

Inspection Report

Course provider: University of Salford

Course approval: BSc. (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship

Inspection dates: 14/06/22 – 17/06/22

Report date:	05 October 2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	09 November 2022
Date conditions met and approved:	30 January 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.
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 Salford 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	USR1
Course provider	University of Salford
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BSc. (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	
Date of inspection	14 to 17 June 2022
Inspection team	Helen Challis (Education Quality Assurance Officer) Sarah Hamilton (Lay Inspector) Graeme Currie (Registrant Inspector)
Inspector recommendation	Approval with conditions
Approval outcome	

Language

16. In this document we describe The University of Salford as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the BSc. (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship as ‘the course’.

Inspection

17. An inspection took place from 14 June to 17 June. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers, practice educators and people with lived experience of social work.

18. These meetings formed the basis of the inspection plan, agreed with the education provider ahead of inspection. The following section provides a summary of these sessions, who participated and the topics that were discussed with the inspection team. The university have made a decision to close this course when students currently on the course have completed it.

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with BSc. (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship students across three years of study. Discussions included students' experience of applying for the course, their overall experience of the course, teaching and learning, preparation for placement, student support services, awareness of being a regulated profession with professional standards and the resourcing of their course.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course team, university support teams and senior staff members in the School of Health and Society.

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 course. Discussions included their experiences of working with the course team and students, the specific activities they have been directly involved in with the course.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including Salford, Bury and Bolton councils as well as Manchester Action on Street Health.

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 the admissions process and the wider university support for these processes. These included the BSc. (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship Admissions Template; links to the course website and Salford Alternative Entry Scheme. These documents set out the processes applicants followed and criteria they needed to meet. The university also has a requirement for GCSE Mathematics at grade C, or 4 and above.

26. In addition, owing to the nature of this course route, employers have their own organisational admissions process prior to the university's process.

27. Discussions with the admissions staff, students and the course team confirmed how all applicants had skills assessed during the application process via group tasks, role play, written exercises and interview questions.

28. The inspection team were assured that a holistic/multi-dimensional assessment process was in place and that this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

29. The inspection team reviewed documentation related to consideration of prior relevant experience before the inspection. These included BSc Social Work Admissions Marking Sheet, Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) Policy and the APL Assessment Proforma.

30. Discussions with the course team, students and employers confirmed the details of how relevant experience was considered, including via the case study and questioning elements of the interview process. In addition, one student discussed how they had gained a place on the course via Salford Alternative Entry Scheme using their prior knowledge and experience.

31. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

32. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed narrative submitted by the university that outlined how the interview panel includes social work lecturers, people with lived experience and practitioners. In addition, it explained how a core group of people with lived experience have co-produced the interview and assessment process, and how feedback from placement providers and teaching staff is used to ensure that the rigour and inclusion is being maintained.

33. Discussions with employers and people with lived experience during the inspection confirmed this.

34. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

35. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed documentation that outlined how the university assessed the suitability of an applicant's character, conduct and health. These included Applicant and Student Criminal Convictions Policy; Safeguarding Policy; Fitness to Practise Procedure; and Declaration of Health and Conduct Form.

36. During discussions with students, they confirmed their awareness of the consequences of non-disclosure, as well as additional support available during the process for applicants who may have particular health or learning needs. The course team also confirmed that an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate was sought.

37. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

38. The course provider provided documentary evidence relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies prior to inspection which was reviewed by the inspection team. Documents submitted included the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy; EDI Annual Report – 2021; and links to Ask Us (the university student webpages.)

39. The inspection team met with support staff who specialise in areas such as student disability who confirmed that queries or concerns raised during an application would be picked up immediately and passed to the relevant team. This included financial, learning and pastoral support.

40. The admissions tutor gave specific examples of where additional support had been provided for applicants. For example, one applicant who required wheelchair access.

41. Students confirmed to the inspection team that they had received individual support based on their needs and were confident that they knew where they could go and that they would be assisted should any additional support be needed.

42. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

43. The inspection team reviewed the university's webpage for the BSc. (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship course. It highlights entry requirements, comprehensive information about course content, and additional information such as DBS and health checks.

44. The inspection team were also told of additional methods for applicants to obtain information, such as requesting a prospectus, open days and direct enquiry.

45. When the inspection team met with students, this group confirmed that they had all the information they needed to make an informed choice about taking up a place at the university and described the different methods of finding information they had experienced.

46. However after reviewing documentary evidence, and from the discussions with students, the inspection team did not find clear evidence that students were informed that completing the course successfully does not guarantee automatic registration with Social Work England, or the information about registration requirements.

47. In addition, course documents both at applicant and student stages refer to the previous regulator for social work.

48. Therefore the inspection team is recommending that conditions are set against standard 1.6 in relation to the approval of this course.

49. 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

50. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence provided that included First and Final Placement Handbooks; and First and Final Placement Application Forms.

51. The inspection team met with the placement team, students and employers, who all confirmed access to suitable placements.

52. The course team and senior management also described the ongoing work they are undertaking with the private, voluntary and independent sectors to grow placement

capacity and placement type, to ensure that there is a wide range of experiences available for students.

53. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Standard 2.2

54. The course provider provided documentary evidence relating to practice learning opportunities that included First and Final Placement Handbooks; and First and Final Placement Application Forms. Appendix 3 of the placement handbook maps how the students will meet both the Professional Capabilities Framework and the Professional Standards.

55. The inspection team saw a demonstration of the Practice Assessment Record and Evaluation (PARE) system students use on placement which includes learning agreements setting out how the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) requirements will be achieved during placement. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners to discuss the types of placements on offer, along with associated tasks and how students are matched to them. Also discussed were the placements partnership arrangements made via the university's membership of the Greater Manchester Social Work Academy (GMSWA).

56. The students described this in their meeting with the inspection team and provided examples of positive experiences and reasonable adjustments that had been put in place where necessary.

57. The inspection team agreed that it was evident that there are good working relationships with placement partners, and students have appropriate and wide-ranging placement experiences.

58. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

59. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included Final Placement Handbooks; the Practice Learning Agreement which covered the processes for induction, supervision and quality assurance.

60. The inspection team were told how all placement information and supervision processes were used by both students and Practice Educators on the PARE system, and a demonstration of this was provided.

61. Students have the support of their personal tutor, practice educator and workplace supervisor who they can contact directly should they require additional advice or guidance whilst on placement. The students expressed satisfaction with the support provided, including the preparation for placement activities.

62. Practice educators were able to provide examples of how they had supported students with reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances whilst on placement. Practice educators described how students are clear on placement expectations and expressed their experiences of how students are confident to organise and coordinate meetings depending on their needs.

63. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

64. The inspection team reviewed the documentary evidence and processes for auditing placements, to determine the level of placement and matching of student to placement with the course team. These included the Practice Learning Agreement which covered the processes for induction, supervision and quality assurance; the Interim Placement Review Form; Placement Assessment Report template; and anonymised concern meetings minutes.

65. The inspection team heard from the course team about initial practice placement agreement meetings with students commencing placements. The workload for each student is agreed at these meetings, as is the induction plan and the frequency of supervision throughout the placement. A mid placement review is also arranged to review progress, ensure learning objectives are being met and plan the latter half of the placement. Both the students and the practice educators gave clear examples to the inspection team of these processes working effectively.

66. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

67. The inspection team reviewed the evidence provided in relation to students' assessed preparation for practice. The module Skills for Social Work includes a Readiness for Direct Practice (RDP) assessment, involving people with lived experience, which students must pass.

68. Practice educators, employers and people with lived experience expressed confidence with the preparation and competence of students. Examples were also given of how the practice educator, student and university staff have worked well together to identify when a student needs additional support to ensure placement safeguarding needs are met and worked to a clear process to attempt to resolve this.

69. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

70. The inspection team were informed by the course team that all practice educators are registered with Social Work England and they have achieved at least Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS) stage 1. Where an on-site supervisor has not achieved this, an off-site Practice Educator is assigned to the placement to supervise and support students.

71. The course team explained how GMSWA have a specific work strand that ensures practice educators have access to resources to ensure they have current knowledge, skills and experience.

72. Practice educators discussed with the inspection team their satisfaction with the formal university induction process including e-learning, understanding of student handbooks and the PARE system. Practice educators have regular monthly meetings with the course team which include discussions on new initiatives, workshops and support sessions, and minutes and resources are shared with those unable to attend.

73. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

74. However, feedback from employers identified that provision of practice educators for this course has been difficult.

75. Therefore, the inspection teams recommends that the university ensures continual communication with their stakeholders about the provision of practice educators to manage any issues that may arise.

76. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations section](#) of this report.

Standard 2.7

77. The inspection team reviewed documentation that ensured relevant policies and procedures were available during placement. This included the University Whistleblowing Policy document; and the First and Final Placement Handbooks which included information about relevant policies and procedures.

78. Students stated their awareness of the whistleblowing policy from a particular lecture and course material and expressed confidence in how they would raise a concern if needed. One student gave an example of where they had used this procedure with a positive outcome.

79. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

80. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted which gave an overview of how responsibilities and lines of accountability of individuals and governing groups support the delivery, resourcing and quality management of the course. These included the Academic Roles Manual; Scheme of Academic Governance; School of Health and Society Structure; and School of Health and Society Goals and Priorities.

81. Discussions during the meeting with senior management and the course team provided further evidence of the governance structure of the course within the wider School of Health and Society, along with the regular operational, quality assurance and strategic meeting schedules. In addition, senior management confirmed that current vacancies had been recruited to.

82. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

83. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted which illustrated placements met the regulator's standards. These included the Quality Assurance Practice Learning (QAPL) audit form; Higher Education Institution (HEI) audit form; and a weblink to the GMSWA practice learning hub.

84. Meetings with the senior management course team and employers confirmed the service level agreements in place via the GMSWA and how the Quality Assurance Practice Learning (QAPL) process worked. The inspection team were informed about the QAPL process and the quality framework service level agreements in place whereby partners collaborate to find suitable alternative placements for students involved in a placement breakdown.

85. Placement breakdown procedures were further explored during discussions with the course team, students, practice educators and employers who described the processes consistently. These procedures emphasised the importance of identifying and dealing with any problems at the earliest stage to prevent the placement breaking down.

86. Meetings with students and practice educators gave the inspection team examples of university support and placement adjustments to ensure that student learning needs and employer needs were being met.

87. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

88. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence which contained policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk, and what support is available. These included the Practice Learning Agreement and First and Final Placement Handbooks.

89. Students also discussed completing an occupational health check which captures any additional needs and is used when matching students to placements to ensure that the placement partner can meet those needs.

90. The inspection team spoke with the tutor responsible for placements who outlined the procedures required for a placement audit, which included checking for policies and procedures.

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

Standard 3.4

92. The inspection team discussed involvement in the course with employers and placement providers. These discussions outlined how the GMSWA Practice Learning group was part of the development of practice educators; including reviewing capacity and quality. Employers also explained how they are involved in the assessment of practice; teaching; and management and monitoring of the course.

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

Standard 3.5

94. Prior to inspection, documentation was reviewed by the inspection team that evidenced effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems are in place. These included Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure (PMEP) and the Programme Design, Approval and Amendment Policy.

95. During meetings with people with lived experience and employers, the inspection team heard examples of how involved stakeholders were in the improvement systems. The people with lived experience group described long term and continuous involvement in the development and quality monitoring of the course. They felt part of it and included by staff in all developments. An example of this is that took part in the design of the questions for the student interview on application to the course.

96. Students fed back how they had been involved in course adjustment and development and commented on how they felt they had sufficient opportunities to feed back their thoughts and opinions to the course team. For example, reordering the first year timetable.

97. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

98. However, whilst the inspection team were assured that students were engaged in giving feedback, some students were unsure who their course representatives were. In discussions with the course team, it was established that the system of student course representatives had been affected by the pandemic and staff shortages, but this was in the process of being reinstated.

99. Therefore, the inspection team recommends that the formal student course representative system be reinstated fully.

100. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations section](#) of this report.

Standard 3.6

101. From the inspection team meetings with the course team, senior management and placement providers, the university clearly demonstrated how they work with the GMSWA and non-traditional placement partners with respect to placement provision, with a defined strategy and teaching partnership collaboration to ensure that each year has sufficient placement capacity.

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

Standard 3.7

103. Prior to inspection the inspection team reviewed the Course Leaders' and other course team's CVs and confirmed that they are registered social workers.

104. The course team described to inspectors how they had recent and relevant knowledge of contemporary social work practice, and were supported by the university to maintain this knowledge and to grow relationships with key stakeholders. This support included placement partners and people with lived experience of social work, as well as dedicated time provided to pursue research opportunities.

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

Standard 3.8

106. This standard is supported by commentary at 2.6 and 3.10.

107. When meeting with the senior management team, the inspection team discussed the four staff vacancies. They were informed of the closure of the BSc. (Hons) Degree Apprenticeship course, and that some of the vacancies had already been filled, with others due to be filled before the next academic year. In addition, the senior management team explained the strategy for ensuring appropriate staff numbers.

108. The course team discussed how they are adequately resourced and supported by senior management.

109. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

110. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted about how the university collects, analyses and uses student data. This included the PMEP; the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan – Progress Tracking; and the External Examiner Reports.

111. During the inspection, the inspection team saw evidence of how the PARE system was used by students, practice educators, personal tutors and the wider course team to record, monitor and assess practice placement progression. The senior management team explained how the data was used.

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

113. However, as the External Examiner did not meet with students for the last report, the inspection team recommends that a meeting takes place before the next report.

114. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations section](#) of this report.

Standard 3.10

115. The inspection team reviewed staff CVs, a screenshot of Staff Development Programme events, and the Embedding Interprofessional Education in the School of Health & Society Policy.

116. During meetings with the course team, the staff development programme was discussed, as were other methods available for staff to maintain awareness and skills in teaching and learning, with specific sessions about current issues within social work.

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

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

118. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection which shows how the course learning outcomes are mapped to Social Work England's Professional Standards and the Professional Capabilities Framework, operated by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW). These included the Professional Standards Mapping Document; Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes 2021/22; and the Programme Handbook.

119. The course team were able to demonstrate how each module builds knowledge, skills and reflective practice and how the assessments are designed to link with module and course learning outcomes that link to the professional standards.

120. When meeting with students they were clear on the importance of being able to meet the professional standards prior to practice.

121. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

122. The inspection team reviewed taught module timetables that outlined the inclusion of external stakeholders, including people with lived experience.

123. GMSWA partner placement providers provided information to the inspection team of the different ways that they are involved in discussions and developments regarding the course tuition and practice learning.

124. Practice educators described during meetings how feedback between them and the course team worked both ways and that the course provider valued their input. They shared their experiences about students and processes to the course team both individually in monthly meetings and collectively with other practice educators.

125. The inspection team found evidence of people with lived experience being involved in the admissions process, delivery of the course and assessment. However, during the meeting with people with lived experience, they described a cumbersome system of claiming expenses which could potentially provide a barrier to this group's growth and continued engagement with the university.

126. In addition, the inspection team could find no evidence of people with lived experience having access to or undertaking the same EDI training as staff and other external stakeholders.

127. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met but would like to make a recommendation that the course team explore how they can work with the people with lived experience to expand their group, provide university EDI training and improve internal systems for reimbursement.

128. Full details of the recommendations can be found in the [recommendations section](#) of this report.

Standard 4.3

129. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed documentation submitted. This included timetables for the modules Introduction to Social Work and Law. These illustrated how EDI principles are woven through the course.

130. During meetings with the course team, the inspection team heard about the different actions taken. These included ensuring that reading lists are diverse and inclusive; inviting a diverse range of practitioners to support academic staff in teaching and assessment; and guest speakers who come from a diverse range of experiences.

131. Support services staff also spoke with the inspection team about how they ensure they meet any additional needs students may have.

132. The inspection team was assured 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.

133. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

134. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence about how the course is continually updated. This included the Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure (PMEP) and the Programme Design, Approval and Amendment Policy.

135. Discussions with the course team and senior management provided explanation about how the course is continually updated.

136. The inspection team were assured that the course is regularly reviewed through academic standards and quality assurance processes.

137. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

138. The inspection team reviewed the individual module descriptors that track across the course, explaining how theory and practice would be explored. These included the modules Theories and Interventions 1 and Theories and Interventions 2.

139. Meetings with the course teams and students confirmed how theory and practice linked to assessment and the associated learning outcomes.

140. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

141. The inspection team reviewed evidence relating to the range of placement providers which provide opportunity to work in a multi-agency context, with colleagues from other professional disciplines, and how the placement handbook described multidisciplinary work experiences against learning objectives.

142. During meetings with the course team and students the inspection team heard examples of sessions where students met with a range of outside speakers.

143. The inspection team did not find evidence that students have experiences of learning alongside students studying other professional disciplines other than on the practice placement.

144. The senior management team informed the inspection team about a pilot project to develop their simulated skills environment for students to learn alongside students from allied professions and staff in other disciplines.

145. Therefore, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 4.6 in relation to the approval of this course, that the course provider continues with current plans to solidify student engagement with other professions and expand the current pilot programme to do this.

146. 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 condition, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 4.7

147. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team were able to review the Programme Specification and Programme Handbook. These documents detailed the course structure with the required hours, along with the expectations of attendance.

148. Discussions with students confirmed the required attendance levels. Discussions with the course team outlined the systems for monitoring attendance of taught sessions and on placement; as well as outlining the specific attendance monitoring for the apprenticeship route.

149. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

150. The inspection team reviewed the Assessment Information/Brief 2021/22, Assessment and Feedback Policy, and the Programme Handbook prior to the inspection.

151. During meetings with the course team and students, the inspection team heard examples of how the range of different assessment methods would test different skills and competencies.

152. This evidence demonstrated clear guidance in relation to assessment, marking, moderation and quality assurance processes. The module assessments are mapped against the curriculum, learning outcomes, PCF and relevant Social Work England Professional Standards.

153. The inspection team also heard from the course team and support staff about support available regarding assessment and what reasonable adjustments were available for students with learning needs.

154. However, during the meeting with students a concern was raised regarding the standardisation of marking and differences in outcomes between tutors.

155. The inspection team discussed this with the course and programme lead who explained that any anomalies had been picked up and had been due to the pandemic and staffing issues. However, the course team assured the inspection team that there was a plan for training new staff, increased standardisation activity across the new staff team and increased internal moderation.

156. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

157. However, the inspection team recommends that the course provider continues with current plans to improve standardisation.

158. Full details of the recommendations can be found in the [recommendations section](#) of this report.

Standard 4.9

159. The inspection team agreed that the evidence reviewed demonstrated that assessments are carried out at appropriate stages during the current and updated course.

160. The inspection team met with students at different stages of the course who expressed an appreciation of how particular modules provided them with knowledge for placements.

161. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

162. The inspection team reviewed documentation including the assessment and feedback policy. The inspection team agreed that the evidence reviewed demonstrated that feedback to students was presented formally within the Practice Learning Agreement meetings. Students are allocated a Personal Tutor who they meet on a regular basis to discuss course progression, learning requirements and any other support needs. Students were also provided with feedback on their Readiness for Practice assessment, which can include feedback from people with lived experience of social work. Students are also given feedback as part of placement activity from supervisors and practice educators.

163. The students spoke positively about how and when they are given feedback in relation to assessment and placement and how it enabled them to improve in these areas.

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

Standard 4.11

165. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed documentation including staff CVs, and External Examiner information including procedures and policy. The inspection team were satisfied that staff involved in the course had the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills and were able to see how many were qualified social workers. On the inspection itself, they established there was a good generic balance between adult and children/families backgrounds of the staff course team.

166. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

167. The inspection team reviewed documentation including the First and Final Practice Handbooks that demonstrated progression at specific points before, during and at the end of placement.

168. Discussions with the course team, students and placement partners assured the inspection team that there are systems in place to manage students' progression including two direct placement observations on the 100 day placement.

169. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

170. From the Programme Handbook, Programme Specification, and course team CVs, the inspection team agreed that evidence informed approach to practice was demonstrated throughout the course, and that the course team had suitable skills, knowledge and understanding of research and evaluation.

171. Meetings with students, employers and practice educators confirmed this.

172. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

173. The inspection team were provided with documentary evidence and university website links prior to inspection. These included links to the Wellbeing and Counselling Support Services and AskUs (the student hub). These links outlined a range of advice and support services designed to meet the pastoral needs of all students, including confidential

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

174. Topics of discussion during meetings with students and the course team included the university Report and Support system, enabling students or staff to report concerns about incidences at university such as hate crime or sexual assault. Also, students confirmed that they are made aware of these services at induction and potential applicants are given this information at open days.

175. The course team also discussed how social work students have a special arrangement with the Counselling Department where students can access Resilience Counselling.

176. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

177. The inspection team were provided with documentary evidence and university website links prior to inspection. These included links to the Digital IT Support and Service Desk and the Library, as well as the Personalised Academic Support Policy.

178. During discussion with students, the inspection team heard how students are allocated a personal tutor to support them throughout their studies, who can refer students to wider specialist support within the university. That support is also available when students are on placement. The inspection team heard how the university monitors how students engage with study skills sessions in order to improve their services and identify students who may benefit from additional support.

179. When discussing individual needs and access to resources with students, practice educators and placement partners, the inspection team were given examples of reasonable adjustments where needed. One example was a student in a wheelchair, the provider made sure that they were able to access all areas.

180. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

181. The inspection team reviewed documents including the Fitness to Practise Procedure, Fitness to Study Policy and Academic Integrity and Misconduct Procedure and were satisfied that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health.

182. The course team demonstrated how student suitability of conduct, character and health is checked at the start of the course and throughout the duration of the course. When meeting with students they were able to confirm their knowledge of the processes and requirements.

183. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

184. From reviewing documentation including the Personal Mitigating Circumstances Procedure, the Student Engagement, Interruption and Engagement Policy, and a Reasonable Adjustment Plan template, the course provider was able to demonstrate that they are supportive of any reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments.

185. When meeting with students, practice educators, placement providers and specialist support staff, the inspection team were given different examples of support that had been made available to students. For example, a student currently progressing with a dyslexia assessment when their needs were initially raised in discussion with their practice educator.

186. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

187. Students are provided with the BSc Programme Handbook; careers advice built into the Applied Social Work Practice Module; and the School of Health and Society hold a careers fayre each March. Students receive information about their curriculum, practice placements, and assessments information.

188. However, after reviewing documentary evidence, and from the discussions with students, the inspection team did not find clear evidence that students were informed that completing the course successfully does not guarantee automatic registration with Social Work England, or the information about annual registration requirements, including continuous professional development.

189. In addition, course documents refer to the previous regulator for social work.

190. Therefore, the inspection team is recommending that the same condition set against standard 1.6 is also applied to standard 5.5 in relation to the approval of this course.

191. 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

192. The inspection team received evidence of this standard in documents such as the Programme Handbook and from discussion with the course team and students. Information

is provided to students at induction. There is clear instruction for students on what to do in case of absence.

193. The inspection team agree that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

194. This standard is supported by commentary at 4.10.

195. The inspection team heard from students that feedback was provided clearly and when expected, with options provided to students about following up on the feedback given.

196. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

197. The inspection team reviewed the university Academic Appeals Policy that is available to students on the university website and via electronic course resources.

198. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

199. Since the qualifying course is a BSc. (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

201. 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	1.6 and 5.5	The education provider will provide evidence that applicants and students receive a clear explanation that completing the course successfully does not guarantee automatic registration with Social Work England and also that demonstrating continuous professional development is a requirement of annual registration. <u>OR</u> The education provider will provide evidence that the course has closed.	31 December 2022	Paragraph 49 and 191
2	1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that Social Work England is named as the regulator in all course resources and documentation as 'Social Work England'. <u>OR</u> The education provider will provide evidence that the course has closed.	31 December 2022	Paragraph 49

3	4.6	The education provider will provide evidence of how they are implementing current plans to improve student engagement with other professions, expanding the current pilot programme.	31 December 2022	Paragraph 146
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Recommendations

202. 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	2.6	The inspection team is recommending that the university ensures continual communication with their stakeholders about the provision of practice educators to manage any issues that may arise.	Paragraph 76
2	3.5	The inspection team is recommending that the course provider fully reinstates the formal student course representative system.	Paragraph 100
3	3.9	The inspection team is recommending that the course provider ensures that the External Examiner meets with students at the next external examination event.	Paragraph 114
4	4.2	The inspection team is recommending that the course provider explores how they can work with the people with lived experience group to support them with recruitment and expansion ; offers training to underpin the work they do with the university, in particular EDI training, and consider how they can improve internal processes for reimbursement.	Paragraph 128

5	4.8	The inspection team is recommending that the course provider ensures that procedures are in place to ensure consistent marking, including training for new staff, increased standardisation activity across the new staff team and increased internal moderation.	Paragraph 158
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Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Table breakdown of standards met during preapproval and inspection.

Standard	Met	Not Met condition applied	Recommendation given
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.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met condition applied	Recommendation given
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 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	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met condition applied	Recommendation given
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 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	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met condition applied	Recommendation given
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 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	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met condition applied	Recommendation given
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 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.	☒	☐	☒

Standard	Met	Not Met condition applied	Recommendation given
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 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	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met condition applied	Recommendation given
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.	☒	☐	☐
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	Recommendation
1	1.6 and 5.5	The education provider will provide evidence that applicants and students receive a clear explanation that completing the course successfully does not guarantee automatic registration with Social Work England and also that demonstrating continuous professional development is a requirement of annual registration. <u>OR</u> The education provider will provide evidence that the course has closed.	The education provider has provided evidence that this course is closing, no other students will be recruited to the course.
2	1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that Social Work England is named as the regulator in all course resources and documentation as 'Social Work England'. <u>OR</u> The education provider will provide evidence that the course has closed.	The education provider has provided evidence that this course is closing, no other students will be recruited to the course.
3	4.6	The education provider will provide evidence of how they are implementing current plans to improve student engagement with other professions, expanding the current pilot programme.	Condition met

Findings

The education provider has submitted details of course closure and as a result, conditions 1 and 2 above are no longer relevant.

With respect to the condition against standard 4.6 the course provider has submitted evidence to demonstrate how they are developing student engagement with other professions. The Directorate Lead for Interprofessional Education will be re-established in the academic year 2022/2023 and this will result in a review of current activities across the School.

The education provider submitted details of specific activity taking place:

As part of their 100 day placement students are working in multi-disciplinary teams engaging with other professionals on a daily basis.

The students undertake a level 6 module 'Applied Interprofessional Education' the module requires students to:

- To evaluate and critique the apprentices own interprofessional practice through an analysis of criteria used in assessment and decision making within integrated health and social care approaches.
- To analyse how values of social work can inform practice and feed into decision making and professional judgement in the context of interprofessional practices
- Evaluate strategies used to maintain wellbeing in relation to the demands of integrated service delivery approaches and policy and sociopolitical drivers of interprofessional working
- Analyse the use of supervision during practice
- Assess the use of theory in interprofessional decision making

Assessment for the module requires students to develop a poster and written commentary reflecting on their experience of inter-professional practice.

In preparation for their end point assessment, students will undertake a Level 6 module which includes input from other professionals. The education provider submitted a timetable for this module which included a session delivered by a multi-disciplinary team encouraging students to consider case studies from the viewpoints of other professionals, considering their specific roles and responsibilities.

Regulator decision

Conditions met and approved.