



Inspection Report

Course provider: Kingston University

Course approval:

MA Social Work (full time)

MA Social Work (part time)

MA Social Work (work based learning)

PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(full time)

PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(part time)

Inspection dates: 07 – 10 February 2023

Report date:	20/03/2023
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	12/07/2023
Date conditions met and approved:	08/01/2024

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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, new course 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 appearance 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- or 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, without conditions or that it does not meet the criteria for 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 decision about the approval of the course.
13. The 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. Kingston University's MA Social Work (full time), MA Social Work (part time), MA Social Work (work based learning), PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(full time) and PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(part time) courses were 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. This work was carried out jointly with another inspection team inspecting the BA (Hons) Social Work course.

Inspection ID	KIUR2
Course provider	Kingston University
Validating body (if different)	
Courses inspected	MA Social Work (full time) MA Social Work (part time) MA Social Work (work based learning) PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(full time) PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(part time)
Mode of Study	Full time Part time Worked based
Maximum student cohort	Full time 55 Part time 10 Worked based 45
Date of inspection	7-10 February 2023
Inspection team	Helen Challis, Education Quality Assurance Officer Lyn Westcott (Lay Inspector) Stephen Stericker (Registrant Inspector)
Inspector recommendation	Approved with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

16. In this document we describe Kingston University as 'the education provider' or 'the university' and we describe the MA Social Work (full time), MA Social Work (part time), MA Social Work (work based learning), PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(full time) and PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(part time) as 'the course'.

Inspection

17. A remote inspection took place from 7 – 10 February 2023. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

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

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with six students, mainly international, in the first and second year of the course. One of these was a student representative. Discussions included their experience of admissions processes, placement allocation, curriculum, assessment and access to support.

Meetings with course staff

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

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work who have been involved in the design and delivery of the course and interview process for applicants for the MA Social Work course. Discussions included their role in interviews and admissions, contributions towards course design and evaluation, support and training offered and their role within teaching and assessment.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including Developing Together Social Work Teaching Partnership (DTSWTP) and representatives from

placement partners including Sutton Council, NSPCC, Welcare, Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

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. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted by the course provider. This included the university admissions policy, information about the entry requirements, course admissions guide, written test scenarios, applicant information checklist, questions with scoring, and self-declaration for IT abilities. Documentation also outlined that the assessment process had been moved online during Covid and the group discussion element has been discontinued.

26. The inspection team met with staff involved in admissions and the course team. At these meetings, it was confirmed that the online interview process introduced during the pandemic had been retained and the group discussion/role play discontinued. The reason for this was it felt more flexible and inclusive as it negated the need for travel.

27. From documentation submitted and the discussions with staff, the inspection team agreed that the assessment process allowed applicants to show they had the capability and potential to meet the professional standards.

28. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

29. Although the inspection team agreed this standard has been met, they agreed that the online interview process could be strengthened and are making a [recommendation](#) in relation to standard 1.1 that the course provider reviews the provision of online processes only and reintroduces the group discussion/role play, online if necessary.

Standard 1.2

30. Course entry requirements submitted prior to inspection stated applicants needed 'demonstrable experience' and the list of interview questions submitted confirmed a

question was asked about experience during the interview. The inspection team agreed that previous experience was considered as part of the admissions process.

31. The inspection team also reviewed the university RPEL policy outlining what constituted demonstrable experience and how this was assessed.

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

Standard 1.3

33. The documentary evidence provided by Kingston University stated that they work closely with DTSWTP to ensure that employers, placement providers and people with lived experience were involved in the admissions processes. Additional documentation stated that interview panels would consist of a course team staff member plus either a Teaching Consultant, or a Partner Agency Staff member or a Person with Lived Experience, with the interview continuing with course team staff members only, should circumstances require.

34. Further evidence was requested, and the inspection team reviewed data that showed a third of interviews were conducted by staff members alone. This was confirmed during meetings with the course team.

35. Students discussed with the inspection team their different experiences with panels varying in composition and number. Some had an interview panel of two, including a person with lived experience; others had one member of staff.

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

37. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a [recommendation](#) in relation to standard 1.3. We recommend that the course provider introduces check to ensure that panels generally include an employer representative and person with lived experience, and failure to do so is by exception only.

Standard 1.4

38. The university demonstrated the process of assessing suitability of applicant's character conduct and health through evidence submitted and inspection meetings.

39. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed the university's admissions policy which included the process for the declaration of suitability for social work. This outlined the need to undertake an enhanced DBS, and declare any relevant disciplinary or unprofessional conduct, health or disability. The University outlined a clear process for assessing this declaration.

40. Discussions with students and staff confirmed that processes were used. Meeting with employers and DTSWTP confirmed that the University admissions team could seek further guidance on suitability to undertake placements from the DTSWTP advisory group. However, international students pointed out that they had not been made aware of the

specific DBS checks required and believed overseas suitability checks made elsewhere were sufficient.

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

42. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a [recommendation](#) in relation to standard 1.4. We recommend that the course provider provides clear and accessible information to international students, informing them of the need to undertake DBS check in addition to any other vetting procedures.

Standard 1.5

43. The narrative submitted in the mapping document prior to the inspection outlined processes for supporting applicants with disabilities, promoting equality and diversity and reviewing the selection process. The university admissions policy was clear that talking about disability or health conditions would not impact on decisions made about offering a place.

44. Further evidence was requested regarding EDI training for staff involved in admissions. This was not provided prior to inspection. However, discussions with staff responsible for admissions confirmed staff and people with lived experience received mandatory EDI training and this is tracked and monitored via course leads.

45. Further discussions were had regarding the continuation of the online processes. Staff members explained that this was a result of people finding it a more useful method; it promotes inclusivity by negating travel costs. The inspection team were informed that the application process will be reviewed at the end of the academic year.

46. During discussions with students, the inspection team heard of several reasonable adjustments made for applicants, including extra time for an applicant with dyslexia. Support available was also confirmed during discussions with support services staff who outlined the processes for applicants to identify requirements and the provision of these. They explained that most post graduate students apply through UCAS which requires a declaration of additional needs.

47. Meetings with students also highlighted their different experiences with interview panels varying in composition and number as outlined at Standard 1.3.

48. The inspection team found this standard to be met.

Standard 1.6

49. The course provider submitted the admissions policy as evidence. This document outlines the admissions stages and underlying principles to be used. The inspection team were unable to find evidence relating to the specific information given to applicants allowing them to make an informed choice about taking up an offer of a place.

50. Further evidence was requested. The inspection team reviewed the course website and found that it stated that completion of the course would allow registration with the regulator. Additional narrative received from the course provider explained that information regarding Social Work England's professional standards is not given at recruitment stage but is followed up at applicant experience days which are not compulsory. Further documentation submitted included an interview invitation template and written test template that explained the interview process.

51. During meetings with students, the inspection team heard some applicants had very little information concerning options for funding for the course, full costs of the whole course, and placements.

52. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 1.6 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 [conditions](#) section.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

53. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed documentation including the Readiness for Direct Practice module descriptor and the Practice Learning Handbook. The inspection team found some of this was contradictory regarding the number of skills days, with the module descriptor giving 14, while the Practice Learning Handbook identified 15. The inspection team asked for further clarification around this.

54. Discussions with the course team clarified the discrepancy in the documentation and additional evidence submitted confirmed that 200 days are spent learning in a practice setting, with 30 of those including 30 skills day.

55. During discussions, students were unclear about the purpose and names of skills days, some referring to recall days or voluntary days.

56. During inspection, the inspection team found that the university sources placements in organisations both within and outside the DTSWTP. The university documents submitted as evidence outlined how the DTSWTP develops new placements within the partner organisations and had overall responsibility for quality assuring practice learning.

57. While the inspection team was able to view the InSpace system that identified what placement students had undertaken, no evidence produced showed that the university had overview of data to check students have contrasting placements from the DWSWTP or that

placements outside the DTSWTP had been audited to determine if they could be classed as statutory or not. As a result, the inspection team were unable to determine if students had at least one placement in a statutory setting.

58. Consideration was given as to whether the findings identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standards. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

59. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is also making a [recommendation](#) in relation to standard 2.1. We recommend that the course provider ensures information given to students is consistent and clearly articulates correct number of skills days, their purpose and mandatory attendance.

Standard 2.2

60. During inspection, the inspection team determined that the university sources placements in organisations both within and outside the DTSWTP.

61. Prior to inspection, the course provider submitted documentary evidence that included the Practice Learning Handbook and Practice Learning Agreement. These documents outlined how the DTSWTP develops new placements within the partner organisations and had overall responsibility for quality assuring practice learning, including the auditing of placements within partner organisations.

62. Discussions with both employers and members of the DTSWTP took place during the inspection where the placement co-ordinator showed the inspection team the InPlace system that held student details and the placements they had been allocated.

63. Meetings with staff responsible for practice placements, placement providers and employers identified that placement partners outside of the teaching partnership did not fall within the same processes as those within. These included DTSWTP agencies self-auditing social work placements to assess them as suitable for social work students, while placements outside DTSWTP agencies are audited by university staff.

64. The inspection team were satisfied from meetings with students, practice educators and employers, that methods were identified to ensure practice learning opportunities for students that enabled them to gain the knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards. However, concerns remain about the university's oversight of those audits undertaken by the DTSWTP and lack of evidence that audits had been undertaken for those providers outside the Teaching Partnership.

65. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition linked to standard 2.1 was also appropriate in relation to standard 2.2 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 [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 2.3

66. The course provider submitted documentary evidence that included the Practice Learning Handbook and Practice Learning Agreement. These outlined the process for ensuring students had induction, supervision, access to resources and a realistic workload, including an induction checklist.

67. The Practice Assessment Panel (PAP) was also explained in the evidence submission. Consisting of university staff and stakeholders including people with lived experience, employers, and practice educators, one of the responsibilities of the PAP was monitoring placements and student achievement on both practice placements.

68. Discussions with placement providers, members of the DTSWTP and practice educators confirmed that the processes outlined in the documentation were used.

69. The inspection team were assured that this standard had been met.

Standard 2.4

70. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed the Practice Learning Handbook submitted by the university as evidence of meeting this standard. The document outlined how student levels of responsibility increased, using the Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Work (PCF) to determine expectations from placement providers and students according to each stage of the student journey. Students also completed a personal development plan after their first placement in preparation for their second.

71. This documentary evidence was triangulated during discussions with students and practice educators. In addition, reviews at the mid-point of the practice placement are conducted and are reviewed by the PAP to ensure learning opportunities are appropriate.

72. Following review of documentary evidence provided and their discussions with key stakeholders throughout the inspection, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

73. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included Readiness for Direct Practice module descriptor which outlined how the module prepares and formally assesses students' progression to placement in a service delivery setting. This included people with lived experience who provided simulated interviews in the skills lab. Successful completion of the module is a prerequisite of starting the first placement.

74. In discussions with students and support services, the inspection team heard how health and suitability checks are updated throughout the course.

75. The inspection team heard from students, placement providers and course teams who confirmed the assessments outlined in the Readiness for Direct Practice module descriptor were followed.

76. The university was able to demonstrate that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

77. As outlined in standard 2.1, placements are sourced from both the DTSWTP partners and organisations not part of the DTSWTP. As part of the submitted evidence in the Practice Learning Handbook, planning and preparation checks include the registration and currency of practice educators with these being done by the Teaching Partnership member organisations and a placement information form completed for other providers. The course provider set out the expectations that included availability of off-site practice educator if one was not available on site.

78. While meeting with practice educators, the course team and members of the DTSWTP, the types of training and development opportunities and peer support provided by the DTSWTP was explored. The teaching partnership also do an audit of practice educators continuous professional development and placements, but only for members of the Teaching Partnership.

79. However, concerns remained about how the university has overview of audit data from the DTSWTP and of lack of evidence that the university had undertaken similar audits for those practice educators outside the Teaching Partnership.

80. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition linked to standard 2.1 was also appropriate in relation to standard 2.6 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 [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 2.7

81. The inspection team reviewed submitted evidence including the Practice Learning Handbook that outlined the process for dealing with concerns and difficulties. Additional evidence submitted include a process flowchart, whistleblowing policy and resources from the taught session on whistleblowing and reporting concerns.

82. Discussions with practice educators and placement providers confirmed that policies and procedures are in place for students to challenge unsafe behaviours and that these had been used. The inspection team heard from some students that while there are processes in place, one or two students felt reluctant to report issues.

83. The university was able to demonstrate that this standard was met. The inspection team were able to confirm that there are policies and processes in place to meet this standard. However, a few of the students we spoke to felt they would be reluctant to report issues. Whilst this may not be reflective of all students, the inspection team are making a recommendation that the university re-examine how students are informed and encouraged to report their concerns.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

84. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the Department of Social Work and Social Care (DSWSC) Resources Document containing a governance structure for the DWSWTP.

85. When meeting with senior managers, the inspection team had the opportunity ask for clarification on how the overall governance structures linked together. The inspection team received a comprehensive description of the different internal and external governance processes, such as the PAP and assessment boards, and how they were coordinated to ensure a coherent overview of key issues and course priorities.

86. The inspection team were satisfied that the description provided evidence of the course having a management and structure in place with clear roles and lines of accountability defined and that this standard had been met.

Standard 3.2

87. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the DTSWTP Primary Partner Charter, the agreement for teaching partnership members that outlined commitment to high quality placement provision and support to enable students to meet the required learning outcomes.

88. The university provided documentary evidence which outlined the process in place to deal with potential placement breakdown. The focus on this process was prevention that relied on the placement allocation process as described in the Placement Allocation Strategy and confirmed by practice educators and placement providers.

89. While the inspection team were satisfied that methods were identified to ensure agreements were in place within the DTSWTP, concerns remain about the lack of evidence for agreements with providers outside the Teaching Partnership.

90. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 3.2 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 [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.3

91. As evidence of its meeting this standard, the university submitted the Placement Preparation and Planning, and Placement Allocation sections from the Practice Learning Handbook. The Placement Preparation and Planning document described how two main processes took place to ensure that placement organisations had the necessary policies and procedures in place with regard to students' health, wellbeing and risk. The auditing of placements prior to use checked for these via the Placement Information Form and this was followed up by students confirming they had read and understood policies and procedures via the Placement Learning Agreement.

92. Discussions with employers and members of the DTSWTP satisfied the inspection team that processes were in place for those placements set within the Teaching Partnership. However, concerns remained about the university's oversight of those checks undertaken by the DTSWTP and lack of evidence that processes had been undertaken for those providers outside the Teaching Partnership.

93. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 3.3 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 [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.4

94. Documentary evidence submitted ahead of inspection outlined the involvement of employers in various elements of the course supported by practices and procedures developed as part of the Teaching Partnership. These included participation in the admissions process, placement matching, evaluation of courses and assessment of students via the PAP.

95. This was confirmed during meetings with the course team and employers. During these meetings, the inspection team also heard about how the Teaching Partnership supports the

role of Teaching Consultants who are practising social workers seconded to the university to support the delivery of teaching on modules.

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

Standard 3.5

97. Documentary evidence provided by the university described how people with lived experience, employers and students are all invited to contribute feedback on the course through surveys and annual reviews of the course and placements. This was done either directly with the university or via the Teaching Partnership. The inspection team also saw evidence of module evaluations and student surveys, analysis of feedback and action plans (Course Enhancement Plans) to address any issues raised. For example the Quality Assurance of Practice Learning (QAPL) form results are discussed with the Teaching Partnership and formally reported to the Board of Study.

98. Discussions with stakeholders confirmed their contributions to the monitoring and evaluation process.

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

Standard 3.6

100. The university's membership of the teaching partnership ensures that capacity for placement is considered when determining student numbers. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed documentation and narrative describing how recruitment numbers are planned to reflect the team's capacity and institutional resources.

101. While the course provider acknowledged its proximity to other universities make it challenging, they have undertaken to ameliorate this by requesting Placement Pledges for the upcoming academic year to support the university's planning and allocation process.

102. Discussions with placement providers and members of the DTSWTP confirmed how they work together with the university to identify placement capacity and plan to meet need.

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

Standard 3.7

104. The Course Leader and Head of Department CVs confirmed that both were on the register and appropriately qualified.

105. The inspection team concluded that the documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection was able to demonstrate that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

106. Through review of staff CVs submitted, the inspection team were assured that all staff on the course were registered and had appropriate qualifications.

107. During discussions with the senior management team and staff, it was explained that staffing needs are reviewed annually and how areas of interest and expertise were used to plan where staff delivered across the course.

108. The university was able to demonstrate that this standard had been met.

Standard 3.9

109. Prior to inspection, the university provided evidence that data had been collected through annual surveys and through the university's continuous monitoring, enhancement processes and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey. This data was then analysed in the Course Enhancement Plans and actions identified to address issues such as attainment gaps.

110. Discussions with staff included how recording of academic attainment on a student record system took place and use of dashboards to monitor progress.

111. The inspection team agreed that this standard had been met.

Standard 3.10

112. Evidence submitted prior to the inspection included a narrative outlining how the university has an appraisal system which supports staff to attend and participate in a variety of personal development activities, including shadowing practitioners. This activity is recorded online.

113. Further evidence was requested both prior and during inspection regarding how the appraisal process had supported course staff to maintain their knowledge, understanding and currency with regard to professional practice, and some examples of development undertaken.

114. No documents to evidence staff were supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice were seen by the inspection team. The inspection team were unable to triangulate this standard during the inspection. Therefore, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against Standard 3.10 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 [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

115. The inspection team reviewed the Module Directory submitted prior to inspection which provided evidence of curriculum content. The Practice Learning Handbook clearly mapped course content to Social Work England Professional Standards and the PCF.

116. When meeting with the students they clearly articulated the need to meet the professional standards prior to practise, when applying for registration and during practise.

117. The inspection team discussed the structure and content of the course in more detail with the course team. The course team were able to demonstrate how each module builds knowledge, skills and reflective practice and how the assessments are designed to link with module and course learning outcomes. The inspection team explored the learning outcomes for the Final Placement and Human Development and the Social Environment modules with a focus on how the wording of learning outcomes can determine the appropriate level of assessment. For example, is 'demonstrating an understanding' congruent with level 7 learning outcomes as outlined in the QAA Quality Code for Higher Ed (2014).

118. The inspection team noted that some learning outcomes listed on the programme specification were different to those on the module descriptors. This meant that students may not be able to correctly demonstrate knowledge and skills. This led to the inspection team recommending that conditions are set against Standard 4.1 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 [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.2

119. As detailed within standard area 3.5, meeting with representatives of placement partners, students, practice educators and people with lived experience, the inspection team heard positive examples of the good working relationships the university has with each stakeholder.

120. These conversations, alongside the documentary evidence which demonstrated how placement partners, students and people with lived experience of social work are engaged in the continuous review and development of the course, satisfied the inspection team that this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

121. Narrative provided ahead of inspection outlined the university's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). This included reference to an EDI teaching toolkit. During meetings with the course team, the work done to decolonise the curriculum was discussed as was the annual review of modules to ensure principles and frameworks were updated as required.

122. The module descriptor for Legal, Ethical and Policy Frameworks for Social Work Practice module evidenced the inclusion of human rights and legislative frameworks.

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

Standard 4.4

124. The university has well established systems to ensure the course is updated annually. These processes were evident in the Course Enhancement Plan and the Department Annual Monitoring and Enhancement Summary Report documents.

125. During meetings with the course team and library staff, the process for updating reading lists was discussed. This assured the inspection team as it had been noted that the module reading lists submitted prior to inspection contained literature that was 10 years old. It was confirmed by staff that reading lists on Canvas, the university's e-learning platform, were regularly updated. The inspection team are making a recommendation that the university add links to the up-to-date reading lists to the module descriptors to ensure students are aware of the most current reading lists.

Standard 4.5

126. The modules descriptors for this course outlined in the Module Directory demonstrate how assessment methods have been designed to encourage students to demonstrate their ability to link theory to practice. The inspection team also heard from practice educators and students how student supervision sessions are used to further demonstrate theoretical concepts during practice placements.

127. The inspection team noted that there were discrepancies in learning outcomes across some course documentation that led to the inspection team recommending that a condition linked to standard 4.1 was also appropriate in relation to standard 4.5. 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 this report.

Standard 4.6

128. Practice placement module descriptors and discussions with students and practice educators confirmed that students have the opportunity to work with and learn from other professions.

129. Module descriptors and discussions with the course team outlined the use of presenters from other professions/disciplines invited to present and facilitate sessions.

130. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

131. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a [recommendation](#) in relation to standard 4.6. We recommend that the course provider continues with the development of plans to introduce structured interprofessional learning sessions within the taught elements of the course.

Standard 4.7

132. Module descriptors submitted prior to the inspection outlined the breakdown of the number of hours spent in scheduled learning and teaching alongside time students were expected to spend in guided independent study.

133. The inspection team were satisfied that documentation evidenced that the amount of time spent under direct instruction was sufficient to meet the required level of competence, therefore agreeing that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

134. The course provider demonstrated a wide range of assessment methods used throughout modules on the course with each descriptor containing an overview of the assessment strategy. Within each module the assessment details were matched to the learning outcomes which demonstrated the ways in which students would meet the professional standards.

135. The university also submitted External Examiner (EE) reports for the course. The EE did not raise any concerns regarding assessments.

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

Standard 4.9

137. The inspection team reviewed documents in relation to assessments and progression as outlined in 4.8 above.

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

Standard 4.10

139. Prior to the inspection, the course provider submitted the Assessment Calendar which provided documentary evidence outlining deadlines for feedback to be given to students.

140. Discussion with students identified that they found the feedback to be timely, useful and allowed them to feed this into their next assignments.

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

Standard 4.11

142. Staff CVs were submitted as evidence that the course provider met this standard. The inspection team reviewed these prior to the inspection and found these documents verified that assessments are carried out by staff with appropriate expertise.

143. Also submitted was a statement that the EE was qualified and on the register. The inspection team was unable to find documentation submitted that evidenced this statement. This led to the inspection team recommending that a condition is set against Standard 4.11 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 [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.12

144. Documentary evidence provided in relation to the systems that manage student progression included both placement modules, the Outline of Programme Structure and the Critical Reflection of Practice module; this was reviewed by the inspection team. In addition, discussions with the course team, placement partners and people with lived experience assured the inspection team that all parties are included in the systems identified and this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

145. The inspection team concluded that evidence-informed thinking and practice could be clearly demonstrated throughout the course via the Module Descriptors. The support mechanisms for students, along with feedback from people with lived experience and practice educators encourages them to develop their skills and approach to practice. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

146. Prior to inspection, the university submitted a link to the support services available for the health and wellbeing of students. These included fast track to NHS services for students with mental health support needs, careers advice, support for reasonable adjustments and cost of living crisis support. There was a dedicated page for the current cost of living crisis.

147. Meeting with support services staff, the inspection team heard how many senior managers were new to post and had introduced improvements to the services.

148. During discussions with students the inspection team heard mixed experiences of the services with some finding support and information around financial issues and funding unclear and confusing. For example, one student was unaware they had applied for and been awarded a bursary.

149. The inspection team took the student feedback into account but felt that the experiences of newer students and improvements outlined by support services reflected appropriate support was present.

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

Standard 5.2

151. Documentation submitted prior to inspection included a narrative outlining students' allocation to personal tutors, arrangements for regular group tutorials and how personal tutor meetings are planned. A link was given to student support available through the Academic Skills Centres and libraries.

152. When discussing the services with the students, they shared their knowledge and experience of using the services giving examples of how they had accessed academic skills workshops offered to new starters at induction.

153. Student support in relation to academic development was clearly demonstrated and the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

154. The inspection team reviewed the policies and processes submitted prior to inspection which included the Fitness to Practise Procedures - Student Health and Disability and Fitness to Practise Procedures - Student Conduct. After completing a declaration in relation to criminal convictions, an enhanced DBS check and health check upon commencing their study, all students are required to sign a declaration confirming ongoing suitability prior to each practice placement.

155. Discussions with students and practice educators confirmed this process.

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

Standard 5.4

157. Narrative provided prior to inspection outlined how students can access services for assessment for reasonable adjustments, from being signposted through self-declaration, identified as requiring support at induction or tutors signposting students to university services. During meetings with student support services, the process of creating individual

learning plans was discussed. Students confirmed that they were encouraged to share these plans with relevant staff both in the course team and in the practice placement.

158. During meetings with students, including student representatives, positive comments were made about the support available via individual learning plans, with one student sharing experiences of the support in place for dyslexia.

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

Standard 5.5

160. Students receive an induction to the course which outlines curriculum content and placement expectations. Key documentation provided to students on Canvas also outlined this in addition to providing the expectations for registration upon qualification and the role of Social Work England as the regulator.

161. The careers and employability team offer support and advice to students throughout the course through bespoke sessions and provide further information about the transition to ASYE. As part of their course, students set up a Professional Development Plan that they take forward to the ASYE level. The university also invite past students to speak to current students during the second year to share experiences and key information about the requirements of registered social workers.

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

Standard 5.6

163. The inspection team reviewed documentation prior to the inspection that evidenced that students were aware of what parts of the course are mandatory. This included the Course Agreement which is signed by the student. The procedure for reporting illness is outlined in the Practice Learning Handbook.

164. Discussion with staff and students confirmed that attendance to all elements of the course was mandatory with both an electronic and hard copy register being completed. Students absent from the practice placement complete the appropriate agency procedure to inform staff, and the university and placement provider liaise to aggregate the attendance results. If an activity is not attended, the student is required to make up the learning missed.

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

Standard 5.7

166. The inspection team determined that there was a clear process and timetable for feedback throughout the course. This was supported by the Assessment Calendar and the

Fairness in Assessment Policy which outlined university commitment to providing timely and purposeful feedback.

167. Students confirmed their experiences of feedback were positive and that they received both annotated and summary feedback which they found helpful. They were also given the opportunity to follow up on feedback by booking 1:1 sessions with the tutor.

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

Standard 5.8

169. The course provider submitted The Student Complaint Procedure and Academic Integrity 2022-3 (Taught) document in support of meeting this standard. The latter contained link to the online policy 'How to submit an academic appeal in 2022/23.'

170. Students confirmed that they knew about both processes and understood the steps they contained.

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

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

Standard 6.1

172. As the qualifying courses are the MA Social Work (full time), MA Social Work (part time), MA Social Work (work based learning), PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(full time) and PG Dip Social Work (masters exit route only)(part time) 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 are binding and 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, we are proposing the following condition for this course at this time.

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	Standard 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that applicants, through more than one source, are given full information as outlined in the guidance for standard 1.6 and that the wording around registration is corrected to read that completing the course successfully is not a guarantee that they will be able to register with Social Work England.	2 months after regulatory decision	Paragraph 49
2	Standard 2.1 and 2.2	The education provider will provide evidence that: • all placements used for students on the course are audited by the university prior to allocation and learning opportunities clearly identified • statutory placements are identified	4 months after regulatory decision	Paragraph 53 and Paragraph 60
3	Standard 2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that all practice educators are: • on the register • appropriately qualified and experienced	4 months after regulatory decision	Paragraph 77

4	Standard 3.2	The education provider will provide evidence that they have agreements with all placement providers to provide education and training that meets the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards.	4 months after regulatory decision	Paragraph 87
5	Standard 3.3	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures that the process outlined in the submission evidence regarding placement policies and procedures is undertaken and audited prior to placement allocation for all placement providers.	6 months after regulatory decision	Paragraph 91
6	Standard 3.10	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures that the course team are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding of professional practice.	2 months after regulatory decision	Paragraph 112
7	Standard 4.1 and 4.5	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures that: - the variations in learning outcomes in documentation are eliminated - learning outcomes for the course are congruent with level 7 learning outcomes as outlined in the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education (2014).	2 months after regulatory decision	Paragraph 115 and Paragraph 126
8	Standard 4.11	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures the External Examiner is appropriately qualified and on the register.	1 month after regulatory decision	Paragraph 142

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	Standard 1.1	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider reviewing the provision of online processes only and reintroduces the group discussion/role play, online if necessary.	Paragraph 25
2	Standard 1.3	The inspectors are recommending that the university introduces check to ensure that panels generally include an employer representative and person with lived experience, and failure to do so is by exception only.	Paragraph 33
3.	Standard 1.4	The inspectors are recommending that the course provider provides clear and accessible information to international students, informing them of the need to undertake DBS check in addition to any other vetting procedures.	Paragraph 38
4.	Standard 2.1	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider ensuring information given to students is consistent and clearly articulates correct number of skills days and their purpose.	Paragraph 53
5.	Standard 2.7	The inspectors are recommending that the university re-examine how students are informed and encouraged to report their concerns.	Paragraph 83
6.	Standard 4.4	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider The education provider will provide evidence that ensures that the variations in reading lists are eliminated.	Paragraph 124

7.	Standard 4.6	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider continuing with the development of plans to introduce structured interprofessional learning sessions within the taught elements of the course.	Paragraph 128
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Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

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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	☒	☐	☒

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

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
2.5 Ensure that students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to make sure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.	☒	☐	☐
2.6 Ensure that practice educators are on the register and that they have the relevant and current knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.	☐	☒	☐
2.7 Ensure that policies and processes, including for whistleblowing, are in place for students to 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.	☐	☒	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
3.4 Ensure that employers are involved in elements of the course, including but not limited to the management and monitoring of courses and the allocation of practice education.	☒	☐	☐
3.5 Ensure that regular and effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems are in place, and that these involve employers, people with lived experience of social work, and students.	☒	☐	☐
3.6 Ensure that the number of students admitted is aligned to a clear strategy, which 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	☐	☒	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards.			
4.2 Ensure that the views of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work are incorporated into the design, ongoing development and review of the curriculum.	☒	☐	☐
4.3 Ensure that the course is designed in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion principles, and human rights and legislative frameworks.	☒	☐	☐
4.4 Ensure that the course is continually updated as a result of developments in research, legislation, government policy and best practice.	☒	☐	☒
4.5 Ensure that the integration of theory and practice is central to the course.	☐	☒	☐
4.6 Ensure that students are given the opportunity to work with, and learn from, other professions in order to support multidisciplinary working, including in integrated settings.	☒	☐	☒
4.7 Ensure that the number of hours spent in structured academic learning under the direction of an educator is sufficient to ensure that students meet the required level of competence.	☒	☐	☐
4.8 Ensure that the assessment strategy and design demonstrate that the assessments are robust, fair, reliable and valid, and that those who successfully complete the course have developed the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
4.9 Ensure that assessments are mapped to the curriculum and are appropriately sequenced to match students’ progression through the course.	☒	☐	☐
4.10 Ensure students are provided with feedback throughout the course to support their ongoing development.	☒	☐	☐
4.11 Ensure assessments are carried out by people with appropriate expertise, and that external examiner(s) for the course are appropriately qualified and experienced and on the register.	☐	☒	☐
4.12 Ensure that there are systems to manage students’ progression, with input from a range of people, to inform decisions about their progression including via direct observation of practice.	☒	☐	☐
4.13 Ensure that the course is designed to enable students to develop an evidence-informed approach to practice, underpinned by skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research and evaluation.	☒	☐	☐
Supporting students			
5.1 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their health and wellbeing including: I. confidential counselling services; II. careers advice and support; and III. occupational health services	☒	☐	☐
5.2 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their academic	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
development including, for example, personal tutors.			
5.3 Ensure that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health.	☒	☐	☐
5.4 Make supportive and reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments to enable them to progress through their course and meet the professional standards, in accordance with relevant legislation.	☒	☐	☐
5.5 Provide information to students about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker including information on requirements for continuing professional development.	☒	☐	☐
5.6 Provide information to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory.	☒	☐	☐
5.7 Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments.	☒	☐	☐
5.8 Ensure there is an effective process in place for students to make academic appeals.	☒	☐	☐
Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register			
6.1 The threshold entry route to the register will normally be a bachelor's degree with honours in social work.	☒	☐	☐

Regulator decision

Approved with conditions.

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

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

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

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that applicants, through more than one source, are given full information as outlined in the guidance for standard 1.6 and that the wording around registration is corrected to read that completing the course successfully is not a guarantee that they will be able to register with Social Work England.	Met.
2	2.1, 2.2	The education provider will provide evidence that: • All placements used for students on the course are audited by the university prior to allocation and learning opportunities are clearly identified. • Statutory placements are identified.	Met.
3	2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that all practice educators are: • On the register and • Appropriately qualified and experienced	Met.
4	3.2	The education provider will provide evidence that they have agreements with all placement providers to provide education and training that meets the professional standards and	Met.

		the education and training qualifying standards.	
5	3.3	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures that the process outlined in the submission evidence regarding placement policies and procedures is undertaken and audited prior to placement allocation for all placement providers.	Met.
6	3.10	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures that the course team are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding of professional practice.	Met.
7	4.1, 4.5	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures that: • The variations in learning outcomes in documentation are eliminated • Learning outcomes for the course are congruent with level 7 learning outcomes as outlined in the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education (2014).	Met. Further action required in relation to findings identified during review.
8	4.11	The education provider will provide evidence that ensures the External Examiner is appropriately qualified and on the register.	Met.

Findings

In relation to the condition applied against standard 1.6, the inspection team were directed to the course provider website, provided with copies of PowerPoint presentations used as part of selection and recruitment days and had the opportunity to review the social work information checklist went to applicants. The updated documentation provided accurate information about eligibility to apply to register with Social Work England upon completion of the course and offered further information about course content through a range of sources. The inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

In order to assure the inspection team that the condition in relation to standards 2.1 and 2.2 was met, the course provider submitted examples of placement documentation used by university staff, practice educators and students. Through the documentation provided, it

was evident that checks were in place to assure the nature and quality of placements before allocation and throughout the placement experience and that these were continuously reviewed by the course team to ensure learning opportunities remained appropriate.

Further to the documentation provided, the university also provided an update on the development of a quality assurance tutor role within the staff team from September 2023. The addition of this role provided further assurance to the inspection team that there would be a more robust structure in place to support the allocation and management of practice provision for students on the course. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 2.6, the education provider submitted a copy of the revised departmental policy used to ensure placements had suitable learning opportunities and there was appropriate support on placement. Within the policy, there was reference to the process in place to ensure practice educators were appropriately qualified and experienced as well as an outline of the steps required when concerns had been raised about a placement or practice educator.

To support the updated policy, the course provider also submitted copies of forms used to gather information in relation to practice educators and correspondence shared with those who were allocated a student on placement. This included the Practice Educator Audit Form (PEAF) which included information about a practice educators registration with Social Work England and the practice educator contract letter which confirmed the arrangements in place. The course provider outlined that when the documentation was completed by a practice educator, this was cross checked against the Social Work England register by the Operational Education Lead at the university. Further to this, all practice educators were required to regularly update their CV's and share these with the university to demonstrate experience and CPD. The inspection team agreed that this standard was now met.

In order to offer assurance that the condition in relation to standard 3.2 was met, the course provider shared a copy of the Kingston University Placement Providers Agreement. The inspection team agreed that the condition was now met but suggested it would be useful for language within documentation to be reviewed to reflect wider placement providers and not just those within local authorities.

In relation to the condition set against standard 3.3, the education provider submitted an overview of the actions undertaken within the staff team in relation to the development of dedicated placement quality roles and review of course meeting agendas. The course provider confirmed that the addition of senior lecturer with quality assurance responsibilities would strengthen work undertaken and also support with embedding policies and procedures in relation to placement provision. The addition of standard agenda items in relation to placement audits and quality provided further assurance that issues

would be identified and responded to appropriately by the course team. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

In order to fulfil the requirements of standard 3.10, the university provided an overview of the arrangements in place to ensure that staff have appropriate time to engage in CPD activities to support them to maintain their knowledge and understanding of professional practice. In addition to opportunities for staff to regularly attend conferences, the university also outlined how all staff are supported to achieve fellowship with AdvanceHE within 18 months of starting their employment. Further to this, arrangements with the Developing Together Social Work Partnership (DTSWP) provided staff with opportunities to engage in the 'academic in practice' role where there were opportunities to contribute to service delivery in local authorities through a range of means. CV's provided by the university offered further detail about the range of professional development activities staff had been involved in.

The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met but observed that not all CV's had up to date details of staff DBS status. Whilst this does not directly impact the course providers ability to meet this standard, the inspection team agreed that it would be advisable to adopt a consistent approach for all staff in relation to monitoring of DBS.

In relation to the condition applied in relation to standards 4.1 and 4.5, the education provider submitted a revised programme specification for the course. Upon reviewing the initial submission of the document, the inspection team were unable to identify where changes had been made to the learning outcomes and therefore were unable to agree that these were congruent with level 7 learning outcomes. Following further discussion with the course provider, it was established that the document reviewed by the inspection team was not the most recent and therefore further information was provided by the course team.

Within the second evidence submission, the inspection team observed that changes had been made to the course aims and the learning outcomes were renamed knowledge and understanding specific to the subject. The inspection team agreed that the course aims met level 7 expectations, however the knowledge and understanding statements (previous learning outcomes) remained unchanged. Further to this, the inspection team identified that the coding of the knowledge and understanding statements was not intuitive and did not match to the coding used in a later table within the programme specification. It was identified by the course provider that the coding seen later in the document related to a previous version of the programme. The language of learning outcomes and knowledge and understanding statements was also used interchangeably within the programme specification.

The inspection team were able to agree that the revised programme aims were appropriate for the level of study and that these aims would further guide the knowledge and skills statements. Whilst it was agreed this was sufficient to meet the condition at a threshold

level, the inspection team highlighted that the inconsistency of language within the programme specification and inaccurate coding used by the course provider had the potential to cause confusion for students on the programme. As a result, the inspection team are proposing that the original condition is met but the course provider must ensure, as a priority, that the programme specification is updated to reflect the current course knowledge and understating statements. These changes should also be ratified via internal university quality assurance processes and the course provider must demonstrate how any changes to the programme specification will be communicated to students currently studying on the course. Within two months of the final report, the course provider will submit evidence to the Education Quality Assurance team to assure them that the programme specification has been updated and agreed by their institution, with inconsistencies in language addressed throughout documentation.

In relation to the condition applied against standard 4.11, the course provider shared a copy of the CV for the external examiner for the course. This confirmed that they were appropriately qualified and on the Social Work England register. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

As a result of the above, the inspection team is recommending that the course be approved subject to the programme specification being updated to ensure it is reflective of the current version of the course.

Update 08.03.24

The course provider submitted a copy of their revised programme specification for the course which demonstrated that it had been updated to reflect the current course knowledge and understanding statements. This had been agreed internally by the university. As a result, Social Work England remain assured that the Masters in Social Work remains an approved course.

Regulator decision

Approved.