

Inspection Report

Course provider: Edge Hill University

Course approval:

MNSW (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work

MNSW (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work

MNSW (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work

MNSW (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work

BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award)

BSc (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award)

BSc (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award)

BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award)

Inspection dates: 9 – 12 July 2024

Report date:	6 th September 2024
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	30 th October 2024
Date conditions met and approved:	14 th March 2025

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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 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. Edge Hill University MNSW (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work, MNSW (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work, MNSW (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work, MNSW (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work, BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award), BSc (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award), BSc (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award) and BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award), 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	EHUR2_CP43_CP44_CP45_CP46_CP48_CP49_CP50_CP51
Course provider	Edge Hill University
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	MNSW (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work MNSW (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work MNSW (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work MNSW (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award) BSc (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award) BSc (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award) BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award)
Mode of study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	32 in total, 8 per each nursing cohort
Date of inspection	9 – 12 July 2024

Inspection team	Sam Jameson (Education Quality Assurance Officer) Jo Benn (Lay Inspector) Lisa Brett (Registrant Inspector)
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Language

16. In this document we describe Edge Hill University as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the MNSW (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work, MNSW (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work, MNSW (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work, MNSW (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work, BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award), BSc (Hons) Children's Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award), BSc (Hons) Learning Disabilities Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award) and BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing and Social Work (MNSW exit Award), as ‘the course’ or ‘the programme’.

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place from 9 to 12 July 2024 at Edge Hill University campus where the education provider is based. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work. A joint inspection was carried out during the same dates and at the same location, with the second inspection team focusing on the Step Up Social Work (Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work). The 2 inspection teams had joint meetings with the senior leadership team, people with lived experience of social work and student support services.

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 a number of students from different cohorts of the course. Discussions included their experiences of the teaching and learning within the course, their access to support services of the university, admissions process, placements and how ready they felt for practice.

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, admissions team, staff involved in practice and placement learning, library and academic support services, disability support services and student support.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work who have been involved in the course. Discussions included what area(s) of the course they were involved with, how much input and feedback they had from the university and what training they received in this role.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including practice educators, representatives from the Cheshire and Merseyside Social Work Teaching Partnership (CMSWTP), Wirral NHS Trust and Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Trust.

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 submitted in support of this standard included information provided within the education and training standards mapping document, and links to university web pages regarding guidance on the selection process and course details.

26. The inspection team were able to triangulate information provided within documentary evidence during their meeting with staff involved in selection and admissions. The inspectors were satisfied that the selection process includes a written statement, video case study and questions focused on this during the interview, with the cumulative process ensuring that applicants meet the requirements of this standard and entry to the course is a via holistic assessment process.

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

Standard 1.2

28. The university provided documentary evidence prior to the inspection that detailed how applicants prior relevant experience is considered as part of the admissions process.

29. The inspection team heard from student representatives and staff involved in selection and admissions how prior relevant experience is discussed and drawn upon further within the interview process.

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

Standard 1.3

31. Information submitted prior to the inspection indicated that people with lived experience of social work, employer partners and placement providers are involved in the admissions process for the course.

32. The inspectors heard from members of the people with lived experience of social work group, of their involvement in the design of the interview process, including the timing and wording of questions and the case study used in the interview day.

33. Employer partners and placement providers explained their involvement in the admissions process, including the input of the CMSWTP. With a dedicated workstream for ensuring these key stakeholders' participation throughout the admissions process for the programme.

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

Standard 1.4

35. Prior to the inspection, the inspectors were able to review documentary evidence which detailed the courses' process for assessing whether applicants' conduct, character and health are suitable for them to train as social workers.

36. Within their meeting with staff involved in selection and admissions, the inspection team heard of the enhanced disclosure and barring service check, self-disclosure suitability for social work form and occupational health processes that applicants must complete. The inspectors were assured of the procedure in place which includes guidance and support from occupational health services and a suitability panel when appropriate.

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

38. During their meeting with staff involved in selection and admissions the inspectors were informed that applicants to the course must meet the requirements of assessing suitability for both nursing and social work. The inspection team learnt that applicants must complete two suitability checks/declarations to meet these requirements. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a [recommendation](#) in relation to 1.4. We recommend that the course provider reviews its process for assessing the suitability of applicants, to consider whether this process can be streamlined for applicants and reduce the two suitability checks they currently do.

Standard 1.5

39. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the university Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025. The inspectors were able to learn that the courses' selection and admissions process adheres to this policy and is in line with equality, diversity and inclusion principles.

40. The inspection team heard from student representatives that they were offered support and reasonable adjustments throughout their admissions process, including any accessibility requirements. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

41. Information provided to the inspectors in the lead up to the inspection highlighted the range of information available to applicants. The inspectors were assured that these materials were suitable for supporting applicants to make an informed choice about whether to take up on offer of a place on the course.

42. The range of information and guidance includes information on the course and university websites, details for open and offer days, including post-offer days and visits to campus and course experience days, as well as live chats with current students. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

43. Through their review of the documentary evidence and discussions with the course team, staff involved in placement-based learning and the submission of further documentary evidence during the inspection week, the inspectors sought to gain clarity on how the course meets the requirements of this standard. These on-going discussions throughout the inspection week required the inspectors to consider the additional evidence and seek greater insight into how students spend at least 200 days gaining different experiences and learning in practice settings.

44. The inspection team were presented with differing explanations and information within a nursing focused presentation and then a social work focused presentation regarding the breakdown of placements days. Student representatives that the inspection team met with provided narrative evidence of the communication they had received from the course team regarding the requirements of placement days and hours for both regulatory bodies. The students spoke of feeling unclear of what was required of them in their integrated final year placement and uncertain of how the difference between the requirements of hours and days between the 2 regulatory bodies was managed.

45. As a result of the above discussions and evidence reviews the inspection team learnt that students on the course complete a 70-day placement in year 2. The placement is purely social work based with no requirement to meet the Nursing and Midwifery Councils' (NMC) proficiencies. The integrated placement in year 4 of the course provides students a final 130-day placement that enables students to practice in both roles and develop professionally to meet both regulatory body requirements. The course has 30 university placement days, skills days, set at times throughout the academic calendar, with a range of

topics covered and attendance monitored, recorded and addressed if any days are missed and need to be made up.

46. Examples of integrated placements, that include statutory social work tasks and involve high risk decision making and legal interventions include prisons, community mental health teams within mental health trusts, and children and adolescent mental health services settings in children's hospitals. The inspection team were assured that students have placements that provide contrasting learning and development experiences.

47. Students complete a social work portfolio, a nursing focused document and an integrated document that evidence proficiencies across both professions. Students submit their social work portfolio of evidence at day 100 of the integrated placement, with the remaining 30 days of their placements to ensure their nursing proficiencies are met.

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

49. Following a review of the evidence and discussions with student representatives during the inspection week, the inspection team is making a [recommendation](#) in relation to 2.1 and 2.2. We recommend that the information provided to students regarding their final year integrated placement is reviewed. This will seek to provide students with greater clarity and insight into how the statutory tasks, placement days and hours breakdown and the requirements of Social Work England and the NMC are organised.

Standard 2.2

50. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard highlighted how the course ensures that placements provide suitable learning opportunities that allow students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.

51. The inspection team were able to triangulate the documentary evidence within their meetings with student representatives, placement providers and employer partners.

52. The course has a range of mechanisms in place to ensure that administrative and practical information regarding placements is shared and accessible for students. Some of the examples provided within meetings and documentary evidence included pre-placement request forms, the placement portfolio, the practice learning agreement, university recall days and pre-placement and mid-point reviews.

53. The course has a dedicated placement lead responsible for the quality assurance and monitoring of student progression and a practice assessment panel, that includes people with lived experience of social work and social work practitioners who review the placement portfolio and feedback to practice educators. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met. Please see paragraph 48 regarding the [recommendation](#) set for this standard and 2.1.

Standard 2.3

54. Examples of the placement portfolio, practice learning agreement and pre-placement request forms gave the inspection team insight into how the course ensures that while on placements, students have appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload.

55. Student representatives that the inspection team met with spoke of feeling well supported during their placements. One example provided to the inspection team highlighted the process and support put in place for one student who did not have a practice educator for a period of time. The course team explained their procedure and timely communication with the placement provider to ensure that a practice educator and appropriate level of support was put in place for the student.

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

Standard 2.4

57. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection provided an overview of the process and procedures in place from the course provider, supported by the teaching partnership, of how they ensure that whilst on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training.

58. The inspection team were assured that the audit process of placements and the pre-placement, practice learning agreement meeting, and mid-point review are all in place to ensure that student's responsibilities should gradually increase, under appropriate supervision, as their knowledge and skills develop. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

59. During their meeting with student representatives the inspectors heard from some of the final year students of their experience of feeling unsure of how their learning outcomes on placement would meet the professional capabilities framework and professional standards requirements. This was discussed further with staff involved in placement-based learning, employer partners and placement providers, who explained the work and processes in place to ensure that placements are appropriate and provide suitable learning outcomes. The inspectors were reassured of the process in place but considered how this information is filtered to all students. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a [recommendation](#) in relation to 2.4. We recommend that there is further consultation with students and consideration regarding the information they receive regarding their final year placements, including the learning outcomes and how these link to the professional capabilities framework and professional standards.

Standard 2.5

60. Information submitted by the course provider highlighted the robust process and mandatory requirements that a student must successfully complete before being considered for their first practice learning opportunity.

61. The process includes the receipt of a satisfactory enhanced disclosure and barring service check and occupational health assessment/health disclosure form. The assessed readiness for direct practice module specification and handbook were submitted within the documentary evidence, outlining the role play, interview with a person with lived experience of social work and reflective workbook that make up the assessment process. The inspectors were able to triangulate this information within meetings with people with lived experience of social work and student representatives.

62. Members of the people with lived experience group that the inspection team met with spoke of their coproduction and involvement throughout the assessed readiness for direct practice process. Students spoke of feeling ready for practice and information provided by the course provider outlined that students must pass this module to progress into practice learning in a service delivery setting. The inspection team determined that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

63. Documentary evidence submitted by the course provider and discussions with practice educators and staff involved in practice-based learning supported the inspection team to determine how the university ensures that practice educators are on the register. The inspectors' considerations included how the course provider ensures that practice educators have the relevant and current knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.

64. The inspection team were provided with evidence of the practice educator record that the course provider maintains, including their registration, PEP training and qualifications, if they have a mentor and when they have supported a student.

65. The inspection team were provided with documentary and narrative evidence of the ongoing training and continuous professional development opportunities that practice educators have access to through the course provider and teaching partnership. These services include refresher training, drop-in sessions and mentor support for new practice educators. The placement learning agreement meetings, reviews and placement audits provide further mechanisms for evaluating and gaining feedback for practice educator practice.

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

Standard 2.7

67. The inspection team concluded that the documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection, including but not limited to the whistleblowing, raising concerns and safeguarding guidance and programme handbook, was able to demonstrate that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

68. During the inspection week the inspectors met with members of the senior leadership team. This enabled the inspection team to triangulate documentary evidence submitted by the course provider that detailed the structure and the governance of the programme, including the robust links between the course, committees and boards within the university.

69. As a result of these discussions the inspection team were assured of the close working relationships, robust and clear lines of communication and accountability across individuals and governing groups involved in the course management and governance.

70. The inspection team learnt of the evaluation, planning and implementation carried out within the autumn and spring planning cycles. These meetings aid the review of feedback received for the course, allow student progression data and insight to be analysed, including staffing, financial and resource planning to be set for the next part of the academic year. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

71. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection outlined the agreements in place with placement providers, including the placement audit process. During the inspection week the inspectors were able to triangulate this information with the practice learning lead, who is responsible for the management and quality assurance of placements and is also a member of the teaching partnership.

72. The inspection team met with members of employer partners and placement providers, who spoke about the agreements in place with the university, including contingences to manage a placement at risk of breakdown. These key stakeholders detailed the shared understanding and processes for ensuring that placements provide education and training opportunities so that students have the opportunity to meet the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards.

73. During the inspection week the inspectors heard of the process in place for a placement at risk of breakdown, including the support mechanisms for the student and action plan that were put in place to manage this. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

74. The placement handbook submitted as part of the documentary evidence outlined the support services in place for students during placements to uphold their health, safety and wellbeing. As identified within standard 3.2, the practice learning lead for the course audits all placements to ensure that they have appropriate policies and procedures to support students.

75. From their discussions with student representatives, placement providers and staff involved in placement-based learning, the inspectors were satisfied that the practice learning agreement meeting raises all necessary support, policies and procedures to be discussed and recorded. Practice educators identified these areas are covered again in supervision and reviews with the students.

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

Standard 3.4

77. Members of employer partners and placement providers told the inspection team of their active involvement in the teaching and learning assessment committee, including the programme board and the curriculum advisory board through the teaching partnership. These key stakeholders spoke of their involvement in the above forums, that support the management and monitoring of the course, feeling like a true partnership.

78. Documentary evidence within the education and training standards mapping form identified that employer partners and placement providers are directly involved in the allocation, organisation and management of practice learning opportunities. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

79. The information within the education and training standards mapping form and submitted documentary evidence outlined the comprehensive range of monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems in place for the programme at strategic and operational levels. These included, but were not limited to, the module leads reports, faculty quality statement and overview report, programme management board and the autumn and spring report meetings.

80. As identified within standard 3.4 the inspectors were assured that employer partners and placement providers are clearly involved in the monitoring, evaluation and improvement of the course.

81. Documentary evidence and meetings with people with lived experience of social work identified their active roles and attendance in the practice assessment panels, fitness to practice procedures, programme board and curriculum assessment groups. Student representatives spoke of attending the programme board, staff student committee,

providing feedback in module evaluations and the practice learning process. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

82. From their meetings with representatives from the senior leadership team and the course team the inspectors were assured that the number of students admitted to the programme is identified from a clear strategy. The inspection team were satisfied that this included consideration of local and regional placement capacity and ensuring that students can complete quality placements in appropriate settings.

83. Employer partners and placement providers identified their involvement in discussions and planning through both formal and informal mechanisms. The inspectors learnt that the teaching partnership has a working group that all key stakeholders attend to support the management of student numbers and placement capacity.

84. The inspectors were satisfied that students would have learning opportunities that will help them develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to meet the professional standards by the time they complete the course. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

85. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection included information in the education and training standards mapping document of the lead social worker for the course.

86. The information identified their role, confirming their registration with Social Work England, appropriate qualifications, and experience. The inspectors were able to check and verify this information. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

87. The CVs of all the members of the course team were submitted prior to the inspection. Following their review of documentary evidence and discussions with the course team and wider university services, the inspectors were assured that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise, to deliver an effective course.

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

Standard 3.9

89. As identified under standard 3.1, the inspection team learnt of the evaluation, planning and implementation carried out within the autumn and spring planning cycles for this programme. These meetings aid the continuous cycle and evaluation of the programme,

allowing student data, including graduate outcomes, progression and attainment, and equality and diversity data to be analysed, alongside staffing, financial and programme resource planning.

90. The inspection team were able to triangulate documentary evidence from the education and training standards mapping form in their meetings with members of the senior management team and course team.

91. These discussions highlighted the proactive use of the Tableau system to gather and act on any trends or areas of interest, such as student disengagement, absence and 'hot' modules.

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

Standard 3.10

93. The inspectors heard from the course team of the various continuous professional development opportunities that they have access to, including research, further training and development, and support to maintain other professional and social work relevant roles.

94. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection included information on the annual performance and development review that supports the course team continuous professional development. Discussions with members of the course team and the senior leadership team enabled the inspection team to triangulate this information during the inspection week.

95. The inspection team were provided with a wealth of information regarding the support available to educators on the programme, including examples of how educators on the programme maintain their knowledge, currency and understanding of professional practice. Some of these examples include work as a BIA, AMHP and allocated time in frontline practice. A member of the team spoke of the training and development they had received as a social work practitioner to gain further educational training and teaching qualifications, and now teach on the programme.

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

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

97. Meetings with placement providers, employer partners and practice educators identified that students were able to meet the expected level of knowledge and competency for their stage of learning and development. The inspectors were satisfied that the documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection was able to demonstrate that the content, structure, and delivery of the programme is in accordance with relevant standards, guidance and frameworks.

98. Following their meetings with the above key stakeholders and documentary evidence review the inspection team were assured that the course is designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards upon completion of the course. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

99. Members of the people with lived experience group that the inspection team met with confirmed that they are involved in the design, development and review of the curriculum. They spoke of their coproduction and facilitating of teaching sessions, based on their own personal experiences, the high level of support and training they receive in this role, expressing how they feel respected and have equity throughout their work with the university and course team.

100. The inspection team heard from employer partners and placement providers about their involvement in the delivery and review of course and curriculum, aided by the active working groups and workstreams of the teaching partnership.

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

Standard 4.3

102. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the university equality and diversity policy and strategy 2021-2025. Within their meetings with the course team and members of the senior leadership team the inspectors were able to triangulate this information and learn how these principles are incorporated and work at programme level.

103. The inspectors were provided with examples and insight of reasonable adjustments that are in place for students on the course, and the proactive and early recognition approach that is taken to support individual needs. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

104. Information submitted by the education provider prior to the inspection included, but not limited to module specifications, external examiner reports and the university curriculum strategy.

105. The inspectors were able to hear from the course team of how the curriculum stays relevant and that it is updated regularly in line with research and developments or changes in legislation, government policy and current best practice. Mechanisms that uphold this process include the teaching partnership, the annual review and updating of module

specifications, changes are considered at the programme board and escalated through university quality assurance processes.

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

Standard 4.5

107. Documentary evidence and discussions with the course team identified the links and integration of theory into practice within the course, including both practice-based learning and practical learning within an academic setting.

108. The inspection team learnt of the simulation flat, simulated child protection conference and reflective journals as some of the methods that ensure that students have the opportunity to learn theory and understand why it is important, but also to reflect on and learn how to apply theoretical frameworks in practice. Students that the inspection team met with spoke of how these areas of teaching supported their learning and development in relation to learning and applying theory to practice.

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

Standard 4.6

110. Information submitted by the course provider identified that the course offers a range of opportunities for students to learn from other professions. These include scenario-based teaching involving a range of social work practitioners, nurses, paramedics, and independent advocacy services which also utilises a range of simulation exercises and opportunities.

111. The inspectors heard from the course team, students and placement providers of the wide range of placement-based learning and opportunities that students have to work with and learn from other relevant professions, supported by the integrated social work and nursing course. Staff involved in placement-based learning and practice educators confirmed that these opportunities are discussed and recorded within the practice learning agreement, with checks and reviews that these have been achieved within placement reviews and supervisions.

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

Standard 4.7

113. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection assured the inspectors that students on the programme will spend enough time in structured academic learning for them to meet the required learning outcomes and meet the professional standards by the time they complete the course.

114. The inspection team were able to triangulate this information within their discussions with the student representatives, employer partners and placement providers and the course team.

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

Standard 4.8

116. Prior to the inspection, the inspectors were able to review documentary evidence submitted by the course provider in relation to the assessment strategy and guidance in relation to assessment, marking, moderation and quality assurance processes for the programme.

117. Documentary evidence submitted by the course provider, programme specification and module handbooks, identified the range of assessments utilised in the programme, including simulated activity, presentation, case study, portfolio and assignments. Discussions with the course team and information provided prior to the inspection confirmed that all assessments are mapped to the modules' learning outcomes and appropriate standards.

118. The inspection team were assured of the mechanisms in place, including the teaching partnership, internal marking and moderation processes from both social work and nursing teams and the external examiner, to ensure that assessments are robust, fair, reliable and valid. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

119. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the module specifications, programme handbook and information contained within the education and training standards mapping form. The documentary evidence highlighted that assessments are mapped to the learning outcomes and scaffolded to increase incrementally throughout the programme.

120. During their meetings and discussions with student representatives, employer partners and placement providers the inspection team heard of 'pinch points' within the final year of the course. The inspectors were provided with verbal evidence of the impact that the sequencing of assessments has upon students in year 4 of the course. These key stakeholders highlighted the effect this can have upon a students' ability to focus during their placement and ability to achieve effective placement practice due to the strain and burden they feel from academic deadlines and timeframes.

121. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 4.9 in relation to the approval of this 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 [proposed outcome](#) section.

Standard 4.10

122. As a result of their review of documentary evidence and discussions with student representatives and the course team, the inspectors were assured that the programme is structured to enable formative and summative feedback in a timely manner.

123. The inspection team were provided with information that identified feedback focuses upon strengths and areas for improvement to enable feedforward and complies with the quality management handbook. Formative assessments and feedback are designed to scaffold learning and feed into the summative assessments. Various opportunities for students to gain feedback include peer seminars, workshops and include feedback from people with lived experience of social work.

124. Students are encouraged to use their learning from feedback into their individual learning plans. In practice students complete a daily reflective diary which is shared with their practice educator and direct feedback is given at the midpoint interview with final summative feedback in the final meeting. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

125. Documentary evidence received prior to the inspection confirmed the external examiners' experience, qualifications and registration with Social Work England.

126. Staff CVs and information contained within the education and training standards mapping form assured the inspectors that all programme staff involved in the assessment of students at any point across the programme are appropriately qualified. The inspection team met with members of the team, including registered social workers and experienced academics with appropriate expertise in relation to the course's assessment methods and marking schemes to support fairness and consistently. Therefore, the inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

127. The inspection team agreed that, following their discussions with members of the senior management team, course team and review of documentary evidence, the university has robust governance mechanisms to oversee and inform decisions regarding students' progression and attainment. These mechanisms include direct observations, including assessment and feedback from people with lived experience of social work.

128. The inspectors heard of the key role of the university personal academic tutors to oversee the progression, and make decisions about the assessment and graduation of individual students. During placements the personal academic tutor works with the practice educator and supervisor to monitor and provide an overview of the student development and progression.

129. The inspection team were provided with narrative and documentary evidence regarding formal committee processes that are in place to consider assessment results and student progression. The external examiner attends the progression and award boards alongside members of the programme team and wider university staff. The inspection team advised this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

130. Discussions with the course team and documentary evidence, including module descriptors, Staff CVs and university library services information identified that academic staff use their research as part of the teaching in the course.

131. During the inspection week, the inspectors heard from library academic support services and student representatives of how students are supported to develop an evidence informed approach to social work practice. The inspectors were assured of the research active staff team that ensured currency of research in the curriculum, and dedicated research and dissertation modules within the programme to supports students' learning and development.

132. The inspection team advised this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

133. The inspection team were able to meet with representatives from the wide range of university student support services. This allowed the inspectors to triangulate documentary evidence and confirm that the university provides a comprehensive range of support for students which is accessible via a variety of methods and tools.

134. The inspectors were assured that the information they received, both narrative and documentary, covers the requirements of this standard and includes specific support around safeguarding, transition to university, counselling, financial support, health and wellbeing, careers and disability services. The inspection team noted the central Catalyst service for students to access and information is provided pre-course, during induction and throughout the course to offer students support. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

135. As identified within this report, students on the course are allocated a personal academic tutor when they start the programme. The inspectors learnt from discussions with student representatives, course team and library support services that this role provides both academic guidance and pastoral support.

136. Students meet with their personal academic tutor 4 times a year, with a focus upon professional direction and development, and clear and robust collaborative working that links into the comprehensive range of academic skills and development services available to students through the university library team and support services. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

137. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection identified the process for students on the course to update their self-disclosure submissions, as identified in standard 1.4. As a result of their discussions with student representatives and the course team the inspectors were assured that the process checks that students' conduct, character and health remains suitable for the practice of social work and that they can interact safely with people with lived experience of social work and others.

138. The inspection team heard of the role and support that the personal academic tutors and practice issues panel provides to students if there are any areas flagged and follow the university fitness to practice and support to study procedures. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

139. The inspection team concluded that the documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection was able to meet the requirements of this standard. Within their meeting with student support services and student representatives the inspection team were able to triangulate documentary information that confirmed supportive and reasonable adjustments are put in place for students.

140. The inspection team met with staff members from the dedicated university support service and were provided with examples of how this team works with students to put in place bespoke plans to uphold their individual needs, both at university and placement settings. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

141. Documentary evidence, discussions with university support services and the course team identified that students have access to a comprehensive range of materials providing course information, from pre-course to completion. Information is provided through a variety of media including live discussions with current students, open/experience days, programme and module handbooks and specifications.

142. Meeting with student representatives confirmed that they have information and guidance regarding the transition to a registered social worker, careers development and support is available from designated services at the university.

143. Consideration was given to this standard by the inspectors following feedback from student representatives that they met with. Final year students spoke of receiving contact from the university that they felt was not timely and caused uncertainty regarding their final year placement, including the breakdown and requirements for the 2 regulatory bodies. However, the recommendations under standards 2.1 and 2.2 address this area.

144. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

145. The inspection team concluded that the documentary evidence, details of attendance requirements, student communication and monitoring through the 'Quickly' system and personal academic tutors, provided in advance of the inspection was able to demonstrate that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

146. As identified under standard 4.10 of this report, the inspectors were assured that the programme is structured to enable formative and summative feedback to students in a timely manner.

147. The inspection team were provided with information that identified feedback focuses upon strengths and areas for improvement to enable feedforward and complies with the university quality management handbook. Formative assessments and feedback are designed to scaffold learning and feed into the summative assessments. Various opportunities for students to gain feedback include peer seminars, workshops and include feedback from people with lived experience of social work.

148. Students are encouraged to use their learning from feedback into their individual learning plans. In practice students complete a daily reflective diary which is shared with their practice educator and direct feedback is given at the midpoint interview with final summative feedback in the final meeting. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

149. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the university academic appeals procedure, confirming that there is a formal appeals procedure for students. This information was triangulated within meetings with student representatives and the course team. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

150. As the qualifying course is an integrated masters course in nursing and social work, with individual exit routes, 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	4.9	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates that the course team and partners review measures to mitigate the barriers to practice learning created by the sequencing of assessments.	30 th January 2025.	Paragraph 199

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	1.4	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider reviewing its process for assessing the suitability of applicants, to consider whether this process can be streamlined for applicants and reduce the two suitability checks they currently do.	Paragraph 35
2	2.1 and 2.2	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider the information provided to students regarding their final year integrated	Paragraph 43

		placement is reviewed. This will seek to provide students with greater clarity and insight into how the statutory tasks, placement days and hours breakdown and the requirements of Social Work England and the NMC are organised.	Paragraph 50
3.	2.4	The inspectors are recommending that there is further consultation with students and consideration regarding the information they receive for their final year placements, including the learning outcomes and how these link to the professional capabilities framework and professional standards.	Paragraph 57

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](#).

A review of the conditions evidence will be undertaken and recommendations will be made to Social Work England's decision maker.

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Recommendation
1	Standard 4.9. Ensure that assessments are mapped to the curriculum and are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates that the course team and partners review measures to mitigate the barriers to practice learning created by the sequencing of assessments.	Met.

Findings

151. The conditions review was undertaken as a result of the conditions set during the course approval as outlined in the original inspection report above. The course provider submitted the conditions monitoring mapping form within the timescale identified by the inspectors. The mapping form contained narrative evidence and supporting documentary evidence that was reviewed by the inspectors.

152. In relation to the condition set for standard 4.9, the course provider submitted information including, but not limited to, Revised Academic Planner 2025-2026, Curriculum Advisory Group Documentation and the Current and Proposed Changes to Summative Assessment Strategies.

153. The inspectors identified that the university have taken steps to address the barriers to practice learning created by the sequencing of assessments. The course team, in collaboration with their partners, have reviewed and implemented measures to mitigate

these barriers, as outlined in the documentary evidence submission and further guidance provided in the conditions mapping form. The changes are clearly detailed in the application for minor amendments. The changes reduce the number of assessments and aim lessen the impact of assessments outlined on the planner provided by the course provider, there is also some increased time to complete the required assessments. Both inspectors stated that the changes made are appropriate and meet the condition.

154. Following the review of the documentary evidence submitted, the inspection team are satisfied that the condition set against the approval of the MNSW (Hons) course is met.

Regulator decision

Conditions met.