 200 days as 80% of apprentices time was learning on the job. There is also an additional opportunity for apprentices to undertake a three-day shadowing experience as part of the Critical Reflection on Professional Practice module, but this is arranged by the apprentice with support from their manager and Practice Educator.

44. When meeting with the course team discussions were had about the requirement for 200 placement days. It was discussed that many apprentices were in fact in their substantive post but were given additional 'stretch' work tasks. This means that for a good portion of their time apprentices are in fact doing their day job and not undertaking placement work. When asked to provide information and evidence as to how the university accurately records time spent on stretch activities and where the supervision was recorded for that work, the university were unable to provide this and agreed with the inspection team that there was an over-reliance on employer partners to ensure this activity took place. It was agreed by all that given the wide range of employers and opportunities for placement activity the university needed a more consistent approach to allocating the required time whilst also ensuring the implementation and monitoring of these activities for the duration of the apprenticeship. This includes ensuring that each apprentice undertakes stretch work that includes statutory tasks.

45. When meeting with the apprentices they spoke of the inconsistencies of placement stretch tasks and the time to undertake these. Some employers were able to offer and support more of these activities and others less so. There was also a lack of statutory tasks in some areas. Some apprentices were expected to undertake some of these activities outside of normal working hours, with no supervision, such was the extent of their workload.

46. During the inspection, the course team took all these points onboard and produced a sample document which identified designated blocks of time throughout the course to ensure that both they and employers could evidence dedicated placement activity time alongside the apprentices existing caseloads. The inspection team agreed that the proposed model was a positive step forward and would potentially meet the requirements of this standard but the university needed to work more on this and engage with their employer partners to discuss the implementation and monitoring of this model.

47. The inspection team agreed that this standard was not met. 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 2.2

48. The university provided documentary evidence relating to practice learning opportunities which included an Apprentices Initial Learning Plan and Apprentices Review Form. The inspection team met with representatives from employer partners to discuss the types of stretch tasks and work being offered to apprentices.

49. The inspection team agreed it was evident that there are good working relationships with employer partners, and students have appropriate and wide-ranging placement experiences. However, as explored in the standard above, the university was unable to demonstrate how they ensured each apprentice undertakes statutory tasks as part of the placement stretch work. Therefore, these discussions, along with the documentary evidence reviewed, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

50. 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 2.3

51. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection covered the processes for induction, supervision and quality assurance. The inspection team were told how the processes were used and monitored by both the course team and employer partners in the respective meetings.

52. Students have support from their Personal Tutor who they can contact directly should they require additional advice or guidance. Apprentices also told the inspection team about the support they received from Practice Educators, Placement Tutor and through supervision.

53. The apprentices said they were happy with the support they had from the university.

54. Support was also explored with Practice Educators, who were able to provide examples of how they had supported apprentices with reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

55. The inspection team were directed to the evidence and information about the four-way meetings that take place as the main mechanism for ensuring that the apprentices' responsibilities are appropriate to their current place within the apprenticeship programme and their current learning needs. There is also a specific meeting prior to the contrasting 30-day placement, which takes into account the apprentice's previous experience, current learning needs, and the learning opportunities provided by the contrasting placement.

56. When meeting with the apprentices, the inspection team were given examples of where concerns about workloads were raised with the Practice Educator, who in turn supported the student with their employers to look at the impact of their workload on their learning

needs. The apprentices also said the university had also been supportive in these discussions. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

57. The inspection team were satisfied with the evidence provided in relation to students assessed preparation for practice, such as the Apprentices Review Form and skills days. The inspection team also took a tour of the simulation suites available to students and discussed how they are used with members of the course team.

58. As this is an apprenticeship the apprentices are already in practice prior to the start of the course. The suitability checks done as part of the employer initial sift of applicants to the course, alongside the university's admissions processes, ensure that the apprentice has demonstrated appropriate character and conduct during their career to date. As a result, the inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

59. The documentary evidence reviewed by the inspection team showed what checks are made on practice partners employment methods to ensure that there are appropriately qualified Practice Educators in place. The university has also introduced a new protocol to aid partner agencies in their own checks to ensure consistency in approach and quality assurance in the recruitment of independent Practice Educators.

60. This process was discussed with Practice Educators and employment partners with both confirming that these processes were working well in practice. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

61. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included the Faculty Process for Managing Concerns (whistleblowing), Whistleblowing Procedure, and a link to the university complaints page. When meeting with the apprentices they spoke of their awareness of the policies and where to find them. They felt that they would be listened to if they had to use the policy and commented on finding the university very supportive. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

62. In addition to documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection, on day one of the inspection the course team gave a helpful presentation to the inspection team focussed on the governance structures and committees at the university. The inspection team were able to see clear lines of reporting and associated quality assurance mechanisms, processes and

related committees. This included the processes the recent changes to the course would have gone through for internal approval.

63. When meeting with senior management colleagues the inspection team were able to explore some of what was in the presentation in more detail, along with future plans. The inspection team were therefore satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

64. As this is an apprenticeship course, employer partners are contractually bound to provide education and training that meets the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards. Some employers have a reciprocal arrangement in place to accept each other's apprentices to provide the 30 day contrasting placement opportunity.

65. Documentary evidence supporting this standard was the Advanced Critical Reflection Professional Practice Module Guide which highlighted relevant frameworks including the professional standards, but not specifically which professional standards would be met here.

66. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

67. The inspection team reviewed the Contrast Learning Experience Agreement Form prior to inspection which covers policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk. In addition to these, when meeting with the Practice Educators, the inspection team were told of practice educator briefings that would go into detail over areas such as student wellbeing and support. The Practice Educators all spoke positively of these events. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

68. The inspection team, through the review of evidence alongside meetings held with employer partners, were assured of the positive working relationships between the university and partners. Employer partners are involved in the Social Work Apprenticeship Partnership Group, which feeds into the Course Quality Annual Monitoring processes and School of Psychological, Social and Behavioural Sciences (PSBS) Board of Study. Some of the partners and 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

69. Documentation provided by the course team demonstrated how employer partners, students and people with lived experience of social work are engaged in monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems. The inspection team were also able to meet with each of those groups, along with representatives of the WMTP, to hear how they are

involved in practice and what impact they felt they had on course evaluation and improvement. The feedback from each group was positive and included practical examples of changes made as a result of their feedback. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

70. As detailed above in standards 3.2 and associated evidence, the university clearly demonstrated how they work with employer partners around placement provision with a defined strategy and agreement regarding cohort sizes. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

71. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed the Course Leader's CV and confirmed they are a registered social worker.

72. 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

73. 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. Throughout the inspection, the inspection team heard of some of the contemporary teaching and assessment methods used. The inspection team also heard about areas of research and PhD focuses from the course team. When the inspection team met with students, they gave positive feedback about teaching and assessment methods. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

74. Prior to inspection the university provided clear evidence and information that demonstrated the mechanisms used by the university to gather data and information and how this feeds forward for analysis and action. This evidence included Progression and Awards Board Apprenticeship Board of Study Course Report and Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring (CEQM) Report with interim update, all of which was reviewed by the inspection team.

75. During the inspection, the inspection team were provided with further information and evidence relating to audit mechanisms, including a demonstration of the software the university uses to track students' progression and engagement and how it alerts the course

team to any dips or trends, either at individual student level or a more strategic level, such as the attainment gap between white students compared to BME students. This information is used to feed into the CEQM report and the Board of Study. The course team were able to discuss both long and short-term goals; some of the ways they are attempting to tackle the trends and reduce attainment gaps, and the research they are undertaking to try and understand these issues better. The inspection team was satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

76. As discussed under standard 3.8 above, the staff team has a wide range of experience and specialisms. Staff are being supported and funded to undertake PhDs as well as other research opportunities. The inspection team were provided with information and evidence about the support available for the course team to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice as well as personal development. There is also a budget to support both professional and personal development.

77. When meeting with senior managers they advised of the time allocated to each staff member to allow for external as well as internal development and training opportunities. New colleagues joining the university without a teaching qualification complete the PgCert which includes receiving Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA), to which the course is aligned.

78. The course team also engage with the local teaching partnership, WMTP, in regional activities. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

79. The inspection team reviewed the Course Specification, Parts A, B and C, Group Tuition Quality Policy and other documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection, which shows how the course learning outcomes are mapped to Social Work England's Professional Standards, the Institute for Apprenticeship Standards and the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF).

80. The inspection team discussed the structure and content of these in more detail with the course team during a meeting 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. Learning outcomes in turn link to the Professional Standards and other frameworks.

81. When meeting with the apprentices, 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

82. When meeting with representatives of employer partners, students, Practice Educators and people with lived experience, the inspection team heard positive examples of the good working relationships 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.

83. 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 course, satisfied the inspection team that this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

84. The inspection team, having reviewed the University's overarching policies, such as the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy, 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, as discussed in standard 3.9 above. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

85. This course has recently been refreshed and a number of changes will be implemented for new students from September 2022. Existing students will continue on their current course. These changes are the result of a mix of student and Employer Partner feedback as well as changes in legislation policy and practice. Inspectors were provided with all updated documents.

86. Documentary evidence provided to the inspection team prior to inspection included the Internal Course and Module Change workflow slides and Example Course Change Form and the inspection team discussed, in detail with the course team, Employer Partners, Practice Educators and people with lived experience all the elements where they provide continuous feedback about the course. Therefore, the inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

87. 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. The

inspection team discussed this with the course team and were given a clear overview of how and where links are made.

88. This was explored in more detail with the Practice Educators who said that the materials students arrive with were particularly good examples and enhanced their work supporting the integration of theory into practice with all their apprentices. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

89. The inspection team were told that Social Work sits within the Faculty of Health and Life Science and therefore apprentices can work alongside undergraduate students from allied health professions to optimise student experience. The inspection team were taken on a tour of the facilities within this faculty and shown the simulation suites that are fully set up to enable students to recreate a number of scenarios, depending on the session.

90. Documentary evidence submitted and reviewed by inspectors included the Module Information Descriptors for Social Work Practice with Children and Families and Social Work Practice with Adults. These are the main modules that focus on multi-disciplinary working but this is also included elsewhere on the course. Apprentices come into contact with a wide range of professionals from mental wellbeing services, psychology services, police, teachers, Judges, CAFCAS, CRASAC, and substance use services.

91. The inspection team were also told of the upcoming events being held within the faculty, such as turning a building into a mock hospital setting and enabling students from multiple courses to work together, and other events including working with another university and their medical students. The inspection team was satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

92. The inspection team were able to review both the Course Specification and Individual Module Information descriptors, detailing the course structure with the required hours along with the university's Academic Regulation 2021-22 and found there were a sufficient number of hours recorded. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

93. The inspection team reviewed documents in relation to current assessments and progression and were given practical examples of how the range of different assessment methods test different skills. The inspection team were also given updated documentation showing how and when changes to assessments, as part of the new version of the course, would take place. These changes were due partly due to university-wide changes around assessment and ensuring a diverse range are available.

94. The team also discussed support available for 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

95. As with the standard above, 4.8, the inspection team 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. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

96. Feedback processes are aligned with the university Assessment and Feedback Policy. The inspection team reviewed this along with HLS Best Practice Marking and Moderation Guide and Enabling Students to Recognise Formative Feedback document, amongst other evidence.

97. The university evidenced the multiple ways that apprentices are given feedback for both personal and professional development, including through their Personal Tutor with whom they meet on a regular basis to discuss course progression, learning requirements and any other support needs. Apprentices are provided with feedback from formative assessments which can include feedback from people with lived experience of social work. Apprentices are also given feedback as part of placement activity from supervisors and Practice Educators.

98. The inspection team discussed feedback and its effectiveness with apprentices 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

99. The inspection team reviewed the course team suitability in the standards above and confirmed their approval. The inspection team also reviewed External Examiner CVs and other supporting documentary evidence including Coventry University External Examiner Appointment Criteria, Guidance on the appointment and role of External Examiners, Example External Examiner Advert. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

100. Documentary evidence provided in relation to the systems that manage student progression included the Apprenticeship Course Handbook and the Apprenticeship Course Specification documents which were reviewed by the inspection team. These, in addition to discussions with the course team, employer partners and people with lived experience of

social work, assured the inspection team that all parties are included in the systems identified and this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

101. The inspection team concluded that evidence-informed thinking and practice could be clearly demonstrated throughout the course via the Module Information Descriptors. The support mechanisms for students, along with feedback from people with lived experience of social work 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

102. Prior to inspection, the inspection team were provided with documentary evidence and links that outlined a range of advice and support services designed to meet both the academic and pastoral needs of all apprentices. Such services include confidential counselling services, careers advice, student well-being and student finance and funding. When meeting with the course team and support services colleagues, the inspection team were told about new Skills Coaches roles and Mentor roles for additional support.

103. When discussing the support mechanisms with apprentices they were able to share their knowledge and experiences of using these services and knew where they could find more information or book appointments should they need to use the services in the future. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

104. Apprentices are allocated a Personal Tutor to support them throughout their studies and who can refer students to further specialist support within the university. That support is also available remotely for apprentices who are not in the university as often and the inspection team were told by the apprentices of specific adjustments made to support them.

105. When discussing the services with the apprentices, they had knowledge and experiences of using the services and specifically mentioned services through the Academic Centre, such as workshops and academic writing support. Student support in relation to academic development was clearly demonstrated and the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

106. The inspection team reviewed the policies and processes submitted prior to inspection which included the Professional Suitability and Fitness to Practise Procedure document, the Group Student Conduct Policy and Student Behaviour Code of Conduct and were satisfied

that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character, and health.

107. When meeting with apprentices they were able to confirm their knowledge of the processes and requirements and therefore the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

108. The university was able to demonstrate that they are supportive of any reasonable adjustments for apprentices with health conditions or impairments which was echoed by the employment partners and Practice Educators the inspection team met with. This was further demonstrated in the documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection which provided the detail on how information is shared with partners and Practice Educators and how the processes work in practice.

109. 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 apprentice's studies. When discussing support with the apprentices, those with any additional needs were satisfied with the support they had received. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

110. The university was able to demonstrate the number of ways that apprentices are given information about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker. These included, but were not limited to, the Course Handbook, and Module Information descriptors (MIDs) The inspection team were also provided with an extensive mapping document showing how the learning outcomes were mapped against the Professional Standards and PCF, making it clear exactly where students could meet those standards in their modules; inspectors agreed that this was a really useful aid for apprentices. However, this map is an appendix at the end of the newly updated course specifications and not currently shared with apprentices, although the course team planned for this to be shared in the next academic year.

111. The inspection team agreed that when the mapping is shared, apprentices would benefit if it were included in the student facing curriculum documents to ensure they knew where the professional standards were being met. The inspection team agreed that this standard was not currently met as apprentices are not given all the information they need about the curriculum and their progression towards being able to meet the professional standards by the end of the course. 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 5.6

112. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted around attendance prior to inspection and during the inspection, the course team were able to demonstrate the way attendance is monitored and where the trigger points are for investigation and intervention. When meeting with the apprentices they were able to confirm they knew the requirements around attendance. The inspection team were given a tour of the Aula virtual assessment portals which clearly demonstrated feedback from both students and tutors re attendance as well as data that showed extent of monitoring. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Standard 5.7

113. As highlighted under standard 4.10, the inspection team reviewed the documentary evidence provided and discussed the feedback mechanisms with current apprentices. The apprentices 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

114. The inspection team were able to identify the policies and procedures around academic appeals from the documentary evidence provided. A demonstration of the virtual learning environment (VLE) highlighted where these processes are made available to students online but also in the Course Handbook reviewed by the inspection team. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

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

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

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.

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	Standard 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where they communicate information about placement activity to apprentice applicants enabling them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the apprenticeship.	30 November 2022	Paragraph 42
2	Standard 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where the university ensures that apprentice applicants have been given information by their employers that highlights any changes to terms of employment including any impact on current or future salary, enabling them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the apprenticeship.	30 November 2022	Paragraph 42
3	Standard 2.1 Standard 2.2	The education provider will provide evidence that clearly demonstrates how placement stretch activity meets the required placement days and requirements for statutory tasks as part of these activities. This evidence needs to include the implementation and monitoring of these days to ensure the	30 November 2022	Paragraph 47 Paragraph 50

		apprentices are all able to demonstrate they have met these requirements.		
4	Standard 5.5	The education provider will provide evidence that clearly demonstrates how and where apprentices for both the current BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship and updated BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship are given information that informs them how and where they will meet the professional standards and as they progress through the course, building on the mapping work already undertaken by the course team.	30 November 2022	Paragraph 111

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Table breakdown of standards met during preapproval and inspection.

Standard	Met	Not Met 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	Not Met 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	Not Met 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	Not Met 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	Not Met 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	Not Met 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	Not Met 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](#).

Inspectors will undertake the conditions review and make recommendations 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	Inspector recommendation
1	1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where they communicate information about placement activity to apprentice applicants enabling them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the apprenticeship. The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where the university ensures that apprentice applicants have been given information by their employers that highlights any changes to terms of employment including any impact on current or future salary, enabling them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the apprenticeship.	Condition met.
2	2.1, 2.2	The education provider will provide evidence that clearly demonstrates how placement stretch activity meets the required placement days and requirements for statutory tasks as part of these activities. This evidence needs to include the implementation and monitoring of these days to ensure the apprentices are all able to demonstrate they have met these requirements.	Condition met.
3	5.5	The education provider will provide evidence that clearly demonstrates	Condition met.

		how and where apprentices for both the current BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship and updated BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship are given information that informs them how and where they will meet the professional standards and as they progress through the course, building on the mapping work already undertaken by the course team.	
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Findings

This conditions review was undertaken as a result of conditions set during course approval as outlined in the original inspection report above.

After the review of the documentary evidence, the inspection team are satisfied that all of the conditions set against the approval of the BA Social Work Degree Apprenticeship are now met.

In relation to standard 1.6, the education provider submitted an information pack for employees which had been developed by the university. Within the information pack, the inspection team were directed to information relating to types of placements, where placements would be based, necessary levels of contrast and the requirement for enhanced DBS checks.

Within the same document, there was also evidence relating to the impact of apprentices who might decide to change their employment during the course. This included information about their duty to notify current employers as well as discussing their enrolment on the apprenticeship with potential employers prior to starting a new role. The information pack highlights that apprentices should be aware that there should be discussions with new employers about their ability to continue to fund the apprenticeship in advance of any start date as it could have an impact upon their progression on the course. The inspection team were satisfied that the information provided gave applicants enough information to make an informed decision about whether to take a place on the course and agreed that the condition was met.

In relation to the condition set against standards 2.1 and 2.2 the education provider submitted a range of documentary evidence to assure the inspection team that placement activity meets the required length and includes appropriate statutory tasks. A mapping document provided by the university included their rationale in relation to placement planning which identified how work-based learning is aligned to the apprenticeship

standards throughout the three years of the course. Details of the calculations used were reviewed by the inspection team as was the details of placement learning in each year of the course. In total, over the three years, the Apprentice undertakes 208 placements days in the form of work-based learning to meet the minimum of 200 placement days. Alongside the rationale provided by the university, the inspection team also reviewed evidence of how placement learning was tracked and saw evidence of guidance provided to students to ensure consistency. The inspection team agreed that the condition was met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 5.5, the education provider submitted updated versions of their student handbooks and evidence of communications that were sent to students to notify them of these changes. Both versions of the revised student handbooks included an appendix which detailed how the apprenticeship standards are mapped to Social Work England Professional standards so that students are well informed of how they will meet the professional standards during the course. The inspection team agreed that the condition against standard 5.5 was met.

Conclusion

The inspection team is recommending that as the conditions have been met, the course be approved.

It should be noted that all qualifying social work courses will be subject to reapproval under Social Work England's 2021 education and training standards.

Regulator decision

Conditions met.