

Inspection Report

Course provider: Liverpool John Moores University

Course approval: MA Social Work (with PgDip)

Inspection dates: 12th-15th July 2022

Report date:	24.08.2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	15.11.2022
<i>(Delete if not required)</i> Date conditions met and approved:	08.02.2023

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

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

Summary of Inspection

15. The MA Social Work at Liverpool John Moores University 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. Alongside review of documentary evidence for the current MA Social Work, the inspection team also considered proposed changes to the course for the next cohort of students.

Inspection ID	LMUR1
Course provider	Liverpool John Moores University
Validating body (if different)	N/A
Course inspected	MA Social Work (PgDip exit route)
Mode of study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	50
Date of inspection	12 th – 15 th July 2022
Inspection team	Catherine Denny Education Quality Assurance Officer Bradley Allan Lay Inspector David Childs Registrant Inspector
Inspector recommendation	Approved with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

16. In this document we describe Liverpool John Moores University as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the MA Social Work as ‘the course’.

Inspection

17. A remote inspection took place from 12th – 15th of July. During the inspection, the inspection team considered documentary evidence in relation to the current course and proposed changes which are due to be implemented from September 2022 for new students. 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 six students in the first and second year of the course, one of these was a student representative. Discussions included their experience of admissions processes, placement allocation, curriculum, assessment and access to support.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course team, those involved in selection and admissions, senior leadership team, staff involved in placement-based learning and student support services.

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 education providers service user and carer group, which is formed of representatives from Changes Plus and Focus on Involvement. Discussions included their role in interviews and admissions, contributions towards course design and evaluation, support and training offered and their role within teaching and assessment.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including Cheshire and Merseyside Social Work Teaching Partnership (CMSWTP), Sefton Council, Liverpool City Council, Wirral Council and Liverpool Personal Services Society (PSS).

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 provided ahead of inspection outlined the expectations for admissions and selection from CMSWTP, which were adopted by the university. The evidence provided clear guidance in relation to applications, representation on interview panels and selection processes, which included assessment of written skills, ICT proficiency and command of English. The inspection team recognised that guidance had a caveat in relation to Covid-19, which highlighted that ordinary processes could be adapted and appropriate alternatives used. The inspection team were keen to understand how interviews were being managed post-pandemic and what plans were for future cohorts.

26. During meetings with the admissions team and students, the inspection team heard that some interviews were held via telephone call in response to the pandemic. This then moved towards an online process via Microsoft Teams, which has been the most used interview method unless a specific request was made by a candidate to have a face-to-face interview process. The education provider informed us of their intention to remain online and explained that this had been considered as an option prior to lockdown in 2020, though the inspection team were not able to see planning for this within documentary evidence. The inspection team also queried whether online processes allowed for the observed group discussion task to take place. This had not been offered since the start of the pandemic but was planned to return in the next admissions cycle.

27. Whilst there was an understanding that the pandemic had caused significant disruption to usual processes, any long-term changes to processes should be formalised to ensure clarity for applicants and those involved in interview. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 1.2

28. Applications to the course require all candidates to complete a personal statement, which outlines their ability to reflect on their personal life and work experiences and how this influenced their decision to apply to the course. Statements are reviewed by admissions

and information officers who shortlist based on criteria provided by academic staff. Where there is anything non-standard, applications are passed to an academic for review.

29. When reviewing personal statements, academic staff consider whether candidates have any voluntary or paid experience in social care or welfare organisations. There is also consideration of personal life experience and candidates' reflections on this, including those with experience of social care involvement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

30. The inspection team were able to review documentary evidence that outlined the involvement of people with lived experience in developing interview questions, interview panels and selection decisions. During meetings with representatives from the university service user and carer group, representatives confirmed that their involvement in interview and selection processes are consistent. This was enhanced by the representatives adding that they felt valued as equals on interview panels alongside academics and were confident to contribute to decision making. Where a service user or carer is not on a panel, the academic representative is supported by an employer partner who will contribute as outlined above.

31. During meetings with the admissions team and representatives from the service user and carer group, the inspection team heard that regular training is provided for all stakeholders who are involved in admissions and selection for the course. This is facilitated monthly and is supplemented by written material. In addition to this, all staff involved in admissions are required to sign a declaration to confirm that they have completed mandatory training in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

32. All candidates are required to undergo a mandatory health screening to confirm that they are fit to train as a social worker. The process includes an online screening which is sent to applicants upon selecting the university as their first choice. All information is sent to an occupational health unit, which assesses and reviews information and determines whether they can be cleared for study and associated practice. Where the occupational health screen determines that a candidate is not fit to study, their case will be discussed at a screening committee which the candidate is able to attend.

33. Alongside the health screen, candidates are also required to declare any relevant criminal convictions or investigations. Where a conviction is declared, this is individually assessed by the university before an offer is made. Upon joining the course, all candidates are required to subscribe to the online DBS service. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

34. The education provider evidenced their commitment to EDI in the selection process for all candidates through their admissions policy and university wide EDI policy. The admissions team regularly monitors matters relating to EDI to allow it to review the effectiveness of processes in place and encourages representation from a diverse range of backgrounds at its open day events. Candidates who disclose a disability at application have their needs considered prior to interview to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made. During the inspection, university staff also outlined their commitment to widening participation by considering a 2:2 classification on a candidates undergraduate degree if they are from a specified under-represented background.

35. As outlined in standard 1.3, the inspection team heard that the university admissions team provided training in relation to EDI for all stakeholders involved in admissions and selection processes. A declaration is required to say that training has been completed, however there isn't currently a formal way of monitoring engagement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met with a recommendation in relation to monitoring engagement with training provided by the university. Full details of recommendations can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 1.6

36. The university website was highlighted as a key source of information for students when deciding whether to accept an offer to study on the course. Students explained that they were able to review fact files about the course and social work profession on the website and any further queries could be answered via the admissions team. This supported them to have a good insight into the profession prior to starting.

37. Some students highlighted challenges in relation to understanding course fees during the admissions process with some remaining unclear about the final amount before commencing the course. The inspection team also saw that course fees for the next academic year were still unconfirmed. Some students explained that they were unsure of bursaries or student finance available to them and were not fully informed of the costs associated with the course, such as the costs of placement, which had caused some uncertainty.

38. Upon reviewing the admissions information of the website, the inspection team became aware of reference to the previous regulatory body and inaccurate information about the role of Social Work England. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

39. Documentary evidence provided ahead of inspection outlined arrangements for students to gain 200 days experience in practice learning. The inspection team heard that the university provided a 70-day placement within a PVI sector placement, 100 days in a statutory setting and 30 skills days which were planned to take place over the two years of study. Course team staff explained that careful consideration had been given to the range of PVI placements on offer to ensure that they provided appropriate experiences within the social care sector. For statutory placements, the inspection team heard that the majority were allocated through the teaching partnership and that allocation had been successful. Where students were placed outside of the teaching partnership, this related to student location or experience rather than issues with capacity.

40. The inspection team heard that skills days consist of direct teaching which supports the development of specialist skills. Within the current course, 20 days were planned to take place prior to placement 1 and a further 10 prior to placement 2. Plans for changes to the course for future cohorts had also introduced Action Learning Sets (ALS) as part of skills days planning, which would support the development of peer working in relation to specific areas of social work practice.

41. The inspection team queried how attendance at skills days are monitored to ensure that they fulfil the mandatory 200 days of practice-based learning. The university outlined how students who missed sessions would normally be required to complete a 500-word reflection on the area of study which would be submitted to a member of the course team. During meetings with students, it was shared that whilst this was usual practice, there had been occasions where they were not required to complete follow up work following a missed session. The course team also outlined how monitoring attendance and tasks for missed skills days had been a challenge with the current cohort. As a result, some students would not have completed the full 200 days of mandatory learning. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 2.2

42. All placements used for students on the course were audited by the university prior to allocation. Documentation completed by designated members of university staff outlined the placement opportunities available to students, as well as the ways in which experiences would meet the relevant areas of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF). The inspection team heard that Placement Learning Agreement (PLA) meetings further outlined

how the placement tasks would meet the PCF. These would then be reviewed at mid and end point review meetings and appropriately mapped in a separate document.

43. The inspection team heard how the university is working with placement providers and colleagues in the teaching partnership to complete an audit of all current placements to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Employer partners confirmed that they work closely with the university at all points in the audit and review process to ensure that any challenges to placements are addressed appropriately. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

44. As outlined in standard 2.2, documentation has been developed by the university and teaching partnership to support the placement allocation and review process. Within PLA documentation there is specific reference to ensuring appropriate induction arrangements, ongoing access to support, supervision and a realistic workload. These areas are revisited at the mid and end point reviews. During a meeting with placement providers, the inspection team heard that contact from the university ahead of placement allocation meant that employer partners were aware of the learning needs of students and could plan for these appropriately ahead of placements commencing.

45. All placement providers had clear induction and support processes in place and described methods to ensure that students had ongoing access to support when required. The inspection team heard that the role of the practice educator was essential in ensuring that students were completing relevant tasks and reflecting upon their experiences appropriately. Practice educators explained that they would regularly meet students ahead of the PLA meeting to ensure they understood learning and developmental needs. During the placement itself, formal supervision sessions were offered which highlighted progress towards the areas of the PCF identified in formal meetings. Practice educators shared a variety of supervision methods that were used, with some based on an adapted version of their employer format. The notes from supervision would then be used to support review of key competencies at mid and end point reviews. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met with a recommendation around the education provider offering a formal supervision template which could be used by practice educators to ensure consistency. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 2.4

46. Documentary evidence provided ahead of inspection outlined how student responsibilities are progressive depending upon student point of study and setting. Formal placement meetings ensure that the student, placement tutor, practice educator and on-site supervisor are clear about expectations regarding appropriate tasks that should be undertaken. The education provider explained that there is an expectation with providers

that students should not be primary case holders and that responsibilities are mapped to appropriate guidance. The inspection team were able to review documentation that has mapped the end of first and second placement expectations against the PCF and Social Work England's Professional Standards. This supports the team around the student to understand appropriate challenge and expectation. Students and practice educators agreed that the presence of regular supervision was the most effective tool in ensuring that responsibilities and workload are appropriate. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

47. The university outlined that student's readiness for practice is assessed following skills days prior to placements starting. Assessments comprise of a role-play interview with a service user or carer with supporting reflection and completion of a skills portfolio. These are assessed by an academic alongside a member of the service user and carer group. It is a requirement that students pass this assessment before being signed off as ready for professional practice.

48. The inspection team asked placement providers how well prepared for practice students from the course generally were. Representatives from partner agencies explained that some students required support to develop their confidence in certain areas, such as speaking with service users and professionals on the telephone. There was also a recognition that covid had impacted some learning experiences for students on the course. As a result, many employers were encouraging a minimum number of days in the office to allow for peer support. The course team also felt that the introduction of ALS groups as part of skills development would support student confidence ahead of placement.

49. Whilst the inspection team were satisfied that appropriate assessment methods were in place to measure readiness for direct practice, concerns remain in relation to non-attendance at some skills days which had not been addressed. As a result, the inspection team the condition linked to standard 2.1 was also appropriate in relation to standard 2.5. Full details of the condition can be found in the [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 2.6

50. Training for practice educators is provided by the higher education institutions who form the CMSWTP. Training is delivered annually in liaison with local authorities to meet demand for students from universities within the partnership. As a result, most practice educators supporting students from the university have received training delivered by university staff. The teaching partnership also provides ongoing professional development sessions and regular network meetings for practice educators to ensure currency of their practice. This training and development offer has been extended to independent practice educators who offer support for a student from one of the universities in the partnership.

51. The inspection team queried how the university maintains checks on the registration of practice educators. The course team explained that independent practice educators complete an application which includes checks of their registration, identification and right to work, this is followed up with an interview with a member of staff. All those employed through the teaching partnership remain on a central register. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

52. Students are directed to the education providers whistle blowing policy through the practice learning handbook. The education provider also outlined how, throughout the course, students are encouraged to critically reflect upon their own practice and that of others throughout the course which supports them to understand when a concern should be raised. All placement partners confirmed that they have appropriate arrangements to draw students' attention to their organisational policies if concerns need to be raised. All those that the inspection team met with confirmed it happens on the first day as part of student induction and all are made aware of where to find supporting information and documentation. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

53. The course team sits within the School of Allied Nursing and Health. Documentary evidence outlined the current structures in place for course governance, which included module leaders within the course team, a programme leader, programme manager and head of professional standards. The inspection team heard that the previous programme manager (now head of professional standards) had moved out of his post to monitor professional standards, curriculum and fitness to practice across the school. Whilst responsibilities included oversight of other professions within the school, the senior leadership team explained that the head of professional standards continues to have direct influence upon social work education and maintains engagement with the post-qualifying workstream within the teaching partnership.

54. The current programme manager is not a qualified social worker but holds responsibility for direct line management of course staff and addresses issues in relation to workload, planned leave and other HR issues. Any findings encountered that are specific to the social work profession can be fed back up through the leadership team structure for further discussion and advice.

55. Whilst the inspection team agreed that the current structure was acceptable, some concern was raised in relation to its effectiveness in ensuring key strategic monitoring was happening at a course level linked to the education and training standards. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 3.2

56. A commitment to high quality placement provision and support to enable students to meet the required learning outcomes was identified as a key aim of the teaching partnership. The inspection team were able to view the memorandum of understanding, developed by members of the partnership to ensure that all agencies shared the ambition and understood requirements to fulfil this. The teaching partnership had also developed terms of reference for their pre-qualifying work stream, which showed a commitment to addressing concerns and barriers in relation to placement and ensuring they could be overcome.

57. The university provided documentary evidence which outlined the process in place to deal with potential placement breakdown. The early stages of the process focused upon target setting and collaboration between student, practice educator, on-site supervisor and personal tutor in the hope of finding a resolution. Employer partners commented that the university were very responsive in these situations and offered advice and support when required. Where issues remained there were appropriate steps identified which included referral to fitness to practice processes where necessary. In situations where the student's fitness to practice is not impaired, the university assume responsibility for sourcing alternative placement provision and support the student to transfer any relevant learning to their new placement. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

58. The practice learning handbook provides links to relevant university policies which can be accessed by employer partners. Students also have the opportunity to disclose any health or wellbeing issues during their placement agreement meetings so that necessary adjustments can be made. As outlined in standard 2.2, the university ensures that all placement providers are audited by a member of the university course team before student allocation. Part of the audit includes a check on policies in place to support students and a commitment from providers to state that necessary policies are in place. The inspection team queried whether university staff ever saw the policies to quality assure them. Currently, this is not part of practice however there was a recognition that this could be factored into current audit procedures. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 3.4

59. Documentary evidence submitted ahead of inspection outlined the involvement of employers in placement matching and allocation which is supported by procedures developed through the teaching partnership. The inspection team also heard about the professional development opportunities devised by the university in conjunction with the teaching partnership, which allow social workers to become involved in delivering lectures as part of the course curriculum. This was supported by employer partners who confirmed members of their own agencies were not actively delivering content on the course.

60. The inspection team asked how employers had contributed to consultation about proposed course changes which were being considered as part of the inspection. Those who joined meetings from different voluntary and statutory organisations were unaware of proposed changes and had not been aware of consultation events they could be involved in. During further discussions with staff from the university, it became clear that engagement with stakeholders was, at times, informal and relationship-based and that there was not a defined strategy regarding consultation and feedback. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 3.5

61. The education provider works with two organisations to build links with people with lived experience of social work. The service user and carer strategy for the school of nursing and allied health outlines that service users and carers should be involved in the organisation and delivery of teaching and learning activities (including curriculum design, assessment and direct teaching), operational development (including recruitment) and research and innovation. Representatives of the service user and carer group explained that they regularly sit on interview panels for the course and have also contributed to some of the questions used by interview panels. In addition, some members of the service user and carer group explained that they have contributed to teaching on the course as well as participating in role play activities. The inspection team asked representatives of the service user and carer group how they had contributed to the new version of the course, however those present did not know changes were due to be implemented for future cohorts.

62. Documentary evidence provided by the university explained that service users and carers, employers and students are all invited to contribute to attend bi-annual board of studies and can provide feedback on the course through surveys and annual reviews of placement. Whilst the inspection team recognised that there were efforts to engage stakeholders in elements of the course, there was little evidence of evaluation of monitoring activities and planned actions following this. As with standard 3.4, the inspection team felt

that the current strategy for engagement of key stakeholders was not formalised to be able to demonstrate impact. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 3.6

63. The university's collaboration with the teaching partnership is supportive in ensuring appropriate capacity for placement. Conversations as part of the post-qualifying work stream ensure that admissions are linked to projected workforce needs and placements are offered by local authority partners to support this. There are further agreements in place that ensure where placement cannot be offered in one local authority due to student need, this will be absorbed by another in the partnership. Where placements have been offered outside of the teaching partnership, this has been linked to student need or location. Alongside statutory placement provision, the university has also developed strong links with voluntary sector partner organisations. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

64. The management structure for the course includes a programme leader, programme manager and head of professional standards. The programme leader maintains a student facing role and coordinates module leaders, however the head of professional standards, who is a qualified and registered social worker, maintains overall professional responsibility for the course including monitoring and maintaining standards and dealing with formal concern processes (such as fitness to practice). The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

65. Through review of CVs, the inspection team were assured that all staff on the course have the appropriate level of experience and qualification. The university also outlined the requirement for all incoming staff to have current registration with Social Work England upon being appointed. The senior leadership team explained that staffing needs are reviewed annually, and consideration of background experience and research interests remains central to ensure a varied workforce. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

66. Prior to inspection, the university provided data that had been analysed following annual surveys and through the university's continuous monitoring and enhancement

process. The inspection team were able to review information relating to student satisfaction, matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, and progress and retention. Whilst there was a recognition that analysis was taking place in key areas, there was not evidence available to support evaluation and action planning on these themes moving forward. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 3.10

67. The university's annual appraisal cycle acts as a first step to identifying and understanding staff development needs. Regular meetings throughout the academic year ensure that workload allocation and professional development remain a focus and all staff have protected time where they are encouraged to explore personal research interests. Further to this, staff are encouraged to spend time within front-line social work activity to maintain the currency of their knowledge in relation to practice. The inspection team were assured that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

68. Documentary evidence submitted ahead of inspection demonstrated that the content, structure and delivery of the course is aligned with the QAA benchmark statement for social work, the PCF, LJMU employability strategy and Social Work England's professional standards. Module specifications provide detailed learning outcomes which are mapped against the professional standards, ensuring students are clear on how to achieve the necessary outcomes on the course. The course team have also developed a skills handbook to support action learning sets, which will be a feature of the new course and is based around relevant frameworks. As with standards 2.1 and 2.5, the inspection team concluded that further evidence was needed to show how attendance at skills days would be monitored to ensure that students on the course were able to achieve all proposed learning outcomes. Therefore, it was agreed that the condition linked to these standards was also appropriate in relation to standard 4.1. Full details of the condition can be found in the [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.2

69. As detailed within standard area 3.5, the university works closely with service users and carers in areas such as admissions and teaching. There was not evidence available, however, that demonstrated where service users and carers had meaningful input into the review and development of the curriculum, with representatives stating they were unaware of proposed changes to the course. The representatives that the inspection team met with

showed a keen interest in becoming increasingly involved with the course and articulated their wish to understand the outcome of work they have been involved in. 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. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 4.3

70. There was a wide range of evidence provided ahead of inspection that outlined the university's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The inspection team also learned about the work of the programme team to decolonise the curriculum to address power, relationships and institutions and how they have shaped, and continue to impact, modern society. Module specifications shared by the university evidenced extensive incorporation of EDI principles both implicitly and explicitly. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

71. Module content is reviewed each year to ensure the course maintains its currency. The course team utilise experience from a pool of practitioners to contribute towards specialist modules. Research is valued by the teaching partnership and practitioners from the university, as members are actively involved in projects which in turn contributes toward teaching on the course. The commitment from the senior leadership team to encourage academics to pursue their own research interests further supports the team in updating the course based upon current knowledge and understanding. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

72. Assessment methods used within modules have been designed to encourage students to demonstrate their ability to link theory to practice. Placement allocations also offer further opportunity to apply teaching of theoretical concepts in a practice environment. Both students and practice educators spoke of how their relationship on placement is essential in developing the application of theory to practice. The inspection team heard how regular supervision is essential to allow for regular opportunity to revisit theoretical concepts. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

73. Social work sits within the School of Nursing and Allied Health, and as such has strong links with colleagues in the healthcare profession. Documentary evidence submitted ahead of inspection outlined an interprofessional simulation event where social work students were able to learn alongside peers from nursing and paramedic courses, and further

opportunity for students to take part in Motivational Interviewing and Solihull Training. During the inspection, it was shared that a member of the course team has a doctorate in interdimensional learning and is developing a day alongside a broader range of other professions, including the police, where students will work together on case studies. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met with a recommendation relating to completing a mapping exercise of multidisciplinary opportunities available to students both through planned sessions and whilst on placement. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.7

74. The university submitted copies of all module specifications which outlined the minimum number of hours spent under direct instruction from an academic, alongside time students were expected to spend on private study. These basic hours could be further supplemented by attendance at seminars and workshops for some areas of study. The inspection team were satisfied that documentation evidenced that the amount of time spent under direct instruction was sufficient to meet the required level of competence, therefore agreeing that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

75. The education provider demonstrated a wide range of assessment methods used throughout modules on the course. The rationale for employing a range of techniques was based upon the desire to ensure a robust, fair, reliable and valid evaluation of student ability by appealing to different learning styles. Within each module specification, the assessment details were matched to the learning outcomes which demonstrated the ways in which students would meet the professional standards. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

76. Throughout the course, teaching and learning is progressive to prepare students for placements in their first and second year. Early modules provide students with generic knowledge and skills to enable them to undertake less complex work in a non-statutory setting. Following the first placement, students complete modules focusing on statutory social work practice. The course team has developed the curriculum by splitting the specialist practice module into child and adult specific social work as part of the course changes submitted for consideration during inspection. The rationale for this is that students will be able to explore complex social work theory and practice in detail to ensure a robust understanding of key issues ahead of their final placement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

77. The education provider submitted a copy of their personal tutoring policy which outlines minimum expectations in relation to meetings with students. During these meetings, students will receive ongoing feedback about progress and development. As part of the proposed course changes, the university has developed a skills workbook which will form part of the basis for personal tutor meetings over the duration of the course and allow students to demonstrate their preparedness for practice.

78. During a meeting with students on the course, the inspection team heard that experience of feedback on assessments is positive for students. It was shared that lecturers will always offer additional sessions to go through written feedback in more detail and that this is encouraged. Some students explained the timing of some assessments meant that wait times for feedback could be too long, however this area has been considered in line with proposed changes to the course submitted as part of the inspection. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

79. The education provider submitted evidence to show the qualifications of staff who are expected to conduct assessments on the course. This included course team staff, practice educators and the two external examiners recruited to the course. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

80. The university provided a narrative of the people involved in systems to manage student progression. This included personal tutors, module leaders, practice educators, service users and carer representatives. Documentary evidence was provided to support the narrative and show where key people informed judgements, both in academic assessments and whilst in practice-based learning. Effective procedures are in place to manage failed assessments. These are moderated twice to ensure effective judgements, and appropriate support is initiated where students appear to be failing across multiple modules. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

81. Evidence informed practice is a key feature of the course and can be seen within a range of modules. The university has further emphasised the importance of students being able to apply social work evidence, and research effectively through the introduction of specific child and adult specialist practice modules on the new version of the course. Learning outcomes within these modules draw reference to critical evaluation from the outset. Research, evaluation and critical analysis is central to the dissertation module within the

course which students are progressively prepared for over the two years. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

82. Documentary evidence demonstrated that students are made aware of support available to them during induction to the course when disability advice services, careers and employability and student support provide bespoke sessions. The inspection team were able to meet with representatives from services during the inspection who outlined how access to support is available on an ongoing basis for students on the course.

83. Disability support services outlined how their involvement begins during admissions, when information is sent to students who declare a disability through their application form. All students are encouraged to make contact with university services prior to registration, however further opportunities for discussion are offered through enrolment activity. Where students don't engage, this is followed up through direct sessions delivered to cohorts to highlight support available. During meetings with students, they confirmed that they were made aware of support services available and how to access them by various members of university staff upon commencing the course. It was also highlighted that faculty support teams work with placement providers to ensure that the needs of students are met whilst on placement. This can be managed via support at placement meetings or sharing of key information such as individual learning plans.

84. The inspection team also heard about services available to support the mental health and wellbeing of students. A combination of face to face and remote sessions is made available to ensure that access to support is available both during study at the university and whilst on placement. As with disability support teams, mental health and wellbeing services also visit cohorts at different points to outline what is available. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

85. The course receives support from a dedicated librarian who contributes regularly to teaching by providing guidance around using the library, referencing, using databases and searching for literature. During the inspection, the inspection team also heard about 'Skills at LJMU' which allows students to access workshops and webinars to support the development of their academic skills. Students on the course are regularly encouraged to attend writing cafes which offer a supportive peer environment for those who require additional support to manage academic writing. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

86. After completing a declaration in relation to criminal convictions and an enhanced DBS check upon commencing their study, all students are required to sign an annual declaration. This was evidenced through the university criminal convictions policy and supported by students during inspection activity. The inspection team were also able to review procedures in place to manage concerns relating to fitness to practice, ensuring student suitability is rigorously monitored. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

87. Prior to inspection, the university provided details of their disability policy which outlined how reasonable adjustments should be made to allow students with identified needs or disabilities to have fair access to the course. The management of student needs is overseen by dedicated disability coordinators who work collaboratively to develop individual learning plans, which detail support required for students to access the course.

88. The inspection team heard that there were 11 students with active learning plans on the course. The process for ensuring key staff were aware of their needs and adaptations was outlined via the following process: disability coordinators developed plans in liaison with students and key university services, plans were drafted and uploaded to student electronic files which were accessible to course team staff and library services. Where permission was granted by the student, plans were then shared with programme leads who disseminated information to module leaders and personal tutors on the course. This then supported discussions with placement providers where practice learning might be affected. During meetings with students, including student representatives, no concerns were raised in relation to the management of individual learning plans. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

89. Students receive an induction to the course which outlines curriculum content and placement expectations. Key documentation provided to students outlined the expectations for registration upon qualification and the role of Social Work England as the regulator. The Social Work Community site, developed by the university is accessible to students from the point of registration to the course and holds key documentation which can be referred to throughout study.

90. The careers and employability team offer support and advice to students throughout the course through bespoke sessions and can provide further information about the transition to ASYE. The university also invite past students to speak to current students during the second year to share experiences and key information about the requirements of registered social workers. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

91. The university provided their attendance policy for documentary review, which outlined expectations in relation to student attendance for the duration of the course. The course team outlined their expectation that students attend all teaching sessions, placement activity, tutorials and supervision sessions. Attendance is monitored electronically and where issues arise, students may be required to have an attendance agreement implemented. Where students miss mandatory learning, they are required to complete equivalent tasks which are directed by the university. Students who the inspection team met with confirmed they understood attendance expectations. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

92. The university provided their programme guide and academic feedback policy for review prior to inspection. Within documentation there was clear guidance in relation to marking criteria and expected timescales and processes for receiving feedback. Students commented during a meeting with the inspection team that, overall, their experiences of receiving feedback were positive. Lecturers offered opportunities to book 1:1 sessions where students could request further clarification in relation to feedback, and this was reinforced throughout the course. Reports provided by the external examiner recognised that feedback offered constructive advice and supported improvement in student knowledge and learning style. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

93. Details in relation to a student's right to academic appeal were outlined in the programme guide and discussed during induction to the course. Timescales in relation to the stages of appeals were described and information relating to independent advice and support could be found through links to the university student union. Processes in relation to academic appeal were understood by students on the course. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

94. As the qualifying course is MA Social Work, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

Conditions for approval are set if there are areas of a course that do not currently meet our standards. Conditions must be met by the education provider within the agreed timescales.

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	Standards 1.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates the new online selection process for the course, including how key tasks will be facilitated.	Within 1 month of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 27
2	Standards 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates correct reference to Social Work England through all website links and course documentation and up to date information relating to costs associated with the course.	Within 1 month of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 38
3	Standards 2.1, 2.5, 4.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how attendance at skills days are consistently monitored and the process in place to ensure that students fulfil 200 days of practice-based learning when skills days are missed.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 41 Paragraph 49 Paragraph 68
4	Standard 3.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how the management structure and lines of accountability within the social work department ensure effective monitoring and review of activity	Within 2 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 55

		against the regulatory requirements of the course.		
5	Standard 3.3	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how placement partners policies and procedures are checked during audit activities.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 58
6	Standards 3.4, 3.5	The education provider will provide evidence of a strategy that outlines annual engagement of employer partners and people with lived experience in review and evaluation of the course.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 60 Paragraph 62
7	Standard 3.9	The education provider will provide evidence of monitoring, evaluation and improvement activities using data from student outcomes.	Within 6 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 66
8	Standard 4.2	The education provider will provide evidence of a strategy that has been co-produced with people with lived experience which outlines their engagement in all aspects of the course.	Within 6 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 69

Recommendations

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	1.5	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider formalising their monitoring of engagement with EDI training for all stakeholders involved in admissions.	Paragraph 35
2	2.3	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider providing a supervision template to practice educators for use with students on placement.	Paragraph 45
3	4.6	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider completing a mapping exercise of all multi-	Paragraph 73

		disciplinary learning available to students on the course.	
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Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Table breakdown of standards met during preapproval and inspection.

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
Admissions			
1.1 Confirm on entry to the course, via a holistic/multi-dimensional assessment process, that applicants: i. have the potential to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards ii. can demonstrate that they have a good command of English iii. have the capability to meet academic standards; and iv. have the capability to use information and communication technology (ICT) methods and techniques to achieve course outcomes.	☐	☒	☐
1.2 Ensure that applicants' prior relevant experience is considered as part of the admissions processes.	☒	☐	☐
1.3 Ensure that employers, placement providers and people with lived experience of social work are involved in admissions processes.	☒	☐	☐
1.4 Ensure that the admissions processes assess the suitability of applicants, including in relation to their conduct, health and character. This includes criminal conviction checks.	☒	☐	☐
1.5 Ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.	☒	☐	☒
1.6 Ensure that the admissions process gives applicants the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an	☐	☒	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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 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.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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 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.	☐	☒	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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 that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards.	☐	☒	☐
4.2 Ensure that the views of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work are incorporated into the design, ongoing development and review of the curriculum.	☐	☒	☐
4.3 Ensure that the course is designed in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
principles, and human rights and legislative frameworks.			
4.4 Ensure that the course is continually updated as a result of developments in research, legislation, government policy and best practice.	☒	☐	☐
4.5 Ensure that the integration of theory and practice is central to the course.	☒	☐	☐
4.6 Ensure that students are given the opportunity to work with, and learn from, other professions in order to support multidisciplinary working, including in integrated settings.	☒	☐	☒
4.7 Ensure that the number of hours spent in structured academic learning under the direction of an educator is sufficient to ensure that students meet the required level of competence.	☒	☐	☐
4.8 Ensure that the assessment strategy and design demonstrate that the assessments are robust, fair, reliable and valid, and that those who successfully complete the course have developed the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
4.9 Ensure that assessments are mapped to the curriculum and are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.	☒	☐	☐
4.10 Ensure students are provided with feedback throughout the course to support their ongoing development.	☒	☐	☐
4.11 Ensure assessments are carried out by people with appropriate expertise, and that external examiner(s) for the course are	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
appropriately qualified and experienced and on the register.			
4.12 Ensure that there are systems to manage students' progression, with input from a range of people, to inform decisions about their progression including via direct observation of practice.	☒	☐	☐
4.13 Ensure that the course is designed to enable students to develop an evidence-informed approach to practice, underpinned by skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research and evaluation.	☒	☐	☐
Supporting students			
5.1 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their health and wellbeing including: I. confidential counselling services; II. careers advice and support; and III. occupational health services	☒	☐	☐
5.2 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their academic development including, for example, personal tutors.	☒	☐	☐
5.3 Ensure that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health.	☒	☐	☐
5.4 Make supportive and reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments to enable them to progress through their course and meet the professional standards, in accordance with relevant legislation.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
5.5 Provide information to students about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker including information on requirements for continuing professional development.	☒	☒	☐
5.6 Provide information to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory.	☒	☐	☐
5.7 Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments.	☒	☐	☐
5.8 Ensure there is an effective process in place for students to make academic appeals.	☒	☐	☐
Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register			
6.1 The threshold entry route to the register will normally be a bachelor's degree with honours in social work.	☒	☐	☐

Regulator decision

Approved with conditions.

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

If conditions are applied to a course approval, Social Work England completes a conditions review to make sure education providers have complied with the conditions and are meeting all of the [education and training standards](#).

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

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	1.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates the new online selection process for the course, including how key tasks will be facilitated.	Met.
2	1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates correct reference to Social Work England through all website links and course documentation and up to date information relating to costs associated with the course.	Met.
3	2.1, 2.5, 4.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how attendance at skills days are consistently monitored and the process in place to ensure that students fulfil 200 days of practice-based learning when skills days are missed.	Met.
4	3.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how the management structure and lines of accountability within the social work department ensure effective monitoring and review of activity.	Met.
5	3.3	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how placement partners policies and procedures are checked during audit activities.	Met.
6	3.4, 3.5	The education provider will provide evidence of a strategy that outlines annual engagement of employer partners and people with lived experience in review and evaluation of the course.	Met.
7	3.9	The education provider will provide evidence of monitoring, evaluation and	Met.

		improvement activities using data from student outcomes.	
8	4.2	The education provider will provide evidence of a strategy that has been coproduced with people with lived experience which outlines their engagement in all aspects of the course.	Met.

Findings

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

In relation to the condition set against standard 1.1, the course provider explained that, following inspection and consultation with key stakeholders they had decided to revert to their pre-lockdown method of face-to-face assessment. This process complies with the process agreed by the Cheshire and Merseyside Social Work Teaching Partnership (CMSWTP) which was submitted as evidence during the inspection event. The inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 1.6, the course provider shared links to their public facing website for the MA social work. Upon reviewing the website, the inspection team were able to see that all references to the HCPC had been removed and Social Work England was accurately referenced as the regulatory body. There was also up to date information regarding course fees. The inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

When reviewing the evidence for the condition set against standards 2.1, 2.5 and 4.1, inspectors were able to see how students are made aware of skills day attendance expectations within the module handbook and via the online platform 'canvas'. The course provider also detailed where the responsibility for monitoring attendance lies within the course team and next steps if skills day sessions are missed. Enhanced monitoring combined with the introduction of Action Learning Sets (where students engage in meaningful reflection weekly which is reviewed by personal tutors) assured inspectors that students were fulfilling statutory requirements to prepare them for direct practice. The inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 3.1, the course provider submitted information regarding the role of the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Oversight Panel and their role in providing advice to course teams and ensuring strategic oversight. The Head of Professional Standards and Regulation for the programme sits on the panel and ensures information about the regulatory requirements of the course is fed into the panel and to the course team. The course provider also submitted minutes from course team meetings which included reference to discussions about the Education and Training

Standards and curriculum development. Actions from course team meetings are fed up into to senior and faculty management teams to ensure that they are in line with overarching priorities. With regards the involvement of external partners and stakeholders in strategic monitoring, the course provider shared details of arrangements with the CMSWTP and their service user and carer steering group. Both groups include representation from members of the course team to ensure that information is shared through the management structure effectively.

The inspection team were able to see a strategic monitoring diagram which included the various workstreams referenced above and their relationship with one another. The effectiveness of these processes and lines of accountability were demonstrated through the Self Evaluation Document (SED) for the course. This is developed by the programme lead in consultation with their programme team and programme manager. This is further supported by the Head of Professional Standards and Regulation as a member of the senior leadership team.

Inspectors were satisfied that there are appropriate structures in place but reflected on concerns raised during the inspection that meant that, despite the structure in place, there was reliance upon individual staff for ensuring effective monitoring and review. As there has been further review and discussion of management and accountability structures with the course team following inspection and consideration around how these work together to ensure effective monitoring and review, the recommendation on balance is that the condition is now met.

To provide assurance that the condition in relation to standard 3.3 was met, the course provider submitted details of the agreements between HEI partners within the teaching partnership in relation to ensuring agreements with placement providers. All placement providers are required to sign an agreement which confirms that they can meet contractual arrangements including confirmation that all policies, including those relating to health and safety, are in place. This is maintained on a centralised system which can be accessed and reviewed by all HEI's in the partnership. The course provider confirmed that all placements will be audited annually to ensure they remain appropriate. The inspection team agreed that this condition was now met.

In relation to the condition against standards 3.4 and 3.5, the course provider submitted a narrative and supporting documentation that outlined the plans for engagement of key stakeholders in monitoring and review of the programme. This included details of stakeholder involvement in twice yearly Board of Studies meetings and the Annual Programme Review meeting which. Within the meetings, there is discussion regarding student feedback, module/programme amendments, curriculum review and admissions and induction. Since the inspection visit, the university and their partners are also included in the newly formed Curriculum Group which is managed by the CMSWTP and includes both

employer and service user and carer representatives. The inspection team were assured that this condition was now met.

In order to provide assurance that appropriate monitoring, evaluation and improvement activities are taking place based upon student outcomes, the course provider submitted data including module statistics, retention, awards attained, destinations of leavers and student survey information. The narrative included reflection upon the data and reference to action planning processes where necessary. Inspectors also noted that evidence provided in relation to other standards provided information of appropriate improvement planning through the board of studies and work with employers and people with lived experience. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this condition was now met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 4.2 which detailed the need for a strategy outlining the engagement of people with lived experience of social work in all aspects of the course, the course team submitted details of their implementation plan which had been coproduced with representatives from the two service user and carer groups that they work with. Within the engagement strategy, detail of involvement in admissions, teaching and assessment was referenced. The inspection team were also able to see evidence of the documentation used to request the involvement of the group along with feedback forms and a tracker to monitor engagement with the organisations. It was agreed within the course team that the plan would be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Conclusion

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

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

Regulator decision

Conditions met.