

Inspection Report

Course provider: Nottingham Trent University

Course approval: Social Work Degree
Apprenticeship

Inspection dates: 2nd – 4th August 2022

Report date:	12.09.2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	09.11.2022
Date conditions met and approved:	10.03.2023

Contents

Introduction	3
What we do	3
Summary of Inspection	5
Language	5
Inspection.....	6
Meetings with students	6
Meetings with course staff.....	6
Meeting with people with lived experience of social work	6
Meetings with external stakeholders.....	6
Findings	7
Standard one: Admissions.....	7
Standard two: Learning environment	10
Standard three: Course governance, management and quality.....	14
Standard four: Curriculum assessment.....	19
Standard five: Supporting students	24
Standard six: Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register.....	26
Proposed outcome.....	28
Conditions	28
Recommendations	29
Annex 1: Education and training standards summary.....	31
Regulator decision	38
Annex 2: Meeting of conditions.....	39
Findings	40

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 three to four 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. Nottingham Trent University Social Work Degree Apprenticeship 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	NTUR2
Course provider	Nottingham Trent University
Validating body (if different)	N/A
Course inspected	Social Work Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of study	Undergraduate
Maximum student cohort	45
Date of inspection	2 nd – 4 th August 2022
Inspection team	Catherine Denny - Education Quality Assurance Officer Bradley Allan - Lay Inspector Jane Reeves - Registrant Inspector
Inspector recommendation	Approved with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

16. In this document we describe Nottingham Trent University as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the Social Work Degree Apprenticeship as ‘the course’.

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place between 2nd – 4th August 2022 in the Newton Building, where Nottingham Trent University is based. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

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

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with 5 students from the third year of the course, one of which was a student representative. Discussions included selection and admissions processes, experience of placement, provision of practice educators, experience of teaching, learning and assessment, ability to access student support services and mechanisms in place for them to offer feedback about the course.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the social work course team, senior leadership team, staff involved in practice learning, admissions team, library and academic support services, disability support services and pastoral student support.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with 7 people with lived experience of social work from Services for Empowerment and Advocacy (SEA), who work across all social work courses within the university. Discussions included involvement in admissions, training provided to fulfil their role, teaching on the course and how their feedback is incorporated into course design and review.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including employer partners from the local authority, a charitable organisation within the region and practice educators.

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 the admissions policy which outlined processes for candidates applying for a place on the course. Within the policy there were details relating to employment-based criteria, the expectation that students must be prepared to apply taught learning to on-the-job professional practice and necessary sponsorship. Applicants to the course take part in a series of tasks including completion of relevant application forms, a personal statement, written test, and formal interview which tests their knowledge and skills as well as capability to meet academic standards. Students applying to be part of future cohorts will also be required to take part in an observed group discussion as part of their interview. ICT capabilities are tested using online processes and completion of a self-declaration relating to levels of ICT proficiency.

26. Within the admissions policy, English language and math's requirements were set out in a way that suggested math's requirements were higher than those expected for English. The inspection team queried this in line with the guidance set out in the Education and Training Standards. The course team confirmed that expectations were the same in both subjects and that the suggestion within the policy was incorrect. The inspection team felt that this could be misleading to potential applicants to the course. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, 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, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of the report.

Standard 1.2

27. As part of their application to the course, candidates are required to submit a personal statement which is passed to the course leader to decide whether to progress to formal interview. During formal interview, specific questions explore previous professional and personal experience of social work. The university confirmed that previous experience is revisited throughout the course during pre-placement planning meetings to ensure that learning opportunities remain appropriate. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

28. The education provider shared documentation used by interview panels to assess candidates. Copies of documents used outlined the presence of academics, employer partners and people with lived experience on panels. The criteria for applying to the course means that employers are central to the admissions process with internal selection events occurring prior to the university led interview. Students confirmed that employer led interviews focused upon personal abilities and time management, whilst university processes further explored candidates understanding of the profession and knowledge required to engage with the course.

29. Documentary evidence highlighted the involvement of people with lived experience in the review of interview questions. Representatives from SEA confirmed that they play a significant role within the selection of students to the course and feel valued as equal partners in the process. During conversations with the university about their engagement with people with lived experience of social work, the course team highlighted their intention to expand the groups and organisations they work with in this area to encourage representation of a more diverse group. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met, however following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a recommendation in relation to standard 1.3 relating to the range of people with lived experience that the university engages with. Full details can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 1.4

30. The suitability of candidates is explored during the application and admissions stage through interview questioning and self-declaration forms in relation to previous experience of social work, health and criminal convictions. All candidates must also undergo a DBS check to confirm their suitability to practice, even where this is already held by their employer. The inspection team heard that questionnaires are also sent to successful candidates at the end of July which explore issues in relation to fitness to practice. Representatives from the university admissions team confirmed that they screen these to identify any potential health issues which require referral to occupational health.

31. The inspection team were keen to understand more about university suitability panel which is used to screen disclosures from candidates in relation to convictions. The university explained that information is sent by the university admissions officer to partners from the local authority and teaching partnership (who form a virtual panel) for review, however there was no evidence of a defined process which outlined expectations from those involved nor potential timescales for candidates to receive an outcome. Additionally, there was not a clear point where the suitability panel jointly discussed issues arising from any

disclosures. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, 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, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of the report.

Standard 1.5

32. A copy of the university Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy, which informs admissions processes, was provided as part of the inspection. The inspection team were also able to see evidence of the EDI committee terms of reference which includes ongoing review of school level policy and processes, including those in relation to selection and admissions. Through inspection, the team were able to hear examples of how the policy had been implemented in practice through ensuring detailed advice and reasonable adjustments for prospective candidates.

33. The inspection team queried the level of training provided for stakeholders involved in interview processes. The university explained that all internal staff receive training in relation to EDI and unconscious bias during their induction period and each year thereafter. A copy of SEA's equality and diversity policy was also reviewed which outlined their commitment to providing training to all staff and volunteers within the organisation. The course team explained that employer partners who engage with interviews also receive training through their employer, which was confirmed by representatives involved in meetings during the inspection. Whilst there was some assurance that EDI training takes place there was no evidence to show how this is monitored or checked by the university. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met with a recommendation in relation to the monitoring and development of EDI training for external partners. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 1.6

34. As the course is reliant upon employer sponsorship, the university provides information alongside employers by offering question and answer style sessions and producing PowerPoints which can be shared at internal events. Candidates are encouraged to visit the education provider website for further information about the course content. The course leader meets with employer partners each year to ensure that the information they hold is accurate and up to date before recruitment and selection processes begin.

35. During meetings with students, they confirmed that they felt well informed about the course through sessions offered by their employer. In addition, students commented that they were able to find information in relation to financial support to study, which was supportive. Students had information about regulation and registration provided through

presentations and selection processes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

36. Students undertake a placement of 80 days in their second year on the course, followed by 90 days in year 3. In addition to placement days, students take part in 30 skills days which are mapped to modules throughout the course and are further supplemented by skills-based learning in employment. All apprentices are required to keep a record of attendance at skills days which is signed by a member of academic staff to ensure all fulfil 200 days of practice-based learning.

37. The inspection team heard that most apprentices are employed within local authorities, meaning both of their placements are in statutory settings. The university explained that, at the time of the inspection, they only worked with one private or voluntary sector (PVI) provider and statutory tasks were offered within the organisation. The nature of the apprenticeship means that placement identification is led by employers, however the inspection team were keen to understand how the university ensure that there is sufficient contrast between placements one and two. The university explained that the Placement Learning Assessment Form (PLAF) completed by students ensures that appropriate contrast is identified for second placements. Further to this, placement learning agreement and review meetings offer opportunities to review placement tasks and expectations.

38. During meetings with students, the inspection team heard that some felt that placement contrast was not always sufficient and that there was some repetition of previous experience. When this was explored with the course team, they explained that there had been instances where students did not want to work in a team where they had already worked in a different capacity and saw this as a lack of contrast. The university explained that they always ensure that the tasks that students can perform in placements are varied and contrasting, for example students may be required to complete more complex tasks or work with an agency they are not familiar. Members of the course team work with students to help them understand this. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met with a [recommendation](#) in relation to employers clearly outlining where placements offer contrast during planning meetings.

Standard 2.2

39. The education provider outlined how students are introduced to the professional standards during their induction to the course and are then formally assessed against these during readiness for practice interviews at the end of their first year. Students on the apprenticeship are also required to map the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSB's) of the social work degree apprenticeship against the work they undertake whilst on placement.

Progress towards the professional standards and KSB's is reviewed during supervision with the practice educator, and more formally as part of the Quality Assurance Monitoring Process (QAMP) and mid and end point review.

40. Employer partners outlined how they work with the university to ensure placements are appropriate, and highlighted that planning often takes place up to a year in advance so that any issues with proposed practice learning can be addressed. The course team explained that they have a final say on the appropriateness of placement and will challenge if learning opportunities are not sufficient. Once opportunities have been agreed, placement co-ordinators within partner organisations will share information with practice educators ahead of placements commencing. This allows the practice educator to work closely with the student and information provided in the PLAF to offer a range of learning opportunities. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

41. The inspection team were able to see an outline of the stages of the practice learning process, including the initial learning agreement meeting and induction period, through the placement handbook. The responsibility of ensuring effective induction was highlighted as a responsibility of the practice educator in liaison with the on-site supervisor where appropriate. The course team explained that the initial learning agreement meeting is seen as essential in defining roles and responsibilities and ensuring that apprentices are seen as students during any placement activity. Practice educators confirmed that their primary focus within these meetings is to define the role of the apprentice and ensure a thorough induction to placement. Students explained that induction experiences had varied during placements, particularly during the pandemic, however when induction was well led by the practice educator, they were valued and supported students to understand expectations. The university is assured that induction has been successful through student write ups of the organisational context within their teams, which are submitted within 4 weeks of placement commencing. As well as reviewing the induction checklist within the learning agreement form.

42. Practice educators recognised regular meaningful supervision as being a core duty within their role. Practice educators agreed that reflective discussion relating to personal and professional knowledge is a key part of supervision sessions alongside exploring theoretical approaches and constructive challenge where appropriate. All confirmed their understanding of the university expectation that supervision should be planned regularly, offer opportunity to set tasks to develop student knowledge and review learning against key frameworks and standards. There is an expectation that practice educators develop supervision contracts with students and that supervision minutes are typed up and shared with students to help inform progress towards placement portfolios.

43. When the inspection team reviewed expectations in relation to appropriate workload, there were some differences observed in student experience. Students reflected that there were often different expectations from the university compared with their employer and that regularly there was a conflict in managing placement responsibilities alongside expectations of substantive posts. This was particularly challenging in placements where students remained in the same team as their usual role. At times, students reported that not all colleagues within departments they worked in understood the role of an apprentice and some caseloads would be high because of this. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, 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, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of the report.

Standard 2.4

44. The university outlined that all students are working to the level of the PCF that is relevant to their stage of learning whilst on placements. Typically, by the end of first placement, students are expected to demonstrate effective use of knowledge and skills in relation to social work theory and a commitment to the core values of social work. By the end of their second placement, students should have had experience of dealing with situations of higher complexity with reduced supervision and support.

45. As outlined in standard 2.3, student roles and responsibilities are guided by the learning agreement meeting at the start of placement. These are continuously reviewed through supervision opportunities and mid-point review meetings which are attended by the practice educator, on site supervisor and practice tutors to ensure a holistic approach to student support. Employers felt that the training and experience of practice educators assumed a level of trust that they understood what was appropriate and were equipped to respond appropriately. The university also outlined that their involvement in student review on placement means that they can step in if workloads or responsibilities are beyond expectations for their stage of learning or if tasks are not adding to students' skills and knowledge base.

46. Whilst the inspection team reviewed policies and procedures to support the standard, they noted inconsistencies in student experience in relation to workload and responsibilities. This was reported to be a result of a lack of understanding from colleagues within placements of associated policies and procedures, which was felt to be linked to poor communication within workplaces. Some employer partners explained that they held briefings for staff within the organisation to combat this, however this was not always observed to be standard practice. The inspection team agreed that the condition applied to standard 2.3 was also relevant to standard 2.4. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of the report.

Standard 2.5

46. All students on the course are expected to take part in the module 'Preparing for Professional Social Work Practice' prior to their first placement. Within the module, apprentices engage with social work practitioners as well as people with lived experience of social work via the delivery of sessions. Assessment methods used on the module were observed to be varied and assessed both written competency and understanding as well as verbal communication skills. The education provider highlighted that the module had a pass compulsory element so that apprentices were judged as being safe and ready for direct practice.

47. When reviewing the module specification for 'Preparing for Professional Social Work Practice', the inspection team observed that the teaching and learning hours did not add up to the 400 hours assigned to the module. This was explored with the course team who explained that directed academic study hours had been omitted from the module specification. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, 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, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of the report.

Standard 2.6

48. The education provider outlined their role in supplying practice educator training within the D2N2 Teaching Partnership, meaning that most practice educators supporting students on the apprenticeship have received training through the university. The university ensures that all social workers who apply to the role of practice educator have completed their PEPS training or are working towards completion. Further to this they ensure that all applicants are at least 2 years post-qualification before attempting to take on the role.

49. All practice educators that are used by the education provider can access ongoing refresher training through the D2N2 partnership as well as mentoring opportunities and peer development sessions. During a meeting with practice educators, it was highlighted that those supporting apprentices may benefit from further training specific to the role of the apprentice so that support could be tailored effectively. The partnership maintains a register of current practice educators and dates of training to ensure that they are within two years of training to maintain the currency of knowledge and understanding of the role. The course team also highlighted that a close link is maintained with practice educators via providing the opportunity for some delivery of teaching on the course, which supports their own continuing professional development when maintaining registration. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

50. Documentary evidence provided outlined where students can access the university whistleblowing policy within the placement handbook. Students are also introduced to the whistleblowing policy of their organisation through induction to placement meetings. The placement learning agreement form includes a section for students to record their understanding of the policy and its use alongside key contact information.

51. Within the 'Preparing for Professional Social Work Practice' module there is dedicated content in relation to whistleblowing, where students are encouraged to reflect upon the professional requirements of the course which includes responsibilities towards service users and colleagues and raising concerns about organisational issues where appropriate. Student professional autonomy is enhanced throughout the modules alongside their ability to think critically to ensure the best outcomes. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

52. Social work sits within the department of Social Work, Care and Community (SWCC), which is part of the School of Social Sciences, alongside disciplines including youth studies, youth justice and careers guidance. The head of department for SWCC is a qualified social worker and maintains a supportive relationship with the course team. This includes liaising with key stakeholders who contribute to course delivery to ensure that the course remains fit for purpose and attending monthly monitoring meetings for the apprenticeship. There is also ongoing monitoring of staffing resources by the head of department to ensure that staff to student ratios remain appropriate and the course is delivered effectively.

53. Governance of the course is managed by the School Academic Quality Committee (SAQC) which feeds into the wider university Centre for Academic Development and Quality. These systems ensure that the course team remain aware of regulatory and compliance issues relating to the apprenticeship, as well as providing opportunities for the sharing of good practice amongst the wider school. The social work team are also supported by an apprenticeship co-ordinator who supports with strategic overview of courses of this nature across the university. The inspection team heard that the current plan for the course is to consolidate and build upon the good practice already in place, as well as find the rhythm of a year-round course alongside the academic year. The leadership team acknowledged that work was required to ensure that colleagues both internally and externally understood the unique nature of the apprenticeship.

55. The inspection team agreed that the current management and governance appeared appropriate with relevant expertise. It was agreed however, that further scrutiny of course level quality assurance processes was required to consolidate the ongoing delivery of the

apprenticeship in line with the proposed increase in student numbers, particularly in relation to monitoring of placements as highlighted in standards 2.3 and 2.4. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, 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, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of the report.

Standard 3.2

54. The education provider liaises with employers prior to students starting the course to ensure the necessary agreements and consents are in place. This includes ensuring employers recognise their responsibility to secure appropriate placements for students that meet the education and training standards. Management of placement breakdown is clearly referenced in the placement handbook which is made available to employers, students and any other stakeholders engaged in student support. Employer partners from local authority organisations were able to confidently articulate steps which should be followed in the event of placement breakdown or difficulties.

55. As part of the apprenticeship requirement, the university meets with the employer and apprentice every 12 weeks to conduct tripartite meetings which review placement and progress. These meetings are in addition to placement reviews and offer a further opportunity to ensure that placements remain appropriate or identify potential issues. The university has also introduced monthly Red, Amber, Green (RAG) reports which are shared with employers that review different elements of placement (such as attendance and engagement) can so that interventions be offered where appropriate.

56. The inspection team observed that employers from local authority organisations were confident about processes in place to manage placements and could talk about mechanisms in place to support but queried whether colleagues from private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector organisations received the same level of input around course design and monitoring. This was also noted for consideration as the course team explained that more PVI organisations would be working with the university on the apprenticeship over the next academic year. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met with a recommendation in relation to guidance and support for PVI colleagues. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.3

57. There is an expectation that all students should be introduced to the policies and procedures in relation to health, wellbeing and risk during their induction to placement. These are referenced within the learning agreement form and require signatures from the

student and all those involved in the team around the student to evidence they have been explored as part of induction. The education provider explained how all policies and procedures are checked by a member of university staff to ensure they are fit for purpose during planning sessions with employers prior to student selection. Employer partners acknowledged that university staff are always on hand and supportive of student needs during placement and can provide clarity on processes where needs are identified. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

58. The nature of the apprenticeship requires strong links with employers and the university throughout the student journey. Employers contributed towards developing eligibility criteria during the set-up of the course and remain part of interview and selection processes. The university facilitates ongoing links via formal and informal opportunities to meet with employers to review the success of the apprenticeship. There is employer representation at termly course committee meetings which are structured in line with priorities identified in the course development plan and more general meetings occur with practice mentors to explore general strengths and areas for development on the course.

59. The D2N2 teaching partnership is another mechanism by which employers are involved with the course and includes representation from local authority partners as well as the private, voluntary and independent sector. The memorandum of understanding provided by the university outlines the key tasks that the partnership covers which includes, oversight of admissions processes, curriculum for the social work courses offered by universities and practice education. The inspection team also heard about the practitioner pool developed by the university in liaison with D2N2 which provides opportunities for employer partners to deliver teaching on the course. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

60. The university outlined their processes for monitoring and evaluation of the course on an annual basis through the Interim Course Review (ICR) which feeds into the overarching Course Development Plan (CDP). During the first semester of the academic year, the CDP and ICR is a key feature of the course committee meeting which includes representation from staff, students, employer partners and people with lived experience. During this meeting, key themes and areas for development are discussed with all stakeholders and priorities and actions are set. These are then reviewed at subsequent course committee meetings which continue to include representation from all partners. The course is also subject to Periodic Course Review (PCR) every three years and, again, this process continues to include representation from key stakeholder groups.

61. The education provider outlined other mechanisms through which feedback from key stakeholders is sought. The inspection team heard that there are regular module

evaluations shared with students throughout the course via 'MySay', and this feedback is discussed between module leaders, students and the course lead to ensure effective changes are made. There is also the opportunity to gather feedback from placement experiences from both students and employers through QAPL processes and via tripartite meetings.

62. People with lived experience of social work have been involved in review of policies and procedures to ensure that they are developed with the principles of co-production at the forefront. Representatives from SEA also outlined how they provided feedback about role play activities during a first-year module and have enjoyed developing their role within this. Further examples were provided where a service user highlighted that a question used in interviews might have been worded in a way that did not draw out the best answers and following discussion with the course team, this was amended.

63. The university outlined their current plans in relation to working with people with lived experience of social work which included widening the range of groups they work with. The inspection team agreed that it would be helpful to develop links with other agencies and concluded that the standard was met with a recommendation in relation to formalising plans for development in this area. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.6

64. The education provider submitted evidence to demonstrate how the cohort for the social work degree apprenticeship reflects local workforce needs following discussions and planning. Throughout the academic year, there is close liaison between the university and employers regarding proposed numbers which are shared with the head of department to ensure that proposals are aligned with targets. Employer partners who contributed to the inspection of the course were able to articulate how this process was planned and the effectiveness of partnership working on a cyclical basis.

65. The inspection team heard that the previous year's intake to the course was lower than predicted for a range of reasons, some linked to post-pandemic impact. Following consideration between the university, employers and teaching partnership, it was agreed that the course would still support local workforce needs and demonstrate the commitment to the apprenticeship from the university. It was also noted during inspection that there has been an increased interest in the course for the next intake. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

66. The course provider submitted evidence to demonstrate that the course leader is appropriately qualified and experienced and holds up to date registration with Social Work England. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

67. The university submitted the CVs of current course team staff alongside documentation, which highlighted training undertaken and scholarly activity of the team, outlining the range of specialist knowledge and expertise currently available to support the delivery of the course. The inspection team heard about the commitment to research nationally from the university as well as plans to develop international research links through the International Parent Centred Network (IPCN) and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) in conjunction with the University of Potsdam.

68. The leadership team explained that the current staffing ratio within the social work department was sufficient to support projected growth for the apprenticeship next academic year. The education provider also outlined their links to long standing hourly paid lecturers to support with any immediate capacity issues but outlined their commitment to recruitment to posts in line with growth. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

69. The education provider submitted evidence of their monitoring and evaluation systems used across all courses within the university. This included access to dashboards, available to all staff, which provide data from a three year range at all levels of the course. Documentary evidence also highlighted the Success for All initiative in place which explores outcomes and continuation rates for students from vulnerable groups. Meetings to review the impact of the initiative are attended by members of the course team and course level strategies are reviewed with partners from the wider organisation.

70. The inspection team queried if it was possible to see data specific to the apprenticeship in relation to progression and outcomes. The course team explained that whilst they can talk about progression of each cohort and highlight changes to the course as a result of feedback, they do not yet have formal data to show course outcomes as the first intake have not yet completed year three. The team were able to discuss how qualitative data informed course developments, and this could also be seen within course development plans. The inspection team were also able to view a snapshot of data relating to outcomes at a modular level using the PowerBi dashboard referenced above. Whilst the snapshot provided insight into the monitoring systems used by the university, it did highlight some imbalance between the success of white students and those from other minority ethnic backgrounds. The inspection team agreed the standard was met with a recommendation in relation to identifying next steps to address the apparent achievement gaps for students in their final year of the course. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.10

71. The university outlined how staff are encouraged to maintain their knowledge in relation to professional practice. The inspection team heard that all staff on the course team engage with scholarly Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and attend professional practice conferences with a focus that has been identified through staff appraisals. Staff have also engaged in research based upon contextual issues and several members of the course team have presented their subject specialisms at conferences, all of which was summarised through staff team expertise documentation. The inspection team heard that some staff are active in practice-based consultancy roles outside of the university which support with the currency of their own knowledge, and that of colleagues through contributions to course development and teaching. Prior to the pandemic, the D2N2 partnership had also begun to explore opportunities for academics to spend time in practice within partner organisations. This remains a feature of the teaching partnership executive board discussions.

72. During review of some module level documentation, the inspection team observed that some of the language used in relation to children's safeguarding practice was outdated following more recent publications. The inspection team agreed that, on balance, the standard was met with a recommendation in relation to refining the use of language in course level documentation to ensure it remains accurate and up to date. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

73. Documentary evidence submitted by the university outlined that the course is mapped to the Social Work England Professional Standards, the PCF, Integrated Degree Apprenticeship Standards for Social Work and the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Social Work. The curriculum coverage for the course is detailed and there are a wide range of topics studied, including those specific to supporting with preparation for professional practice. Each of the module specifications submitted provide clear guidance around learning outcomes to ensure that students understand what is expected of them throughout the course. Some students expressed challenges in ensuring that the Knowledge and Skills Behaviour Statements (KSB's) were covered throughout the course, however both the course team and practice educators recognised this challenge for those on the apprenticeship and were clear on ensuring appropriate guidance was in place or further developed. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

74. The involvement of key stakeholders was detailed through a range of course documentation as outlined in standard 3.5. The inspection team also heard about the involvement of key stakeholders in consultation events leading to the development of the apprenticeship where there was strong interest in the delivery of the course. The university continued to seek feedback as the course was being developed and as a result, the current

delivery has been informed by the views of employers and people with lived experience of social work. Ongoing course committee meetings ensure that feedback is sought on an ongoing basis and stakeholder views are explored. An example of this was provided in relation to the structure of taught sessions at the university being planned on a weekly basis, rather than a block period, to support with employers protecting off the job hours. Representatives from SEA also highlighted how they valued having ongoing involvement in the development of the curriculum and felt valued as an equal partner in the process. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

75. The university outlined its commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) by ensuring capacity within timetables so that staff from all disciplines are represented at various strategic working groups, such as the Success for All initiative and Black Lives Matter group within the D2N2 teaching partnership. The inspection team were also able to review the university EDI policy which underpins the work and behaviours of the course team.

76. There was evidence to support the work done by the course team to consider issues relating to EDI that were specific to the course as an apprenticeship. This included targeted support for mature students who may not have accessed education for a prolonged period, recognition of the support needed for students with additional needs and/or disabilities that might have been accommodated within the workplace and early identification for students who may have undiagnosed conditions which could affect participation in academic elements of the course.

77. The inspection team were also able to identify how the curriculum had been shaped with EDI as a focus through the range of modules provided to apprentices, such as those with a focus upon human rights, equality legislation and exploration of diversity in social work. There are also procedures in place to support emotional wellbeing and resilience and these are promoted to students throughout their time on the course to ensure they are equipped to cope with challenging situations as they arise. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

78. The university outlined how their internal review processes supported them to ensure that the course remained current through regular scrutiny of curriculum, teaching and learning. Evidence of changes to the course included the development of the safeguarding module in year two which incorporated a focus upon contextual safeguarding and the importance of interdisciplinary working within the social work arena. The range of staff active in research also provided assurance that their knowledge informed the development of the course, this included the course teams current priorities in relation to international research projects. The university also outlined how the D2N2 partnership facilitates training

and events for staff where colleagues active in practice provide insight into issues affecting the sector which can then be fed down at course level. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met, with a recommendation linked to that identified for standard 3.10 regarding review of language used within course documentation to ensure that it is reflective of that used in practice. Full details of recommendations can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.5

79. The course team outlined how they have adopted a scaffolded approach to developing apprentices' ability to integrate theory into practice. During the first year of the course, students are heavily supported by their personal tutor and employer mentor to identify opportunities in the workplace where they can apply university-based learning into real life practice situations. Throughout modules, the course team aim to facilitate opportunities where theories that are introduced are followed up with practical sessions that allow students to explore how they would integrate such approaches in a case study or role play scenario.

80. The inspection team heard how the role of the practice educator is vital in supporting this skill. Practice educators who the team met with outlined how this topic is a feature of supervision sessions with students, where they are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences in placements and consider how they could alter their approaches to case work based upon knowledge acquired thorough the course. The practice educator also sets tasks for students to focus on following supervision where they may be guided toward considering application of a specific theory linked to social work. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

81. The course promotes multi-disciplinary learning through the involvement of professionals from fields such as policing, prevent teams and healthcare on modules such as safeguarding children and adults and through skills days. The apprenticeship standard also sets out the requirement that students must work in partnership with other professionals through placement and off-the-job learning which is formally monitored and reviewed. During a meeting with the senior leadership team for the course, it was explained that there is a commitment to enhancing links with other courses within the department such as youth work, health and social care, education and allied health professions to enhance interdisciplinary learning opportunities. This is a feature of discussion through course committee meetings as an identified area for review. Through discussion with various representatives from the university, the inspection team agreed that the standard was met with a recommendation that engagement of other professions is mapped over the course of the academic year. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.7

82. The evidence provided to meet this standard included module specifications which detailed the hours required for contact hours, directed learning and on-the-job learning. In addition to hours spent within the university, all apprentices receive further support via mentoring opportunities and group tutorials. Apprentices that met with the inspection team demonstrated an awareness of the need to log hours within their 'off-the-job' learning to demonstrate they were meeting the requirements of the course. Apprentices also logged their participation in skills days activities which were reviewed by their tutor on the course. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

83. The university provided assessment mapping for all modules which detailed the range of assessment methods used to ensure that students can meet the intended learning outcomes for the course. The range of assessments used within the course was reflective of the types of work students would be expected to undertake in practice. Furthermore, the variety of methods used to assess student capabilities showed recognition of the diversity of student cohorts. The university outlined that all assessments have a practice context, requiring students to apply theoretical knowledge to their professional practice.

84. To provide students with guidance around expectations, all assessments have a marking rubric which enables students to see what is expected at each grade boundary and promotes self-evaluation of work prior to submission. Members of staff involved in marking assessments take part in marking calibration sessions to share grading and feedback, ensuring consistency for students. The university also recognised that the external examiner report did not reflect the specific requirements of the apprenticeship and so posed specific questions to ensure a review of the unique features of the course. The response from the external examiner demonstrated a strong understanding of the course and recognised comprehensive mapping of all relevant outcomes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

85. The evidence provided by the university demonstrated that assessments are carried out at appropriate stages during the course and follow a staged approach to student development. Students are provided with clarity about how assessments link to the relevant standards and frameworks as they progress. There is a combination of assignment and exam-based assessment methods used and study days are factored into timetabling to support preparation. The university outlined how they have responded to feedback and revised assessments that were administered closely together. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

86. The inspection team reviewed assessment processes within the university's quality handbook which outlined expectations in relation to how course teams should ensure effective feedback is provided to students. This included reference to the format of feedback which proposed an element of individualised feedback and timeliness of feedback, which was outlined as three weeks for assessed coursework. The course team have developed an assessment and feedback group which was developed to promote consistency in the quality and format of feedback provided to students on the course. Reports from the external examiner also recognised that the processes in place were effective.

87. During meetings with students, the inspection team heard that feedback had been received that was detailed and supported students to improve in future assignments. Some representatives from the course commented that there had been times where they felt that the quality of feedback was inconsistent, and comments did not match the expectations as they understood them. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met but felt a recommendation in relation to enhancing processes around review of feedback within the assessment and feedback group was appropriate. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.11

88. Documentary evidence outlined that all course team staff involved in marking assessments had been awarded or were working towards appropriate qualifications within the higher education sector. The university outlined arrangements in place for moderation of marking by appropriate senior staff. The external examiner appointed to the programme is a professionally registered social worker and has experience which is appropriate within the field. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

89. Student progression is managed through a range of mechanisms including tutorials, readiness for practice interviews, placement review meetings and reports from practice educators which include elements of direct observation. Progression is also reviewed via more formalised processes such as Practice Assurance Panels (PAP) and Board of Studies. The inspection team heard that the university includes people with lived experience in assessment processes, such as assessment panels, and all representatives on these panels hold equal status. The course team ensure students have a good understanding of how progression will be monitored during dedicated sessions at the start of the course which explain assessment methods and the range of people involved in these. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

90. The university outlined how the course is designed in a way to promote research skills and evidence informed approaches through the content of modules and assessment design.

Specific modules within the course structure incorporate learning outcomes which make specific reference to understanding the value of research and analysis, as well as being able to apply these to practice. The course team highlighted an incremental approach to developing research skills year on year which supports students to be able to integrate research findings to written work by the end of their course. Furthermore, the commitment of the course team to developing their own research skills was evidenced through inspection which also impacts upon course delivery. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

91. The inspection team reviewed evidence in relation to student support services within the university which focused upon issues such as mental health and wellbeing, occupational health services, physical needs, disability support services and careers advice and support. It was confirmed that all services can be accessed directly by students or via referral from personal tutors. The inspection team queried the availability of support outside of usual hours and term times due to the nature of the apprenticeship and it was confirmed that the online nature of many services meant that students could access services throughout the year. During meetings with students, they confirmed that where support had been required this had been easy to navigate and students with specific needs highlighted that they felt well supported by the university.

92. The university shared details of the emotional calendar initiative that has been introduced across the organisation. This calendar is used by student support services and course team staff to map out any times that may create more pressured situations or be more demanding for students. The presence of the calendar ensures that university staff can be pro-active in responding to student needs rather than reactive. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

92. The inspection team met with representatives from academic services within the library who outlined how all services could be accessed via NOW learning rooms. All students can request a 1:1 appointment for support with a range of topics including academic referencing and writing as well as applying to take part in group workshops. Representatives from library services outlined how they had responded to the needs of mature students and apprentices who might struggle to access academic literature by developing targeted support in understanding academic language, bringing theory into reflection, and through offering workshops on reflective writing and thinking. Students receive frequent support through their personal tutor on themes specific to the course and personal tutors also engage four times per year with tripartite meetings in which academic, professional and pastoral issues are discussed. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

93. The education provider submitted their fitness to practice procedure as part of course documentation, which outlined their commitment to ensuring that all students meet Social Work England's Professional Standards whilst studying on the course. Within the procedure, the education provider outlined its commitment to sharing information pertaining to fitness to practice between all agencies involved in supporting the student in the interest of public protection. Following admission to the course when students complete DBS, health and character checks, they are asked to declare if they have any changes to the status of their checks at the start of each academic year and before commencing placement. Where changes occur, the university works collaboratively to signpost students to support where appropriate. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

94. The university submitted documentary evidence to demonstrate the range of support that is available to students to allow them to access the course successfully. This included an example of an access statement which detailed the adjustments required for students for both academic learning and during placement experiences. During placement periods, the university works with employers to raise awareness of adaptations and revisit these during tripartite meetings. The inspection team heard how the university had provided specific support to students with neurodiverse conditions as well as physical impairments to allow them to experience success on the course. This included the implementation of strategies such as assistive technology, alternative exam arrangements, note takers and 1:1 study skills sessions.

95. The course team outlined measures in place to encourage students to declare disabilities early in the application and admissions process. However, where needs have not already been identified, there are effective processes in place to help with diagnosis or support where difficulties arise after commencing study. These processes were confirmed by representatives from student support services and students that the inspection team was able to meet with. Whilst there had been some backlog in relation to dyslexia assessments post-Covid, the university explained that it was committed to ensuring students had a response as soon as possible and committed to inputting financially to support processes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

96. The university submitted documentation, provided to students during induction, which outlines the curriculum, modules, student expectations, placement arrangements, assessment processes and feedback mechanisms. The course team reinforce this at the start of the academic year to ensure that students remain well informed about the course.

Students can access the above documentation on an ongoing basis through NOW learning rooms.

97. The inspection team requested further clarification about the information provided to students in relation to the transition to qualified social worker, registration and the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). The course team explained that all students take part in 'moving on' sessions which include taught content by qualified practitioners towards the end of their final year. This is further supported by work-based supervisors and practice educators who advise students of expectations as a qualified and registered social worker during their final placement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

98. Students are reminded of the course as a professional programme and subsequent attendance requirements during induction. This is reinforced during tutorial sessions and through their substantive employers. Students are made aware that skills days and placement days are mandatory to ensure all on the course fulfil the 200-day requirement. To effectively monitor attendance, the university uses Microsoft Teams attendance reports as well as monitoring access to PebblePad software. The course team ensure there is a joined-up approach to monitoring attendance by maintaining close liaison with employers through the distribution of RAG reports on a monthly basis that include student attendance as a standing feature. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

99. The inspection team observed a range of feedback mechanisms being used throughout the course to ensure that students understood how to support their ongoing development. This included a range of formative and summative assessments that included written and verbal feedback from module leaders, observations from practice educators whilst on placement and mid/end point review meetings. The university were able to articulate the processes in place to support students where appropriate progress was not being made. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

100. Documentary evidence included the process in place within the university to support students to make academic appeals. This process is also made available within learning rooms to ensure that students have ease of access to information if required. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

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

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

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

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	Standard 1:1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates they have amended their admissions policy and supporting information to reflect accurate English language requirements.	Within 1 month of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 25
2	Standard 1:4	The education provider will provide evidence that the process in relation to assessing suitability during admissions has been formalised (including clear points for discussions between panel members where appropriate) and outlines the responsibilities and expected timescales for all involved.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 30
3	Standards 2.3/2.4	The education provider will provide evidence that all stakeholders involved in student induction and workload management within employer organisations have a robust understanding of the expectations of apprentices and that these have been monitored by university staff.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 41 Paragraph 44
4	Standard 2.5	The education provider will provide evidence that shows the teaching and learning hours within the 'Preparing for	Within 1 month of the	Paragraph 46

		Social Work Practice' module have been updated to reflect the total of 400 hours of modes of contact.	regulator decision.	
5	Standard 3.1	The education provider will submit evidence to show how quality assurance processes for the apprenticeship have been scrutinised to ensure they are fit for purpose.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 52

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.	1.3/1.4	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider widening the pool of service users and carers that they work with throughout the course.	Paragraph 28 Paragraph 30
2.	1.5	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider implementing a system that records dates of training for all stakeholders involved in interview and admissions processes.	Paragraph 32
3.	2.1	The inspectors are recommending that the university dedicate time within the placement learning agreement meeting where employers/university representatives clearly outline contrasting experiences available to students on placement.	Paragraph 36
4.	3.2	The inspectors are recommending that the university work with partners from private, voluntary and independent sector organisations to increase their confidence in understanding process in relation to placements for students on the course.	Paragraph 54
5.	3.10/4.4	The inspectors are recommending that the university conduct a review of language used within module specifications to ensure that it is up to date in line with recent legislation.	Paragraph 71 Paragraph 78
6.	4.6	The inspectors are recommending that the university formalise their plans for interdisciplinary learning by	Paragraph 81

		mapping engagement from other disciplines across the course.	
7.	4.10	The inspectors are recommending that the university course team conduct further scrutiny or moderation exercises to ensure that all feedback provided to students is consistent.	Paragraph 86

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

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.	☐	☒	☐
1.5 Ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.	☒	☐	☒
1.6 Ensure that the admissions process gives applicants the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a course. This will include	☒	☐	☐

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

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
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 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,	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
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.	☒	☐	☐
4.9 Ensure that assessments are mapped to the curriculum and are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.	☒	☐	☐

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

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
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	Inspector recommendation
1	1.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates they have amended their admissions policy and supporting information to reflect accurate English language requirements.	Condition met.
2	1.4	The education provider will provide evidence that the process in relation to assessing suitability during admissions has been formalised (including clear points for discussions between panel members where appropriate) and outlines the responsibilities and expected timescales for all involved.	Condition met.
3	2.3/2.4	The education provider will provide evidence that all stakeholders involved in student induction and workload management within employer organisations have a robust understanding of the expectations of apprentices and that these have been monitored by university staff.	Condition met.
4	2.5	The education provider will provide evidence that shows the teaching and learning hours within the 'Preparing for Social Work Practice' module have been updated to reflect the total of 400 hours of modes of contact.	Condition met.
5	3.1	The education provider will submit evidence to show how quality	Condition met.

		assurance processes for the apprenticeship have been scrutinised to ensure they are fit for purpose.	
--	--	--	--

Findings

In relation to the condition set against standard 1.1, the education provider submitted an updated version of their Social Work Apprenticeship Admissions Policy. Reference to English language requirements within the policy had been updated to accurately reflect the level of English required for applications to the course. The inspection team agreed that this condition had been met.

The course provider submitted a copy of their suitability process documentation to provide evidence that the condition in relation to standard 1.4 had been met. The documentation outlined the formal process that would be followed in the event of a suitability issue being shared through the university disclosures team. The process detailed the expectations of different stakeholders within the process and provided timescales linked to this. The inspection team were satisfied that there was a robust process in place and agreed that the condition was now met.

In relation to the condition set against standards 2.3 and 2.4, the course provider submitted updated copies of their placement learning agreement documentation. Within the documentation provided, there was evidence of an induction checklist which could be used as a prompt between the employer, student and university to ensure robust and shared understanding of expectations for induction. Within the same document, there was also space for the practice educator to document learning opportunities provided to students to ensure appropriate level and workload. The inspection team were assured that this condition was met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 2.5, the course provider shared an updated copy of the module specification for 'Preparing for Social Work Practice'. Within the module specification, the inspection team were able to see evidence that the course provider had updated the number of hours of contact so that it was in line with the tasks detailed. The inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

The course provider submitted a narrative of the actions taken to meet the condition in relation to standard 3.1 which related to scrutiny of quality assurance processes on the course. The inspection team saw that there had been a course committee meeting held where quality assurance discussions were held, as evidenced through the minutes provided. Further to this, the course provider detailed the plans of the senior leadership team to maintain a dedicated agenda item relating to quality assurance processes at every course

committee meeting. The evidence provided assured the inspection team that the condition was now met.

Regulator decision

Conditions met.