

Inspection Report

Course provider: University of Cumbria

Course approval: BA (Hons) Social Work

Inspection dates: 26th of April to 28th of April 2022

Report date:	10/06/2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	08/07/2022
Date conditions met and approved:	30/01/2023

Contents

Introduction	3
What we do.....	3
Summary of Inspection	5
Language	5
Inspection.....	6
Meetings with students	6
Meetings with course staff.....	6
Meeting with people with lived experience of social work	6
Meetings with external stakeholders.....	6
Findings	7
Standard one: Admissions.....	7
Standard two: Learning environment	9
Standard three: Course governance, management and quality.....	12
Standard four: Curriculum assessment.....	16
Standard six: Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register	21
Proposed outcome.....	22
Conditions	22
Recommendations	22
Annex 1: Education and training standards summary	24
Regulator decision	30
Annex 2: Meeting of conditions.....	31
Findings	31
Conclusion	32
Regulator decision	33

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. The University of Cumbria 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	UCR1
Course provider	University of Cumbria
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Work
Mode of study	Full Time
Maximum student cohort	25
Date of inspection	26/04/2022-28/04/2022
Inspection team	Sarah Sanderson Education Quality Assurance Officer Bradley Allan (Lay Inspector) Kaleel Khan (Registrant Inspector)
Inspector recommendation	Approved with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

16. In this document we describe University of Cumbria as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the BA (Hons) Social Work as ‘the course’.

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place from 26/04/2022 to 28/04/2022 in Carlisle where education provider 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 eight students from the BA programme, with attendees from years 1, 2 and 3 including student reps. Discussions included experience of placements, the support available to students both on placement and off, feedback, how theory is put into practice and the information given to students about post qualifying training and CPD.

Meetings with course staff

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

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work who prefer the term experts by experience as this is felt to be more inclusive of people who are or have been carers. Experts by experience have been involved in sharing their experiences with students and supporting with the admissions process. Discussions included an exploration of the roles of people with lived experience in the course and how this impacted on the student journey.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including employer partners/placement providers and practice educators, with representation from both statutory and PVI settings.

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. Documentary evidence was supplied in relation to admissions including a narrative of the admissions process and examples of interview questions, case studies and the associated scoring forms.

26. Further information was sought in relation to the assessment of English language skills and the university provided a narrative response explaining the process for assessing internationals was to use IELTS, the Pearson PTE or a similar test with an external invigilator.

27. The admissions team were able to talk through the process during the inspection and the inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

28. The documentary evidence provided gave a description of how previous experience is assessed at the application and interview stage. Additional information was sought to clarify how decisions were made around previous experiences. Information was provided outlining how the interview questions sought to assess applicants prior experience on a case-by-case basis.

29. Inspectors were able to hear from the admissions team their overview of the admissions process and were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

30. The documentary evidence gave some information in relation to experts by experience being involved in asking questions at interview and scoring. In the information provided the university recognised that employers/placement providers had not been involved in the interview process since the pandemic but had previously had involvement and work had begun to introduce employers and practitioners back into the admissions process.

31. Additional information was requested in relation to this standard, the university provided information relating to a recent meeting in February 2022 with practitioners who had expressed an interest in being part of the interview process. The information also advised that academic staff on the interview panel are trained in unconscious bias, cross-cultural awareness and consumer law. Academic staff make the recommendation regarding which applicants are offered a place, guided by the views of others on the panel. External stakeholders do not receive training from the university.

32. Inspectors met with people with experts by experience who worked with the course provider. In relation to admissions, all present at the meeting had taken part in asking questions at the admissions stage and scoring. It was not apparent from the meeting that experts by experience had been involved in the design of the admissions process although the group expressed a willingness to be more involved in this area.

31. Inspectors spoke to employers and practice educators during the inspection. Whilst none of the participants spoken to had been directly involved in the admissions process, there was an awareness that the university had made recent steps towards more external stakeholders being involved. As with experts by experiences, employers and practitioners expressed a willingness to be more involved in this area.

32. In meetings with the course team and from the documentary evidence review the inspection team heard that an advisory board of external stakeholders was in the early stages of development, and from this it was hoped that feedback and involvement from a range of stakeholders could be implemented into different elements of the course. The course team expressed a willingness for this to progress and for meaningful involvement to be achieved.

33. Following a review of all the evidence, inspectors are recommending that one condition be set in relation to standards 1.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 4.2. 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 the inspection team was 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 [proposed outcomes](#) section of this report.

Standard 1.4

34. The documentary evidence provided prior to inspection detailed the process for assessing the suitability of applicants, including DBS checks, applicant self-declaration and also health and character declaration forms.

35. The inspectors had an opportunity to discuss the admissions process with the admissions team during the inspection and were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

36. Information from the course provider prior to inspection highlighted the process of ensuring applicants who have indicated they may require reasonable adjustments, are adult returners or are care experienced have these areas taken into consideration during the admissions process.

37. Additional information was sought, and the course provider advised that internal staff have received training in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion to support them through the admissions process.

38. During the inspection the admissions team were able to talk through the admissions process and the inspection team were also provided with the university's admission policy and equality, diversity, and inclusion policy.

39. On review of the evidence, the inspectors were in agreement that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

40. The information provided prior to inspection included links to the course website that applicants could access, this includes information about the course content, entry and DBS requirements and assessment information. Information was also provided around a course presentation that takes place on the interview day with the opportunity for applicants to ask questions. The slides for this session were provided for consideration. Course fees, additional costs and accommodation costs are outlined on the course website.

41. In discussion with the admissions team and also the course team the inspectors heard how applicants are made aware that completion of the course does not guarantee entry to the social work register.

42. The inspectors agreed that the standard was met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

43. The university provided narrative around a model of 70 days first placement and 100 days second placement and provided documents including the practice placement handbook, practice learning agreement, attendance record, practice skills days breakdown and timetable, observation of practice template and new placement audit.

44. The inspectors were also provided with additional information which detailed how the course provider had implemented the model of Quality Audit of Practice Placement (QAPL) as set out by BASW. Inspectors were advised that the placement setting completes a self-audit and this is then cross referenced by the placement lead.

45. During the inspection the course team gave a presentation and detailed how the skills days are spaced throughout the course to build on skills and previous learning. Inspectors also heard from the placement lead the arrangements for auditing placements, including the use of an end of placement feedback questionnaire completed by students. The course provider also advised that they collaborate with a practice educator forum set up by the local authority which can also be used as a mechanism for gathering feedback.

46. Inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

47. Prior to inspection information was provided around expectation setting for practice educators and placement providers, this was evidenced in the placement handbook and placement learning agreements supplied to inspectors. Narrative was provided in relation to how placements are matched to student learning needs.

48. During the inspection the students were asked for their views on placements. The feedback from this session was that recent improvements had been made to the way placements had been managed. Students gave the example of the introduction of a placement lead having a positive impact on placement allocation and organisation and also the introduction of the online platform Pebblepad had been beneficial.

49. Practice educator knowledge and the auditing of placements were outlined by the placement lead during the inspection.

50. On consideration of all the available evidence, inspectors were agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

51. The documentary evidence provided included the placement handbook, a PowerPoint presentation students go through to prepare for placement and supervision agreement which sets out expectations for support and supervision. Also included were documents to support the review and auditing of the placement including midpoint review forms, induction checklist, record of supervision and the placement audit form.

52. Students reported that overall, they felt the support they received whilst on placement was good, where examples were given of issues students reported that the course team had been responsive and supportive.

53. Practice educators reported that they felt they had a good understanding of student needs prior to them commencing placement due to the information shared with them from the course provider. Due to this, practice educators felt well prepared to offer appropriate support.

54. On the basis of the evidence considered, inspectors were agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

55. Narrative was provided around the differences between first and second placements, the first typically within private, voluntary or independent (PVI) settings and the second in a statutory setting. Information was provided around the learning that takes place before each placement to ensure students have the appropriate skills. The course provider was able to demonstrate in the evidence provided the expectations around learning at each stage.

56. During inspection students reported they felt that their level of training was appropriate for their stage of learning and practice educators and placements providers were able to articulate how students were supported with their learning needs.

57. The inspectors were agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

58. Prior to inspection information was provided that outlined how the DBS was used to ensure suitability and that the programme requires students complete all year 1 modules before going out on placement to ensure that they meet the university's criteria for readiness to practice, mapped against the PCF's, including a module around working with experts by experience. Professionalism, code of conduct and fitness to practice are covered in a presentation students attend before placement one.

59. The above information was also presented to the inspection team at the initial course presentation during the inspection.

60. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

61. Documentary evidence outlined how the quality assurance of practice learning process has recently been updated to include student feedback in relation to practice educators to strengthen this process, and moving forward the university plans to use this data to develop practice learning. Practice educators social work registration and PEPS status is shared with the university before placement and during the audit process.

62. The university run practice educator training and support practice educators by collaborating with the practice educator forums that are set up in collaboration with local authority partners. These forums have recently been extended to include off site practice educators and those working in Private Voluntary and Independent settings.

63. The course team were able to talk through the process of ensuring practice educator currency and refresher training was available to those who require it. Practice educators reported that they would like the opportunity to receive feedback on the portfolios they worked on but did feel that the communication with the university was good and the forums and support available was helpful.

64. Based on the evidence presented, inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

65. The documentary evidence provided included examples of how students are taught to recognise issues within placement and what to do if they are worried. This is outlined in the placement handbook and also in the practice learning agreement.

66. During the inspection students reported they felt confident of the process for raising a concern and would feel comfortable approaching university staff if they had concerns.

67. The inspectors were assured that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

68. Narrative was provided prior to inspection giving an overview of the management structure and committee structure.

69. During the course of the inspection the senior management team were able to provide an overview to inspectors of the role of the senior leadership team and also planning around staff, student numbers and portfolio planning. Possibilities of expanding the social work portfolio were discussed, there was emphasis on this being in line with being able to offer quality of placements.

70. Inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

71. The documentary evidence provided outlined the university's expectations that are shared with practice educators and placement providers. Drop-in sessions are available to practice educators and the university has recently updated their QAPL to strengthen this process. Consent for students to be working with experts by experience whilst on placement is included in the practice paperwork provided.

72. The course team, employers and practice educators were all asked for their experiences of managing placement breakdown. Examples were given that demonstrated clear communication and process between all parties, including students. Support was also

available to both student and practice educators in the event of placement breakdown or difficulties.

73. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

74. The documentary evidence included the placement handbook and also placement learning agreement where the support available to students was outlined. Students reported during the inspection that they felt supported, and employers were able to outline how students could access support onsite and how the employers were able to use the universities help and support referral systems.

75. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

76. In the documentary evidence provided the university had identified that employer involvement was an area that required some development. Although examples from 2018 and 2019 were provided, there was limited input after this time. The university was able to outline plans for an advisory board that would formalise the relationship between employers and the university along with other stakeholders such as experts by experience, students and practitioners.

77. The inspection team heard from employers, experts by experience and practitioners who all expressed a willingness to be more involved in course design and monitoring, one meeting has taken place in March 2022 with additional meetings planned for the future. The university are in talks with stakeholders to grow participation in this area.

78. Inspectors were confident that in time the formulation of the advisory board as set out in the mapping document would meet this standard, however as this is such a recent development it was impossible to assess the effectiveness of this at the moment.

79. Inspectors agreed that a condition in this area was required at this time, with a view to examining this area again after a period of time to allow the university to develop this area further. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [proposed outcomes](#) section of this report. Inspectors are recommending that one condition be set in relation to standards 1.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 4.2.

Standard 3.5

80. The documentary evidence supplied prior to inspection detailed how internal university staff use a range of tools to monitor and improve the programme, these include module evaluations, external examiners reports and annual monitoring. Some detail was also given around current mechanisms for gaining student feedback, including staff student forums, informal feedback and consultations in relation to minor modifications.

81. As with standard 3.4, the university was able to identify that this is an area that requires some additional strengthening and the advisory board that is in the early stages of development will support with the meeting of this standard.

82. Inspectors agreed that a condition in this area was required at this time, with a view to examining this area again after a period of time to allow the university to develop this area further. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [proposed outcomes](#) section of this report. Inspectors are recommending that one condition be set in relation to standards 1.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 4.2.

Standard 3.6

83. The documentary evidence provided outlined that students numbers remain constant due to placement availability in the area. The narrative explained how the university was conscious not to over recruit and risk being unable to place students, and that due to the rural nature of the area, communication with employers and horizon scanning was part of their approach.

84. In discussion with the senior management team inspectors were advised that there are no plans to increase numbers, but there is some flexibility between the number of placements between the BA provision and their MA course.

85. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

86. The documentary evidence provided included information in relation to who the lead social worker is, along with staff CV's outlining the experience within the team.

87. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

88. An overview of the staff involved with the programme along with their CV's was provided as part of the evidence for this standard. During the inspection the inspectors heard how teaching is supported by subject specialists brought in from multiagency partners. An example was given of a barrister supporting students with court skills sessions and also a prison service being used to support with skills days. Inspectors discussed with teaching staff their opportunities to keep their knowledge and skills up to date and heard examples of recent research relating to social work that had been undertaken.

89. The inspectors were in agreement that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

90. Prior to inspection the university was able to provide narrative around the collection of student attainment data that is captured by the annual monitoring process. This data includes retention, progression and award data. Modules with a failure level of 20% or above automatically triggers the requirement for a module report to examine this. The data is also fed into the analysis across the institute.

91. Information around student demographics was also provided, although it was unclear how this information was being used. The inspectors discussed this with the course team during the inspection and heard that an EDI subgroup was in the process of being set up and that local groups would be part involved in this. Inspectors were advised there was an aspiration to have conversations around the marketing of the course in relation to representation on the course but this required planning to ensure that this was a meaningful activity and not tokenistic.

92. Inspectors felt that although some monitoring activities were evidenced, not all of these appeared to be linked to a clear strategy or actions. Inspectors have recommended that a condition in this area would help to strengthen this area.

93. 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 the inspection team was 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 [proposed outcomes](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.10

94. The documentary evidence provided outlined opportunities for current staff to attend sessions with guest speakers, attend conferences and have protected time for research and scholarly activity. Some members of staff are currently undertaking PHD's or are involved in coproduced social work projects.

95. In the evidence supplied the university also identified that staff would benefit from the opportunity to work with or shadow social workers in practice and that early conversation were taking place with one of their employer partners to put this into practice.

96. During the inspection the course team was able to demonstrate a commitment to development and staff development was actively happening, however inspectors reflected that this was happening on an individual basis as opposed to a structured and monitored requirement of the university.

97. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met, but feel a recommendation in relation to formalising current processes may strengthen this area. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendation section](#) of this report.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

98. The documentary evidence provided described how the course is mapped against the PCF domains and also Social Work England's education and training standard and the professional standards. The inspectors were able to review the programme specification, module descriptors, Social Work England standards integration into sessions and PCF mapping for admissions and assessments.

99. Based on the documentary evidence provided the inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

100. This standard was considered in relation to previous standards 1.3, 3.4 and 3.5. The documentary evidence provided prior to inspection did give some examples of previous involvement from employers and also instances of involvement from experts by experience and feedback taken from students. The university highlighted that as with previous standards, this was an area that was looking to be developed through the formation of an advisory board. The university has successfully implemented the beginnings of an advisory board to be made up of external stakeholders.

101. Inspectors have recommended a condition in relation to this standard to allow time for the areas for development the university has identified to be worked on. Details of the condition can be found in [proposed outcomes](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.3

102. Information was provided prior to inspection which outlined how EDI principles had shaped the design of the course, examples of modules and the principles taught were given along with information about the auditing of placements to ensure EDI principles are covered in these setting. During the inspection the course team gave a presentation also outlining how EDI was built into the course.

103. The inspectors were in agreement that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

104. The documentary evidence provided an outline of contemporary issues that are covered in the modules and also highlighted an arrangement for practitioners and experts

by experience to speak to students. The advisory board that is being implemented was also mentioned as a resource to ensure that the contents of the course remain current.

105. During the inspection the course team was able to discuss with the inspection team how they keep their own knowledge up to date to ensure that teaching on the course remains relevant. Inspectors were agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

106. The information provided prior to inspection gives examples of work students complete during the taught elements of the course, for example case studies where students are asked to identify or apply theory.

107. During the inspection students and practice educators were able to give examples of how theory and practice had been used during the course to enhance learning and understanding in this area.

108. The inspectors were agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

109. The university was able to provide evidence related to the social work programme having access to professionals from health-related courses within the university. Students have the opportunity to learn from these professions during skills days and an example of police engagement was given along with examples of mock case conferences and assessments taking place with professionals in a simulated environment. Opportunities for multidisciplinary working is also available during practice learning this is agreed on the practice learning agreement

110. Inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

111. The information provided prior to inspection gave a clear overview of the hours associated with each module along with the requirements for skills days and number of days spent during practice learning.

112. During the inspection the course team was able to talk through how attendance is monitored and had processes in place to monitor and address with students when issues of attendance may be present.

113. Inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

114. The documentary evidence provided outlined how the course content and assessment is mapped against the PCF and also gave examples of assessment strategies used including

essays, presentation, exams, reflective practice and the placement portfolio. Inspectors had access to external examiner reports, the programme specification, the programme handbook and module descriptors.

115. Inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

116. The documentary evidence provided gave an overview of how the course is designed to build on students' knowledge and progress this throughout the course. Examples were given of how modules and assessments at levels 4, 5 and 6 build progressively. This was also a topic covered during the course presentation during inspection with the example of skills days being matched to student abilities as the course progresses.

117. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

118. Prior to inspection information was received regarding both formal and informal feedback mechanisms as well as practical information relating to the systems used for delivering feedback.

119. During the inspection students were able to advise the inspection team that feedback had been constructive, and an example was also given of students having the opportunity to submit a percentage of their work early to gain some initial feedback on this.

120. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

121. For this standard the university gave an overview of staff experience and also provided copies of CVs for staff and the external examiner. On review of this evidence the inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

122. The evidence submitted prior to inspection gave an overview of how students' work is first marked and then moderated. The course provider has mechanisms in place for ensuring the robustness of this process, for example samples of work are internally moderated and if there is disagreement a third marker is available review the work. External examiners can also support in this area if there is no consensus. The role of the university assessment board was also outlined.

123. On review of the evidence the inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

124. The documentary evidence provided gave examples of how level 4 students are supported through skills sessions provided by library services to support them to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to progress. This was also reiterated during the inspection when the inspectors had the opportunity to hear from the library service about the range of service available including one to one support tailored to student requests for support on academic skills.

125. Through review of the evidence available, inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

126. The documentary evidence received outlined the support services available to students both from the university, the student union and the university's occupational health partner where appropriate.

127. The inspection team met with staff involved in support services and heard a number of examples of pastoral, financial and academic support offered to students. One example was the introduction of student engagement coordinators to support students and also follow up with them where appropriate. The referral routes for accessing support were demonstrated, in a meeting with employers it was confirmed that whilst students are on placement providers can access these referral systems.

128. During the inspection students reported that they felt supported and knew how to access support.

129. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

130. The documentary evidence provided prior to inspection outlined the personal tutor system in place and explained how this had been enhanced from September 2021 with the introduction of the software PebblePad which allowed for personal tutors and students to record communications.

131. The documentary evidence also gave an overview of the support the personal tutors offer students, how this is accessed, and the time students usually spend with their personal tutors.

132. During the inspection students reported that they felt able to approach their personal tutors and they found this support beneficial to their time on the course. Inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

133. The documentary evidence provided outlined the university's fitness to practice policy and gave examples of how ongoing suitability is assessed, including informal student progress reviews, fitness to practice meetings and Fitness to practice interviews for serious concerns. A health and conduct committee and/or professional practice case conference are available to review issues which may impact on practice.

134. On review of the evidence available inspectors were agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

135. Inspectors reviewed the documentary evidence provided prior to inspection and had the opportunity to speak to the faculty disability manager during the inspection along with the admissions team. Inspectors heard examples of reasonable adjustments required were identified during the application process and how these were implemented and monitored.

136. In discussion with placement providers and practice educators the inspectors were advised that communication from the university prior to a student starting placement was good, and that they felt well prepared to offer appropriate support to students on placement.

137. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

138. Inspectors had sight of the documentary evidence prior to inspection which gave an overview of information provided to students at different points of the course, from admissions to placements and post qualifying. During the inspection this was discussed by the course team during a presentation in which the information given to students was outlined.

139. Inspectors heard from students that they felt the information they received was appropriate and they were also able to outline the information that had been given to them in relation to the post qualifying requirements for CPD, registration and the ASYE process.

140. On review of the evidence available, inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

141. The documentary evidence provided outlined that the course required 100% attendance, and this is covered in the programme specification which was provided. The narrative explained arrangements for making up lost time due to sickness and outlined how the requirement for attendance on placement was communicated to students.

142. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

143. This standard was considered in conjunction with standard 4.10 which also considers feedback. As with this standard the course provider submitted a narrative of how feedback was provided to students and students advised during inspection that they found the feedback they received informative and helpful for their progression.

144. The inspectors were agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

145. The university provided an overview of the process for academic appeals prior to inspection, this also included pieces of evidence including the appeals support available and the information that students can access about academic appeals.

146. The inspectors agreed this standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

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

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

149. 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.

150. 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	Standards 1.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 4.2	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how they have involved external stakeholders, namely experts by experience, employers, practitioners, and students in the areas of the course outlined in the associated standards in a way which is in line with the principles of co-production outlined in the guidance for standard 4.2	25 th Nov 2022	Paragraphs 33 , 79 , 82 , 101
2	Standards 3.9	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates they are, collecting, analysing, and evaluating student data as specified in the standard.	25 th Nov 2022	Paragraph 93

Recommendations

151. In addition to the conditions above, the inspectors identified the following recommendations for the education provider. These recommendations highlight areas that

the education provider may wish to consider. The recommendations do not affect any decision relating to course approval.

	Standard	Detail	Link
1	3.10	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider formalising staff CPD requirements within the department.	Paragraph 97

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

152. 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

153. Approved with conditions.

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

154. 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](#).

155. Inspectors will undertake the conditions review and make recommendations to Social Work England's decision maker.

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	Standards 1.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 4.2	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how they have involved external stakeholders, namely experts by experience, employers, practitioners, and students in the areas of the course outlined in the associated standards in a way which is in line with the principles of co-production outlined in the guidance for standard 4.2.	Condition met
2	Standard 3.9	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates they are, collecting, analysing, and evaluating student data as specified in the standard.	Condition met

Findings

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

158. After the review of the documentary evidence, the inspection team are satisfied that both of the conditions set against the approval of the BA (Hons) Social Work course are met.

159. In relation to the condition set for standards 1.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 4.2, the course provider has submitted evidence of how they will ensure that experts by experience, employers,

practitioners and students are involved in the course in ways set out in the connected standards. Evidence submitted in relation to this condition includes the Social Work Advisory Board governance structure. This shows involvement of people with lived experience of social work, employers, practitioners and students in the decision making and governance of the programme. This includes areas of the course including admissions, selection and the marketing aspects of recruitment. Evidence submitted clearly details the roles and responsibilities of this Board. Meeting minutes from the Social Work Advisory Board illustrates discussion and work on the involvement of external stakeholders in a numbers of areas. The University have established five sub groups of the Board, 3 of which are active. Evidence also submitted includes the terms of reference and structure diagrams for each sub group of the Board. The inspectors reviewed a substantial amount of additional evidence in relation to this condition. This standard has now been met.

160. In relation to the condition set for standard 3.9, the course provider has submitted a range of evidence to show how they are collecting, analysing and evaluating student data. Evidence submitted in relation to this condition includes the establishment of the Social Work Advisory Board who carry out the function of analysing and working with student data. The course provider has acknowledged aspirations for the future in relation to recruitment from a diverse group of applicants. Evidence in relation to student diversity data sets out a series of objectives and action points to help increase recruitment, retention, and attainment within identified priority groups.

161. Further evidence submitted in the form of the Annual Monitoring Review illustrated to the inspectors that the university has a full understanding of the requirement of the standard. Evidence from the university's marketing team and equality, diversity and inclusion sub group further highlight the work being carried out to collect, analyse and evaluate student data on performance, progression and outcomes. The inspectors noted that the work of one of the Board's sub group is to continually review the strategy utilised in this area. The inspectors reviewed a substantial amount of additional evidence in relation to this condition. This standard has now been met.

Conclusion

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

163. 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

Approval.