

Inspection Report

Course provider: University of Wolverhampton

Course approval: BA (Hons) Social Work
(integrated) Degree Apprenticeship

Inspection dates: 05/04/2022 – 07/04/2022

Report date:	17/01/23
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	18/01/23
Date conditions met and approved:	27/09/2023

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

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

Summary of Inspection

15. The University of Wolverhampton's BA (Hons) Social Work (integrated) Degree Apprenticeship was inspected as part of the Social Work England reapproval cycle; whereby all course providers with qualifying social work courses will be inspected against the new Education and Training Standards 2021.

Inspection ID	UWOR1
Course provider	University of Wolverhampton
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Work (integrated) Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of study	Full Time
Maximum student cohort	To be confirmed
Date of inspection	05/04/2022 – 07/04/2022
Inspection team	Naomi Barrett - Education Quality Assurance Officer Dr Sophia Hunt (Lay Inspector) Graeme Currie (Registrant Inspector) Hannah Brown - Head of Quality Assurance (Observer)
Inspector recommendation	Approved with Conditions
Approval outcome	

Language

16. In this document we describe University of Wolverhampton as 'the education provider' or 'the university' and we describe the BA (Hons) Social Work (integrated) Degree Apprenticeship as 'the course'.

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place from 5 April 2022 to 7 April 2022 across sites in Wolverhampton where the University of Wolverhampton is based. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

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

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with 8 apprentices, some from each year of the apprenticeship course. One of whom was a student representative. Discussions included their experiences of applying for the course, their overall experience of the course, teaching and learning, preparation for placement, student support services, awareness of the regulatory body and the resourcing of their course.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from course team, central support teams and senior staff members.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with two people with lived experience of social work who have been involved in the university's SUCCESS group (Service Users and Carers Contributing to Educating Students for Services), along with the groups co-ordinator. Discussions included their experiences of working with the apprenticeship course and students and what specific activities they have been directly involved in.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from employer partners and Practice Educators from Walsall, Wolverhampton and Dudley Local Authorities as well as Birmingham's Children's Hospital.

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.

25. The apprentice course at Wolverhampton University was reviewed during a period where the university was transitioning between the education and training standards 2019 and the current requirements under the updated standards in the education and training standards 2021. The 2021 standards have increased requirements relating to the number of days students must spend on placement with the requirements launched in September 2021.

26. The inspection team met with third year students who had completed their placement experience under the earlier standards. The inspection team also met with students who were due to begin their placement with the additional number of days that are currently required. The inspection team were aware that some documentation and processes were still under review and development due to the transition and were instructed by the regulator to review the course on the requirements needing to be in place from September 2021.

Standard one: Admissions

Standard 1.1

27. The university provided documentary evidence relating to their admissions policies and procedures. The inspection team established that there is in effect a two-stage eligibility and application process for the course, with the initial eligibility process conducted by Local Authority employers who advertise an expression of interest for the apprenticeship programme. Further written tests and group work exercises are conducted before successful applicants are put forward for places at the university. During the inspection, the inspection team heard more about the admissions process from the students who were able to describe a multi-faceted process involving an online 'skills scan'.

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

Standard 1.2

29. Additional evidence was received during the investigation which supported the Organisational Needs Analysis documentation received as part of the documentary evidence. The inspection team considered that the processes at the employer, including a pre-eligibility checklist, supported the finding that the course had considered the application process and steps taken by the employer to confirm that applicants were in a suitable role

and had relevant prior relevant experience, and that they would have access to relevant experiences whilst they continued in their employment during their apprenticeship.

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

Standard 1.3

31. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence illustrating how a range of relevant people are involved in the admissions process. They held discussions with the SUCCESS group that detailed how people with lived experience and employer partners are involved in the sequential admissions processes and heard examples of how they participate. Significant parts of the process are conducted by the employer, however, the inspection teams considered that the university has oversight of the process and confirms this commitment is in place.

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

Standard 1.4

33. The inspection team were able to review the processes in place for assessing the suitability of applicants, including in relation to their conduct, health and character. One of these processes includes the necessity for all students to complete a Fitness to Train document and declarations are managed following a clear and consistent process. The inspection team confirmed with students that this also formed part of the eligibility checklist to be put on the course and had sight of Occupation Health and DBS employer declaration checklists.

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

Standard 1.5

35. The inspection team met with members of the SUCCESS group who described that training had previously been delivered on Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) for those who had been involved with admissions in the past but detailed that this had 'fallen by the wayside' as a result of the disruption from the covid 19 pandemic. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence including a training presentation which referenced the previous regulator for social work and it was not clear if this had recently been completed by the members of the SUCCESS group. The inspection team agreed that they were not able to conclude this standard was met as the number of SUCCESS team members who had been involved in this area were too few to establish if training had been completed by all members, and the availability of evidence at the inspection was not sufficient.

36. Consideration was given as to whether the findings identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standards, and we

are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 1.6

37. Through the review of documentary evidence, and through conversations with students, the inspection team heard from students that they considered they were provided with the information they need about their course. The course provided recently updated information during the inspection that confirmed a presentation had been provided to employers that detailed the requirement for 70 days contrasting placement following the adjustment to accommodate the 200 days of placement requirements in the education and training standards 2021. The inspection team were provided with a Year 1 apprenticeship handbook, however they considered that as the course was still under development, with a placement handbook not provided to the inspection team, students could not have been given definitive information as to what they might expect whilst on the course, particularly in relation to the requirements for self-directed study and the number of hours of student that the course required to be completed outside of a working day.

38. The inspection team agreed that this information was still in development and as such was not readily available to evidence during the inspection. As such, it could not be confirmed that this standard was met. The inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 1.6. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses 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. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) table.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

39. The inspection team spent a considerable time during the inspection attempting to establish when the placement days were in order to confirm that the 200 days (170 days and 30 days of skills days) were present. Placement Planners provided during the inspection suggested that placements days happened throughout the duration of the placement in an 'ad-hoc' manner, with the planner outlining that some of these days would take place during Christmas and New Year or at times when the university was not open. This conflicted with the account provided by the course team that students could not be on placement when the university was closed. Whilst employers detailed that the structure offered increased flexibility to provide additional placement days if deemed necessary, the inspection team considered that this was evidence that the course provider had not set clear expectations with the employer as to what was acceptable for placement days.

40. The inspection team considered that practise educators and learners required additional boundaries to understanding when placement days were being completed so that could be assessed as having met or not met the expectations. The inspection team considered that this was the university's responsibility to provide a clear structure to the employer for both what was suitable as a placement day, and for a skills day, and to confirm these are tracked, monitored and assessed.

41. The inspection team were satisfied that the course team had identified improvements, including a tracker form, that could be used by practice educators to track and monitor placement days, but this was not available for the inspection.

42. The inspection team were not satisfied that this standard was met due to the evidence being unavailable and where it was available, it did not provide the clarity that is required to give assurance. Consideration was given as to whether the findings identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standards, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) table.

Standard 2.2

43. The inspection team saw that the professional standards were evident and referenced throughout the course. The inspectors noted with positivity that the Practice Learning Agreement outlined the expectations and objectives for knowledge, skills and behaviours of the student, and that this followed the student throughout their placement experience.

44. The inspection team heard from students that they highly valued the continuity of the university employed practice educators. The inspection team heard that the practice educator team had access to the learning materials and curriculum of the course and heard positive examples of how practice educators used these to address student's struggles with theory to practice or reflection skills of students whilst on placement.

45. As with, standard 2.1, the inspection team were reassured that the course team were currently making the arrangements to update course documentation to reflect the requirement for the additional placement days but were unable to conclude that the standard was met due to current assurance not being available at the time of the inspection.

46. The inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 2.2. 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. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) table.

Standard 2.3

47. The inspection team were able to see elements such as Induction checklist, supervision recording and heard during the inspection about the role of the Skills Coach and the individual learning plans. Arrangements for pre-placement audit of the learning environment were also shared.

48. Documentary evidence reviewed in the Apprenticeship Handbook included Individual Learning Plan, mandatory skills review template, programme of study and delivery calendar, apprenticeship mapping standards and arrangements for escalating concerns/whistleblowing.

49. The handbook also set out roles and responsibilities for line manager, Skills Coach, personal tutors and practice educators. Students have support from their personal tutor, practice educator, Skills Coach and workplace line manager whilst on placement. The inspection team did not review evidence of how students are supported to manage their day-to-day workload with their responsibilities on placement.

50. Examples of how reasonable adjustments and personal support for students whilst on placement were not available. The inspection team agreed that the university was not able to demonstrate how they ensure that students have appropriate support and access to resources to manage a realistic workload whilst on placement.

51. The inspection team agreed that this standard was not met and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 2.3. 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 meet the standard. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) table.

Standard 2.4

52. The inspection team reviewed the documentary evidence and process for reviewing and auditing placements. These included the Practice Learning Agreement which covered the processes for induction, supervision and quality assurance.

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

54. The inspection team considered that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

55. The university was not able to provide clear and consistent evidence on the process to assess the preparation for direct practice for students as part of their readiness for practice learning.

56. The inspection team agreed that without this evidence, the standard was not met and that a condition is set against standard 2.5. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would meet the standard. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) table.

Standard 2.6

57. The university advised that practice educators come through the practice educator professional standards (PEPS) course from the teaching partnership and have therefore completed the training course.

58. The inspection team heard how the university does not currently monitor the current knowledge and skills and how practice educators are kept up to date with their practice in an ongoing and systematic way. During a meeting with the inspection team, the course identified that they would need to do this as the practice educators continue to diversify in their practice.

59. The inspection team felt that this left a gap in ensuring that practice educators still had relevant and current knowledge and that there needed to be a check to ensure that any practice educators are still registered on an ongoing basis. The course team indicated in the meeting that this is something that they could add either before each placement or annually to request confirmation of the ongoing registration of their practice educators. The inspection team acknowledged that the course could demonstrate this as there was comprehensive update training given, but the available evidence on the monitoring and governance of this process was not provided for the assurance that the standard has been met.

60. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending a [condition](#) is set against standard 2.6 in relation to the approval of this course.

Standard 2.7

61. The inspection team reviewed documentation that ensured relevant policies and procedures were available during placement. This included whistleblowing and safeguarding policies.

62. The inspection team heard evidence from students of concerns being acted upon and followed up. However, the inspection team heard discrepancies in how concerns had been resolved based on examples provided by students. The inspection team was not satisfied that policies were applied consistently and is recommending a [condition](#) is set against standard 2.7 in relation to the approval of this course.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

63. The inspection team spent considerable time understanding how the roles and responsibilities for governance are structured within this course. Documentary evidence provided by the university demonstrates policy and lines of accountability with a variety of established course management committees that involve all stakeholders.

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

65. The inspection team recommend that the course develops a document that describes the structures with roles and responsibilities, and what activity is connected to these responsibilities. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.2

66. The university provided documentary evidence of the processes and agreements in place with placement providers, minutes of meetings with stakeholders. However, the information was not complete and not in a format that was accessible to the inspection team.

67. The inspection team saw evidence of new placement agreements to clarify the expectations and requirements for agencies in providing practice placements.

68. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence to illustrate how placements met the regulatory standards and how placements were adjusted to meet the student's learning needs. This included the Quality Assurance Practice Learning (QAPL) audit.

69. Placement breakdown procedures were discussed with the course team, students and practice educators who described the process consistently and identified appropriate contingencies for alternative placement locations.

70. As the information was incomplete or not available at the time of the inspection, the inspection team were not satisfied that this standard was met and agreed that it was appropriate to set a [condition](#) against standard 3.2.

Standard 3.3

71. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence which contained policies and procedures in relation to student health, wellbeing and risk, and the support that is available. This included the Practice Learning Agreement and evidence from mid-point review meetings and mandatory skills reviews.

72. Students provided evidence of the support systems available from practice educators, personal tutors and skills coaches. The quarterly review process was seen as a particularly effective support system by students and practice educators.

73. The university referenced an intention to collate information on student health, wellbeing and risk in once place to ensure that the information is readily and consistently available. The inspection team supported this plan and agreed that it should be included as a [recommendation](#).

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

Standard 3.4

75. The university provided clear evidence of how employers are involved in key elements of the course, including the course management board, review panels and the allocation of practice educators.

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

Standard 3.5

77. The inspection team reviewed documentation that evidenced that effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems are in place. There was clear evidence of the involvement of employers and people with lived experience of social work in the assessment review board for the programme.

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

Standard 3.6

79. From the meetings with the course team, the university clearly demonstrated how they work with the west midlands teaching partnership as part of a strategic approach to developing the apprenticeship to respond to employer needs and capacity. There was evidence of effective collaboration with employer partners to respond to these needs.

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

Standard 3.7

81. Prior to inspection, the university confirmed that the course leader was a qualified social worker and is registered with Social Work England.

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

Standard 3.8

83. The inspection team reviewed the structure chart and curriculum vitae for the course and individual team members. This provided evidence of the qualifications, experience and registration of the team.

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

Standard 3.9

85. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence about how the university collects, analyses and uses student data, and confirmed that there were robust mechanisms in place to support this. The inspection team recognised the limitations of the small cohort of students on the programme to providing meaningful analysis of equality, diversity and inclusion data and to draw conclusions on the likely outcomes for individual students but agreed that the mechanisms were appropriate.

86. The university provided evidence of how student performance, progression and outcomes were evaluated.

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

Standard 3.10

88. The inspection team were provided with robust information to evidence how the course team maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice. The inspection team acknowledged the strong research background of the course team and the relevance this had in ensuring that teaching was current and evidence based.

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

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

90. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection which shows how the course learning outcomes are mapped against the apprenticeship standards and Social Work England Professional Standards. This included the course specification template and course module details.

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

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

Standard 4.2

93. The university provided evidence to demonstrate the involvement of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience in the design, development and review of the curriculum through the SUCCESS programme.

94. Practice educators described during meetings how feedback between them and the course team worked both ways and that the course provider valued their input.

95. The inspection team found evidence of people with lived experience being involved in the admissions process, delivery of the course and assessment.

96. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met but would recommend that the course team explore how they can work with the people with lived experience to expand on the experience of SUCCESS to fully embed a co-production approach to the development of the curriculum. Full details of the recommendations can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.3

97. The inspection team reviewed documentation to demonstrate that the course is designed to reflect equality, diversity and inclusion principles, and in accordance with human rights and the relevant legislative frameworks. This included modules on social work and the law and illustrated how EDI principles are woven through the course design.

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

Standard 4.4

99. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence to demonstrate how the course is continually updated. Discussions with the course team provided a consistent explanation for how this is developed, and the inspection team was assured that the course is robustly reviewed through academic standards and quality assurance processes.

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

Standard 4.5

101. The inspection team reviewed the individual module descriptors that can be tracked across the course, explaining how theory and practice is explored. Meetings with the course team, students and practice educators confirmed how theory and practice linked to assessment and the associated learning outcomes.

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

Standard 4.6

103. The inspection team reviewed evidence relating to the range of placement providers to provide opportunity to work in a multi-disciplinary environment, with colleagues from other professional disciplines.

104. During meetings with the course team and students, the inspection team heard of one example of a session where students were taught by a visiting speaker, but this was limited to a single session.

105. The inspection team did not find evidence that students have experiences of learning alongside students studying other professional disciplines outside of the practice placement and agreed that this was not sufficiently evidenced. The inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 4.6. Consideration was given as to whether the findings identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standards, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the condition, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 4.7

106. The inspection team were able to review the course specification template and delivery calendar 2022 - 2025, detailing the course structure to ensure that the number of hours spent in structured academic learning is sufficient to ensure that students meet the required level of competence.

107. Discussions with the course team did not outline the systems for monitoring attendance of taught sessions and on placement; as well as outlining the specific attendance monitoring for the apprenticeship route.

108. The inspection team did not receive sufficient evidence to demonstrate that this standard was met and is recommending a [condition](#) is set against standard 4.7.

Standard 4.8

109. The inspection team reviewed a range of documentary evidence to demonstrate that the assessment design is 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. The university provided evidence from assessment panel meetings, course specification templates and module descriptors. The mapping document described that all modules were mapped against the Apprenticeship Standards and aligned to the Professional Standards to ensure that students have developed the knowledge and skills to practice safely.

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

Standard 4.9

111. The inspection team reviewed the University of Wolverhampton Academic Regulations and the Apprenticeship Handbook in relation to this standard.

112. During meetings with the course team and students, the inspection team heard examples of the range of different assessment methods used.

113. The university provided evidence of how student performance, progression and outcomes were evaluated.

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

Standard 4.10

115. The inspection team reviewed evidence to demonstrate that the university provided timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progress and performance at appropriate stages of the course. The inspection team heard from students who spoke positively about the quality of academic support provided and how it enabled them to improve their practice and learning based on feedback.

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

Standard 4.11

117. The inspection team reviewed documentation including external examiner information to demonstrate that assessment is being carried out by people with appropriate expertise and experience. The evidence showed that there were professionals with a range of expertise involved in the assessment process, including practice educators and social workers currently registered with Social Work England.

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

Standard 4.12

119. Discussions with the course team, students and employers assured the inspection team that there were appropriate systems to review student progression, including direct observation and feedback on practice. Students gave positive feedback on their experience and felt that it contributed to their development and progression. Documentary evidence provided by the university confirmed that systems were in place.

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

Standard 4.13

121. The inspection team reviewed evidence to demonstrate a culture that promoted evidence informed approaches to practice. This was underpinned by a strong research background within the course team. Students and practice educators gave examples of how reflective practice and the application of theory to practice is central to the teaching on the course.

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

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

123. The inspection team reviewed information concerning a full range of support and advice services, including one to one confidential support, online and in person mental health support and careers advice. Discussion with students confirmed that this support was available and gave positive feedback on their experience.

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

Standard 5.2

125. The university provided evidence to demonstrate arrangements for access to personal tutors and Skills Coaches to support their academic development. Feedback from students was positive and they confirmed that they were able to access a range of support.

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

Standard 5.3

127. The inspection team reviewed a range of policies and procedures demonstrating appropriate processes, including the Fitness to Practice policy. However, the inspection team recommend that the role of employers should be clarified in these policies so that there is no ambiguity on their responsibilities in raising fitness to practice concerns about the suitability of student conduct, character or health.

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

Standard 5.4

129. The university provided information to demonstrate the financial and practical support available to students as part of their reasonable adjustment responsibilities, including guidance to support students with specific needs. When meeting with students and employers, the inspection team were given several examples of this support and the impact it had for students.

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

Standard 5.5

131. After reviewing documentary information and from the discussion with students, the inspection team was not able to find evidence that students were provided with clear and consistent information about their responsibilities whilst on practice placements and the transition to becoming a registered social worker. The inspection team heard examples from students of confusing information relating to the implications for employment following the apprenticeship; and there was a lack of clarity about the ASYE requirements.

132. Therefore, the inspection team has agreed that a condition should be set against standard 5.5 in relation to the approval of this course. Consideration was given as to whether the findings identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standards, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section.

Standard 5.6

133. The inspection team reviewed a range of information, including the Apprenticeship Handbook, but were not satisfied that this provided clear and consistent information about mandatory elements of the course. The course team responded that there is a culture of flexibility, to allow students to take annual leave for example, but this left the inspection team with uncertainty about how students then fulfil the mandatory requirements for attendance.

134. The inspection team has agreed that a condition should be set against standard 5.5 in relation to the approval of this course. Consideration was given as to whether the findings identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standards, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the conditions, monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 5.7

135. This standard is supported by commentary at 4.10. The inspection team heard from students that feedback was provided clearly and when expected, with options provided to students about following up on the feedback given.

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

Standard 5.8

137. The inspection team reviewed a range of documentary evidence, including the Procedure for Academic Appeals, Early Resolution Process, Student Complaints Procedure and the Apprenticeship Handbook, and were satisfied that this demonstrated an effective process in place.

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

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

Standard 6.1

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

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

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

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1.	Standard 1.5	The education provider will provide evidence of the range of training and support for SUCCESS members in relation to their role and responsibilities for equality, diversity and inclusion, as part of the admissions process.	3 months after report is published	Paragraphs 35 and 36
2.	Standard 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates complete and up to date information for students to understand the placement requirements and expectations for self-directed learning so that they can make an informed choice about taking up the offer of a place on the course.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 38
3.	Standard 2.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates a clear structure for the organisation and process for ensuring that students fulfil 200 days of practice-based learning; and arrangements for the monitoring of attendance at skills days.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 42
4.	Standard 2.2	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates a clear structure for the organisation and process for ensuring that students fulfil 200 days of practice-based learning;	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 46

		and arrangements for the monitoring of attendance at skills days.		
5.	Standard 2.3	The education provider will provide evidence to demonstrate the support available to students to manage their responsibilities and workload whilst on placement.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 51
6.	Standard 2.5	The education provide will provide evidence to demonstrate arrangements for assessing the preparation of students for direct practice to ensure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 56
7.	Standard 2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates a robust process for checking and ensuring that practice educators are on the register and have the relevant qualifications and up to date knowledge and experience	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 60
8.	Standard 2.7	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how whistleblowing concerns have been responded to and the outcomes reached.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 62
9.	Standard 3.2	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates their agreements with placement partners. The evidence can include any work currently being undertaken to develop capacity with new or existing partners.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 70
10.	Standard 4.6	The education provider will provide evidence of how they are providing opportunities for students to work with and learn from other professions in order to support multi-disciplinary working.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 105
11.	Standard 4.7	The education provider will provide evidence of how they ensure the number of hours spent in structured academic learning is sufficient to demonstrate that students meet the required level of competence, including systems for monitoring attendance at taught sessions.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 108

12.	Standard 5.5	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where accurate and timely information relating to placement activity and the transition to practice is provided and updated for students, enabling them to be best prepared for practice opportunities.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 131
13.	Standard 5.6	The education provider will provide evidence to demonstrate the information given to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory.	3 months after report is published	Paragraph 134

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 3.1	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider developing a document that describes the governance structure for the course to outline roles and responsibilities, along with the activity connected to those responsibilities.	Paragraph 65
2	Standard 3.3	The inspectors are recommending that the university continue with the plan to collate information on student health, wellbeing and risk in one place to ensure that the information is readily and consistently available.	Paragraph 73
3.	Standard 4.2	The inspectors are recommending that the course team consider how they can work with people with lived experience to expand on the experience of SUCCESS to fully embed a co-production approach to the development of the curriculum.	Paragraph 96
4.	Standard 5.3	The inspection team recommend that the Fitness to Practice policy is reviewed to include the role and responsibilities of employers in raising fitness to practice concerns about the suitability of student conduct, character or health	Paragraph 127

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Table breakdown of standards met during preapproval and inspection.

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

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
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.	☐	☒	☐
2.7 Ensure that policies and processes, including for whistleblowing, are in place for students to	☐	☒	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
challenge unsafe behaviours and cultures and organisational wrongdoing, and report concerns openly and safely without fear of adverse consequences.			
Course governance, management and quality			
3.1 Ensure courses are supported by a management and governance plan that includes the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability of individuals and governing groups in the delivery, resourcing and quality management of the course.	☒	☐	☒
3.2 Ensure that they have agreements with placement providers to provide education and training that meets the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards. This should include necessary consents and ensure placement providers have contingencies in place to deal with practice placement breakdown.	☐	☒	☐
3.3 Ensure that placement providers have the necessary policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk, and the support systems in place to underpin these.	☒	☐	☒
3.4 Ensure that employers are involved in elements of the course, including but not limited to the management and monitoring of courses and the allocation of practice education.	☒	☐	☐
3.5 Ensure that regular and effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems are in place, and that these involve employers, people with lived experience of social work, and students.	☒	☐	☐
3.6 Ensure that the number of students admitted is aligned to a clear strategy, which	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Met with conditions	Recommendations
includes consideration of local/regional placement capacity.			
3.7 Ensure that a lead social worker is in place to hold overall professional responsibility for the course. This person must be appropriately qualified and experienced, and on the register.	☒	☐	☐
3.8 Ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise, to deliver an effective course.	☒	☐	☐
3.9 Evaluate information about students' performance, progression and outcomes, such as the results of exams and assessments, by collecting, analysing and using student data, including data on equality and diversity.	☒	☐	☐
3.10 Ensure that educators are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice.	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum and assessment			
4.1 Ensure that the content, structure and delivery of the training is in accordance with relevant guidance and frameworks and is designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
4.2 Ensure that the views of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work are incorporated into the design, ongoing development and review of the curriculum.	☒	☐	☒
4.3 Ensure that the course is designed in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion	☒	☐	☐

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

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

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

Regulator decision

Approved with conditions

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

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

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

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	Standard 1.5	The education provider will provide evidence of the range of training and support for SUCCESS members in relation to their role and responsibilities for equality, diversity and inclusion, as part of the admissions process.	Condition met
2	Standard 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates complete and up to date information for students to understand the placement requirements and expectations for self-directed learning so that they can make an informed choice about taking up the offer of a place on the course.	Condition met
3	Standard 2.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates a clear structure for the organisation and process for ensuring that students fulfil 200 days of practice based learning; and arrangements for monitoring of attendance at skills days	Condition met
4	Standard 2.2	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates a clear structure for the organisation and process for ensuring that students fulfil 200 days of practice based learning; and arrangements for the monitoring of attendance at skills days	Condition met
5	Standard 2.3	The education provider will provide evidence to demonstrate the support available to students to manage their	Condition met

		responsibilities and workload whilst on placement.	
6.	Standard 2.5	The education provide will provide evidence to demonstrate arrangements for assessing the preparation of students for direct practice to ensure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.	Condition met
7	Standard 2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates a robust process for checking and ensuring that practice educators are on the register and have the relevant qualifications and up to date knowledge and experience	Condition met
8	Standard 2.7	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how whistleblowing concerns have been responded to and the outcomes reached.	Condition met
9	Standard 3.2	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates their agreements with placement partners. The evidence can include any work currently being undertaken to develop capacity with new or existing partners.	Condition met
10	Standard 4.6	The education provider will provide evidence of how they are providing opportunities for students to work with and learn from other professions in order to support multi-disciplinary working	Condition met
11	Standard 4.7	The education provider will provide evidence of how they ensure the number of hours spent in structured academic learning is sufficient to demonstrate that students meet the required level of competence, including systems for monitoring attendance at taught sessions	Condition met
12	Standard 5.5	The education provider will evidence that demonstrates how and where accurate and timely information relating to placement activity and the transition to practice is provided and	Condition met

		updated for students, enabling them to be best prepared for practice opportunities	
13	Standard 5.6	The education provider will provide evidence to demonstrate the information given to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory	Condition met

Findings

The course provider submitted a wide range of evidence including their programme specification, practice handbook, information sheets and other documentation to assure the inspection team that they had taken appropriate action to respond to the conditions set.

In order to assure the inspection team that the conditions in relation to standards 1.5 and 1.6 was met, the course provider submitted documentation including the SUCCESS training package and associated training materials, including training slides, certificates of completion and evidence from interviews. The provider also submitted evidence relating to buddying and mentoring arrangements for SUCCESS members. For standard 1.6, the inspection team reviewed slides used for recruitment and a detailed course specification. As a result of the evidence provided, the inspection team are satisfied that the conditions were met.

In relation to the condition set against standards 2.1 and 2.2, the course provider has submitted evidence, including the recruitment presentation, practice learning handbook, the 30 days skills mapping and an example of how this is used in practice, along with logs for recording learning activity. A detailed course specification was also reviewed. On this basis, the inspection team agree that the conditions are met.

For the condition relating to standard 2.3, the course provider submitted the practice learning agreement and handbook. They also provided documentation to evidence how support is reviewed on a regular basis along with anonymised supervision and review notes. The inspection team agree that this condition is met.

The course provider submitted evidence of safeguarding policies, health and safety checklist and detailed information relating to fitness to practice and the roles, processes and responsibilities of social workers to support student preparation and readiness for practice. The inspection team agree that this condition is met.

In response to the condition set against standard 2.6, the course provider provided evidence to demonstrate that all practice educators employed to support apprentices hold a state 2 practice educator award. The course provider evidenced that they keep a register of

practice educators and that relevant qualifications are checked. The course specification template was also reviewed. The inspection team agree that this condition is met.

For the condition set against standard 2.7, the provider submitted the whistleblowing policy and practice learning handbook. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

A copy of the practice placement agreement was submitted by the provider in response to the condition for standard 3.2. This set out detailed arrangements with placement partners. There was also evidence of strategic planning with partners and the teaching partnership to develop placement capacity to support the programme. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

The course provider submitted evidence to demonstrate that students have opportunities to learn from other professional, as a response to the condition set against standard 4.6. This included an example of a year 1 portfolio submission and evidence of guest speakers involved in delivering taught sessions. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

The course provider demonstrated a systematic approach to monitoring the number of hours spent in structured academic learning to evidence the condition for standard 4.7. The university uses an attendance monitoring alert system to track attendance and monitor engagement. The provider also submitted the student engagement policy for review. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

The course provider submitted detailed evidence to demonstrate the information provided to students to prepare for practice learning. This included slides from preparation days that are facilitated to support their readiness for practice placements. As a result, the inspection team agreed that the condition relating to standard 5.5 is now met.

The course provider submitted detailed evidence in response to the condition set against standard 5.6. This included the apprenticeship practice learning handbooks, and the overarching commitment statement and apprenticeship engagement policy. The inspection team agreed that this evidence demonstrated that the condition has been met.

2.1 and 2.6, the inspection team were able to review details of amendments that had been made to the problem resolution protocol and cause for concern processes. In addition, the inspection team reviewed copies of a presentation and concerns document which outlined the process, with the aim of increasing the awareness and confidence of students in raising concerns about their experiences. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 4.3, the course provider shared a copy of an action plan which detailed how they would address issues in relation to social exclusion experienced by some students on placement. Actions included changes to PE training, the development of a PE forum, research into the experience of international students and further work on anti-racist practice, supported by training provided by the Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership. The inspection team were satisfied that the action plan was robust and addressed a wide range of issues impacting upon student experience. As a result, the inspection team agreed that the condition was now met.

Conclusion

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

Regulator decision

Approved