

Inspection Report

Course provider: University of Hertfordshire

Course approval: Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
Social Work (Step up to Social Work)

Inspection dates: 4 to 7 July 2023

Report date:	4 September 2023
Inspector recommendation:	Approval with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	13 November 2023
Date conditions met and approved:	11 December 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 three to four day visit to the education provider. We then draft a report setting out what we found during the inspection and if and how our findings demonstrate that the course meets our standards.
11. The inspectors may recommend in this report that the course is approved with conditions, approved without conditions or that it does not meet the criteria for approval. Where the course has been previously approved we may also decide to withdraw approval.
12. A draft of this report is shared with the education provider, and once we have considered any comments or observations they may wish to provide, we make a final regulatory decision about the approval of the course.
13. The final decisions that we can make are as follows, that the course is approved without conditions, the course is approved with conditions or that the course does not meet the criteria for approval. The decision, and the report, are then published.
14. If the course is approved with conditions, we will write to the education provider setting out how they can demonstrate they have met the conditions, the action we will take once we decide that the conditions are met, and the action we will take if we decide the conditions are not met.

Summary of Inspection

15. The University of Hertfordshire's Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) Social Work (Step up to Social Work) 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.

16. During the same week, the University of Hertfordshire's BSc (Hons) Social Work and MSc Social Work courses were also inspected, and the majority of meetings across the week were held jointly. Details of this inspection are covered in a separate report.

Inspection ID	UHR1
Course provider	University of Hertfordshire
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) Social Work (Step up to Social Work)
Mode of study	Full-time
Maximum student cohort	38
Date of inspection	04/07/2023 - 07/07/2023
Inspection team	Caroline Reynolds - Education Quality Assurance Officer Jo Benn - Lay Inspector Lee Pollard - Registrant Inspector
Inspector recommendation	Approval with conditions
Approval outcome	

Language

17. In this document we describe the University of Hertfordshire as 'the education provider' or 'the university' and we describe the Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip) Social Work Step Up as 'the course' or 'the programme'.

Inspection

18. An onsite inspection took place from 4th to 7th July at the College Lane Campus, University of Hertfordshire. 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.

19. 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

20. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meeting with graduates

21. The inspection team met with a couple of graduates who had completed cohort seven of the programme. Discussions included their reflection of the admissions process, their input into the programme, the curriculum content and learning opportunities whilst on practice placements, mandatory attendance and access to student support.

Meetings with course staff and senior management

22. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the social work course team including the professional lead for the social work programmes, the programme lead for the Step Up course, the head of department of Allied Health Professions, Midwifery and Social Work department, the dean and deputy dean of the School of Health and Social Work, and the associate dean for academic quality assurance. The inspection team also met with staff involved in selection and admissions processes including admissions tutors. During the meeting with the course team, the inspection team were given a demonstration of Tableau, the business intelligence and analytics software utilised by the university.

Meetings with practice-based learning and placement provision staff

23. The inspection team met with staff involved in practice-based learning and placement provision including the placement team leaders. Discussions included practice setting and learning opportunities, placement breakdowns and audit processes.

Meetings with pastoral and academic support services staff

24. The inspection team met with the dean of students who oversees all the pastoral support services, the academic support lead and the information manager who is the specialist subject librarian for social work. Discussions included the access to pastoral and academic support services, the level of support provided to students and how reasonable adjustments are put in place.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

25. The inspection team met with one person with lived experience of social work who is involved in the programme. Discussions included their involvement in the admissions processes, their input in the programme design, monitoring and evaluation, and training.

Meetings with external stakeholders

26. The inspection team met with one employer partner from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF). This employer-led course is delivered by the West London Regional Partnership on behalf of the Department of Education in partnership with the university.

Findings

27. 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

28. The inspection team heard that the programme is designed to recruit and train applicants from a wide diversity of backgrounds who show the potential to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards. There is a fixed eligibility criteria for any Step Up course, this is determined by the Department for Education (DfE). Applicants must hold a certain level of higher education qualification in any subject area apart from social work, they must live in England and meet the required level of maths and English qualifications and have six months minimum relevant previous experience.

29. The inspectors heard that Capita undertake the initial sifting of applications to ensure they meet the essential eligibility criteria for the programme, part of this process includes candidates undertaking a written test. The written test is marked by the employer partner and the university. Shortlisted candidates are invited to participate in an Assessment Centre which includes a group exercise and self-evaluation, a practice scenario and self-evaluation and interview. The admissions activities and questions are mapped to the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and Social Work England's professional standards. The Assessment Centre day ends with all assessors coming together from across the different exercises to reflect on the candidate's suitability. If successful, candidates are offered a provisional place on the programme, this is subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, an occupational health check and references.

30. During the inspection one graduate recalled the online assessment day, and the clear information that was provided. The inspectors reviewed a range of documentary evidence provided by the programme lead including the entry requirements, assessment framework and interview exercises, and the cohort eight application information. The inspection team concluded that the admissions process adopts a multi-dimensional approach and therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

31. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed the application form scoring template which demonstrates that two of the questions specifically request the candidate's reflective and analytical account of their experience of working with a vulnerable child, young person, and/or parent or carer, and what skills, knowledge and personal qualities they have that may be beneficial to the programme. These questions are linked to the PCF indicators. As outlined in standard 1.1, the entry level requirement for the programme is six months relevant previous experience. The inspection team heard that prior experience does not have to be paid, it can be voluntary. Student's own lived experiences are also taken into account. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

32. The programme lead outlined that every stage of the application process is run jointly by the university and the West London Alliance. The application form is scored by an academic member of staff and an employer representative from the local authority to which the candidate has applied. The written test is marked separately by a member of university staff and a local authority representative, and the Assessment Centre exercises are staffed jointly by the university and the relevant local authorities. The inspectors heard that the group exercise is led by care experienced young people. During the meeting with the employer partner and the person with lived experience of social work they talked through their involvement in the admissions processes including how their views were taken into account in relation to the decision making process. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

33. The inspectors reviewed the Programme Specification containing the course entry requirements. This detailed that a satisfactory occupational health screening and DBS check are prerequisites for entry onto the programme. The Resources Planning document which formed part of the university's bid to the DfE demonstrated the process for occupational health checks and DBS checks and the inspectors heard that the occupational health screening and DBS are in place before students start the programme. There are formal mechanisms in place to consider cases where candidates have made declarations and applicants are encouraged to declare disabilities to ensure that reasonable adjustments can

be put in place. The inspectors heard that within the borough councils learning development needs co-ordinators are in place to support students with their reasonable adjustments. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

34. The university's Equality and Diversity Policy reviewed by the inspection team contained specific equality and diversity information in relation to applicants, including the monitoring of admissions processes. The inspection team heard that following each intake of students, the admissions process is reviewed to allow the programme team to explore the diversity of applicants, and the admissions and conversion processes. The inspectors reviewed the Successful AC Candidates Report 2021 which analysed the data regarding the candidates who had passed the 2021 Assessment Centre. The report included various statistics including pass and fail statuses and the reporting of gender, age, ethnicity and disability data. The cohort eight application information detailed how the university are attracting and converting wider audiences onto the programme, in particular ethnic minority and male applicants. The monitoring of the data is reviewed at the Step Up to Social Work Steering Group which includes employer partners. During the inspection the inspectors were given a demonstration of the data system Tableau.

35. The inspectors heard that there is commitment from the university in regards to equality and diversity, which involves undertaking deep data dives to look at progression. During the inspection, the deputy dean stated that strategically equality and diversity is at the forefront of the university's agenda. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

36. Prior to the inspection, the inspectors reviewed comprehensive information about the programme including the online information about the West London Regional Partnership Step Up to Social Work, the employer's website - the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Step Up to Social Work information, the UK government's Step up to Social Work information, and information about the programme on the university's website. Information on the Hammersmith and Fulham's website includes case studies from previous graduates of the programme. The programme lead provided the February 2023 Step Up to Social Work PowerPoint presentation which provided an overview of the programme, the entry level requirements, and the application process.

37. The inspection team heard that the university and the employer run information sessions for prospective applicants. These sessions provide detailed information about the programme and enable attendees to ask questions. A course factsheet is available to all students, this includes the details of placements. The inspectors concluded that there is a range of supportive information enabling candidates to make an informed decision, and therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

38. The university outlined that the programme is divided into three parts; child, adult and family and it is part of the employer's commitment to the DfE that students experience 170 days of placement activity within two contrasting settings within the student's host local authority borough. The 70 day placement is in adult social care, and the 100 days placement is in child protection or children's services. The placement information is clearly outlined within the West London Step Up to Social Work Cohort 8 application to the DfE. The university have designed the placements to pair with two credit-bearing academic modules which focus on developing learning through practice. The 30 interactive skills days are split between the Skills for Practice One and Skills for Practice Two, where 15 days are spent on child observation, and 15 spent on employer-led skills days.

39. The inspectors reviewed the Programme Specification where the programme learning outcomes detail the way in which the curriculum prepares students for practice; these are linked to the professional standards. It is explicit within this document that a successful accomplished period of 170 days of supervised practice, and 30 skills day are mandatory for receipt of the PG Diploma. The Definitive Module Document (DMD) Skills for Practice One and Skills for Practice Two reviewed by the inspectors detail the module aims, intended learning outcomes, intellectual, practical and transferable skills, the modes of delivery and the module content. The learning outcomes, content and assessment are mapped to the professional standards. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

40. The inspection team heard that all placements are audited to ensure that appropriate learning opportunities are available, and the inspectors reviewed the audit form which should be completed by a member of the university's practice learning team in discussion with a placement representative such as the practice educator (PE). The audits are completed before a student starts their placement and it is reviewed every two years. PEs are briefed ahead of the placement about the selection of learning opportunities, and these are monitored through the placement by the university tutor. During the inspection, the inspectors spoke to one PE who outlined that there are lots of opportunities for students to work with different teams.

41. During the inspection meetings, various stakeholders outlined the processes when placements are considered unsuitable, and what happens if concerns are raised. The inspectors heard that early identification often comes to light as part of the student's induction and supervision. In the event that additional training is needed, there are opportunities for students to undertaking shadowing. Placement staff outlined that in the event that a student is struggling, a learning agreement meeting is held. Should further issues arise an extra-ordinary meeting is held, and the PE works with the university to put a

plan of action in place. During the inspection, one of the graduates commented about the limited experience during one of her placements and she had raised this issue. She commented that her issue was listened to and actioned to the point that the placement host is no longer used.

42. The inspectors reviewed the Final Placement Briefing (Initial Meeting) PowerPoint presentation which detailed the placement portfolio and the requirement that it must include direct observations of practice, feedback from professionals, service user and carers, assessment reports from PEs, critical reflections on a student's learning and records of supervision. An example overview of the types of placement tasks were included within the presentation, such as assessing needs and risks, creating and reviewing care plans, and liaising with other professionals. The information provided demonstrated that students are provided with learning opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

43. The university outlined that all students have a thorough induction at the start of each placement; guidance on this is provided as part of the placement planning process. The detail on induction activities is collected as part of the Placement Learning Agreement and every placement is overseen by a tutor who establishes that guidance on support, supervision and workload is followed.

44. Within the West London Step Up to Social Work Cohort Eight application information, this visually sets out the circle of support for students. Each student is provided with staff who guide them throughout the duration of the programme. Students can access a tutor or practice manager to share any concerns and discuss their mental wellbeing, self care and changes to their personal circumstances.

45. The Placement Handbook and Portfolio Guidance reviewed by the inspection team, outlines the role of the PE including the requirement for them to plan for the student's induction, allocate suitable agency work, and plan their specific activities and tasks which will enable them to attain their learning objectives. PEs provide the support and guidance, and they undertake two direct observations per placement. During the inspection, the inspectors met with one PE who corroborated that students receive a comprehensive induction and have support in place. Students are expected to have been provided with a two to four week induction, regular supervision of one and half hours per week, and this is recorded within the Practice Learning Agreement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

46. The inspection team concluded that there are mechanisms in place to ensure that student's responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training, and it was clear from the evidence provided that their responsibilities incrementally increase in complexity. Advice is given regarding the number of caseloads and the level of supervision required, and the university oversees this process. The Skills for Practice One assessment flowchart reviewed by the inspectors demonstrated the transition as students progress throughout their direct practice. During the meeting with the PEs the appropriateness of selecting and undertaking activities was discussed, together with managing and supporting students with specific needs such as health problems and learning needs. PEs outlined that regular communications are in place, and regular discussions are held between them and the university. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

47. Detailed evidence provided to the inspection team showed that mechanisms are in place to ensure students successfully complete the Readiness to Practice assessment prior to going out on placement. The Readiness for Direct Practice assessment flowchart demonstrated that readiness for direct practice is assessed at the start of the Skills for Practice One module. The inspectors reviewed the module content which outlined that students need to develop understanding of organisational structures around statutory social work and the social worker's day to day role. The module starts with five shadowing days with the placement host, this is where students develop knowledge of social work structures, skills, multi-agency working and legislation in practice. At the end of the shadowing days, students' readiness for direct practice must be confirmed by the team manager or a delegated supervisor in the form of a report. Where readiness cannot be confirmed at this stage, students are offered a further, specific and targeted assessment opportunity. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

48. The Placement Handbook reviewed by the inspectors detailed the role of the on-site PE, the off-site PE and on-site supervisors. This clearly demonstrated that every student on placement should have the supervision of a PE who is a registered social worker who has achieved stage two of their practice educator training, and that ideally the PE will also be accredited by the university.

49. Prior to the inspection, the programme lead confirmed that placements are audited to ensure that prospective PEs are on the register. The inspectors reviewed the Audit Form which captures the details of PEs including their social work qualification, and PE training information. These audits are reviewed every two years. From the evidence provided and during the inspection meetings, it was not clear what other mechanisms were in place

including the checks to ensure newly appointed PEs are registered. During the meeting with PEs, it became apparent that no oversight was in place by the university, and regular reviews were not in place to review PE's knowledge, skills and experience. There was an assumption that PEs would be registered social workers. During the inspection, all PEs outlined that they had not been asked to provide any information about their training to the university. Following a review of the evidence and from discussions held during the inspection, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 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 table](#).

Standard 2.7

50. The inspectors heard that the university has policies in place to govern whistleblowing and these ensure students carry out whistleblowing safely and with confidence in the process. The university's Whistleblowing Policy was reviewed by the inspection team, together with the Programme Handbook which includes details of raising and escalating concerns whilst on placement. The inspectors were satisfied that a robust process is in place that supports students to challenge unsafe behaviours and cultures, organisational wrongdoings, and report concerns openly and safely without fear of adverse consequences. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

51. From the documentary evidence provided by the university, it was clear that there is a well established university wide governance structure in place. The university operates in accordance with the terms of its Articles and Instrument of Government, these determine the overarching governance framework within which the university functions, including the requirements for a Board of Governors and Academic Board.

52. The Programme Handbook reviewed by the inspectors detailed the structure of the School of Health and Social Work. The Committee Structure of the Academic Board Programme Committees and minutes of the December 2022 MSc Social Work / Step Up Social Work were reviewed by the inspection team, together with the Step Up to Social Work Steering Group minutes dated November 2022. The steering group oversees the quality provision of the programme.

53. During the meeting with the senior management team, they explained the interface with the academic board and the accountability mechanisms, including the quality

assurance governance structure. This demonstrated how the evidence provided works in practice. The inspectors heard that the programme lead, and module leads develop close working relationships with students to capture their informal feedback. Formal mechanisms are in place to capture formal feedback at the mid and end of module reviews and through the student voice questionnaires. The inspectors were informed that Programme Committees are held twice a year, and these involve academic staff and people with lived experience of social work. These meetings discuss issues and set out the course of actions. Data is recorded on Tableau to enable continuous improvements and this is linked to the Continuous Enhancement Process (CEP). The inspectors were in agreement that the course is supported by a robust management and governance plan which includes the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability and governing groups in the delivery, resourcing and quality management of the course and therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

54. The Placement Agreement reviewed by the inspection team details the agreement between the placement provider and the university in providing students with the relevant experience of practice and observation of service user care under appropriate placement support that meets the professional standards and the education and qualifying standards, including the necessary consents. The agreement sets out the responsibilities of both parties and other terms and conditions including access and reasonable adjustments for students, data protection and confidentiality.

55. The Placement Learning Agreement records the relevant agreements and arrangements. This document is revised and updated throughout the students' placement to reflect any changing priorities or emerging issues. The programme Placement Handbook and Portfolio Guidance sets out the procedure for placement concerns and fitness to practise issues, and this was further discussed during the inspection meeting with staff involved in practice-based learning and placement provision, including the processes that are in place for dealing with placement breakdowns. In the event of a placement breakdown the placement tutor organises an extra-ordinary meeting to discuss the issues, and a decision is made on whether an action plan needs to be put in place. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

56. The Placement Agreement and the Placement Learning Agreement clearly indicate that placement providers must have the necessary policies and procedures in place in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk, and the necessary support systems to underpin these. During the meetings with the graduates, PEs and the employer partner, the inspection team were able to understand how the policies and procedures work in practice. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

57. The inspectors were informed that the programme was conceived as an employer-led initiative from the outset, and this was evident on the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham's website. The programme is delivered by the West London Social Work Partnership on behalf of the DfE and in partnership with the university. The DfE holds the central information on cohorts and application openings.

58. The programme is overseen by a joint Step Up to Social Work Steering Group comprising university staff and staff from each employing local authority. The Steering Group manages and monitors the programme. In addition, employer partners sit on the Programme Committee, and they contribute to the course enhancement planning process which is an integral part of the programme action planning cycle. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence including the Placement Handbook which outlines the partnership working, the Periodic Review dated February 2023 which demonstrated the employer engagement, together with feedback from stakeholders and the Programme Committee constitution information and agendas. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

59. The programme is subject to a process of continuous improvement via the Continuous Enhancement Process (CEP). Feedback is obtained from a number of sources including employers, people with lived experience of social work, students, external examiners and placement providers (both voluntary and statutory). This feedback is used to inform an ongoing action plan. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence including the Quality Assurance in Practice Learning (QAPL) feedback from PEs and the QAPL feedback from students which is used to assess the quality of the placement provision and inform future practice. The university provided an example CEP Action Plan which detailed issues and actions. The Programme Committee oversees the progress against the CEP Action Plan and the actions are endorsed by the associate dean for academic quality.

60. During the meeting with the person with lived experience who is involved in the programme, they provided examples of improvements to the curriculum. The inspectors met with one employer partner who stated that whilst they were not involved in the Step Up to Social Work Steering Group they were aware that it was in place. As an employer-led programme, the employer partner spoke of the very open discussions that take place with the university, and how flexible they were to encompass the needs of employers. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

61. The inspectors heard that for each cohort of students, the employer submits a bid to the DfE offering a justification of the number of students to recruit onto the programme. The

number of places is directly linked to workforce planning ensuring qualifying students can be offered an interview for employment. During the inspection meetings, the university outlined how they meet the requirements of the bid and the programme lead explained how the programme is aligned to staff capacity and student support. Within the West London Step Up to Social Work Cohort Eight application, this set out the commitment of all parties, and minutes of the Step Up to Social Work Steering Group demonstrated how the boroughs of the West London Alliance come together to discuss placement capacity, alongside providing updates and discussing issues. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

62. The inspection team reviewed the curriculum vitae (CV) of the social work lead who has professional responsibility for all the social work courses at the university. The professional lead is a qualified registered social worker. Her CV outlined her qualifications and experience, research projects and publications. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

63. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed the CVs of the social work course team and the programme lead. Their CVs demonstrated their experience, qualifications, registration information and research activities. During the inspection, the inspectors met with the programme lead and members of the social work course team who provided further insight into the programme design, development and delivery. The inspection team were satisfied that the programme has appropriately qualified and experienced staff and agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

64. The university outlined that it monitors and responds to all aspects of student performance from admissions, through assessment to completion via a Tableau data system. The system was demonstrated during the inspection enabling the inspectors to fully understand how the system works in practice. Data is analysed and employed as part of the action planning process which is overseen by the Programme Committee. The inspectors reviewed specimen Tableau data, which records a wide range of data including equality and diversity data on the applications, offers and acceptances onto the programme, module fail rates and trends, and awards data. The CEP Action Plan reviewed by the inspection team showed the actions arising from the data recorded on the Tableau system. The inspection team agreed that the university evaluates information about students' performance, progression and outcomes and were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

65. The nature of the close partnership with the West London Alliance and with Hertfordshire County Council teaching partnership enables educators to access opportunities for development and delivery of training and shadowing opportunities. The co-facilitation with practitioners enables the course team to benefit from practice knowledge. The inspectors reviewed details of the Protecting Children and Building Resilience module, and the Developing Practice Learning Two module which detailed the input provided by practitioners. Examples provided included external speakers who are practitioners speaking on a wide range of topics including risk assessment from theory to practice, the purpose and value of reflective supervision to create robust risk assessments, and practice speakers from the Muslim Parent's Group, and honour based violence. The Staff Development Policy outlined the self-managed research and scholarly activity, and all members of the course team have 22 days allocated to scholarly activity; this includes practice related research, attendance at conferences, and the development of practice-based publications.

66. The professional lead for social work outlined that the team are reminded and encouraged to take up training and professional development opportunities. New members of staff undertake a suite of induction training, and there is a regular cycle of mandatory training which includes equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and health and safety. As outlined in standard 3.8, the inspectors reviewed the CVs of the course team which demonstrated their strong links with practice. The inspectors heard that members of the team are currently or had very recently worked in practice, that research is conducted alongside practitioners, research is practice facing and team members undertake shadowing opportunities. During the inspection, the course team commented that the encouragement and support is in place, and the opportunities are available to them. The inspection team concluded that educators are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice and agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

67. The inspectors heard that the programme has been designed and constructed following the principles of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) benchmark statements for social work, the PCF, and the Knowledge and Skills Statements for Child and Family Practitioners and the Knowledge and Skills Statements for Social Workers in Adult Services. At a modular level the programme has been mapped to the professional standards and the modules have been mapped to the programme learning outcomes as evidenced within the Programme Specification. The Social Work Knowledge and Values in Action module, reviewed by the inspection team, centres on the professional standards and

behaviours and the inspectors heard that students hold the standards at the core of their practice. During the meeting with the employer partner, they outlined the comprehensiveness of the programme to ensure that students meet the professional standards. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

68. The university provided clear evidence of stakeholder involvement in admissions, delivery, development and management of the programme. The Programme Committee documentation evidenced that it has representation from all stakeholder groups and all parties contribute to the action planning cycle of the programme, this was further evidenced in meeting minutes and within the Periodic Review documentation.

69. The inspectors were informed that people with lived experience of social work actively participate in the design and delivery of the programme including the production of teaching materials and podcasts. The Assessment Centre Schedule outlined in standards 1.1 and 1.3, evidenced that the day is supported by people with lived experience of social work in interviews and in observing student group activity. The inspectors also heard that the Operations Board includes people with lived experience of social work in its membership.

70. The course team outlined that they have incorporated consideration of collaborative learning in their teaching programme across all modules. The Protecting Children and Building Resilience module is in part co-produced, and the curriculum and individual sessions have been developed in collaboration with care-experienced young people. Staff are involved in co-producing research with members of the course team.

71. The employer partner outlined that local authorities feel they have built a robust programme, and they have a strong sense of ownership of the course. The inspection team concluded 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 and there is the flexibility and responsiveness of the university to incorporate the needs of eight borough councils into this employer led programme. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

72. As outlined in standard 1.5, the programme operates under the university's Equality and Diversity Policy and the university is bound by the Equality Act (2010). The Programme Handbook has links to the university's EDI information which states that it is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, embracing and celebrating the diversity of its community and fostering a cohesive and inclusive culture. Within the DMDs reviewed by the inspection team, there is clear content within the modules which address equality and diversity. As outlined in standards 1.4 and 5.1, candidates and students are supported and encouraged to declare physical and mental health conditions, and policy information and processes are in

place, including within practice placements. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

73. The university outlined that the programme is continuously updated and revised via an ongoing action planning cycle. This is monitored by the CEP as outlined in standards 3.1, 3.5 and 3.9. The CEP seeks feedback from a range of stakeholders including external examiners, students, employers, and module leads. The Programme Committee consolidates the changes to the programme and oversees the implementation. In addition, a monthly Steering Group composed of employers and higher education institution (HEI) representatives ensures the ongoing relevance of the curriculum to workforce, policy and legislative developments. Clear evidence was provided of the governance structures that oversee the programme development through the formal processes, and this was documented within the CEP Action Plan, the Programme Committee Constitution, Periodic Review information, and minutes of the Steering Group, all of which were reviewed by the inspection team.

74. During the inspection, the programme lead commented that they are currently looking at the membership of the Steering Group, which currently comprises employee partners, PEs and people with lived experience of social work. The inspectors heard that key conversations take place regarding the student journey, the students' experiences, curriculum content and the induction and admissions processes. The course team provided examples of where research had been included within the curriculum, and outlined the mechanisms that were in place to keep abreast of changes in legislation. Further examples were provided in relation to changes in the curriculum in line with policy and law to ensure students have the most up to date information. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

75. The inspection team heard that the programme modules integrate theory and practice, with speakers from practice involved in academic sessions. The module assessments are derived from practice experience to underline theory to practice links, and this was evidenced within the Developing Practice Learning Two module where the assessment is a theorised case presentation. The programme learning outcomes evidenced the clear integration of theory and practice, this was transparent within the Programme Handbook. Whilst on practice placements, students are called upon to integrate this knowledge directly into their practice via reflective logs. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

76. The university outlined that the principles and experience of multidisciplinary practice are meshed into the programme. The Programme Specification reviewed by the inspection team state this as a core principle. The concepts of multidisciplinary practice are embedded in a number of modules including Developing Practice Learning One, Learning Outcomes Intellectual Practical and Transferable Skills Three, Parenting Through Complexity, and Learning Outcomes Intellectual Practical and Transferable Skills Two. The Developing Practice Learning One module incorporates a range of speakers including vulnerable adults, people with mental health problems, and midwives. The Developing Practice Learning Two module includes professionals who are part of the safeguarding network for children including youth justice, and children's rights. The Knowledge and Values in Action module and Parenting Through Complexity module evidence the building of skills of multidisciplinary practice. The inspectors heard that these academic concepts are carried into practice settings and placement tutors take responsibility for ensuring that opportunities for inter-professional working are available as part of the Placement Learning Agreement. This is further discussed within the learning agreement meeting. During the inspection, examples were provided to the inspection team of students working with health visitors, prisons, and midwives. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

77. From the review of documentary evidence provided including the Programme Handbook and DMDs which outlined the module delivery methods and the number of hours spent on each activity, the inspectors concluded that students have a standard 10 hours learning per unit credit. A blended delivery approach is adopted including face to face campus-based learning, independent learning, and online learning.

78. Students are expected to attend all timetabled sessions and assessments. As students are employed on a trainee contract with a local authority, attendance also forms part of their professional obligation to attend the programme. All modules have an attendance component of 80%; students cannot pass a module unless they attend this proportion of classes. Students are advised to contact the module lead if they are unable to attend due to ill health or personal circumstances, in these cases students are given tasks to make up their attendance. It is clearly evidenced within the Programme Handbook that attendance requirements must be fulfilled to be eligible to enter practice. The inspectors were satisfied that the number of hours spent in structured academic learning is sufficient to ensure students meet the required level of competence, and therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

79. The Programme Assessment Strategy is designed in order to meet the programme learning outcomes. The Programme Specification reviewed by the inspection team included a detailed table which mapped where the programme learning outcomes are assessed in the constituent modules. This detailed information acts as an aid to academic staff in understanding how individual modules contribute to the programme, it helps students to monitor their own learning and personal and professional development as they progress through the programme, and acts as a checklist for quality control purposes. The Assessment Landscape document also reviewed by the inspection team detailed the module assessment versus the learning outcomes and the pass criteria. Taken together, these demonstrated the integrated and comprehensive assessment strategy.

80. The DMDs provided by the university showed the range of assessments within the modules; these included presentations, assessed groupwork, and individual essays. The inspectors heard that the range of assessments enables students to have a wide range of learning styles to excel on the course. The inspectors agreed that the assessment strategy demonstrates that assessments are robust, fair, reliable and valid, and that those who successfully complete the course have developed the knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards. The inspectors were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

81. As evidenced within the DMDs, the Assessment Landscape document, and the Programme Specification, the assessments are planned to avoid bunching, they enable students to learn progressively throughout the programme in line with the taught periods of study. As outlined in standard 4.8, the programme learning outcomes are developed and assessed through the constituent modules, as evidence within the DMDs and the programme structure. The inspectors agreed that assessments are mapped to the curriculum and are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course, and therefore concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

82. The inspectors heard that ahead of starting the programme students are offered the opportunity to submit a short analytical piece of writing on which they receive commentary and feedback. This starts a discussion with the students' personal tutor that lasts throughout the programme. Formative and summative feedback is provided on every piece of assessment to support the students' ongoing development. The inspectors reviewed the Marking Criteria and Feedback Form for written coursework, this included a section for students to reflect and self-evaluate on the marking criteria. The university's Assessment for Learning Principles and Guidance 2012 aims to support staff to deliver an enhanced assessment process that values assessment for learning and this forms part of the Learning

and Teaching Institute's Curriculum Design Toolkit which was developed to help staff review and enhance their teaching practice. There are clear processes in place for marking, moderation and resubmissions. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

83. As outlined in standards 3.7 and 3.8, the inspection team reviewed the CVs of the social work course team and the head of the social work programmes which demonstrated that they are appropriately qualified and experienced. The inspectors heard that external examiners are checked as part of the application process to ensure that they are qualified and on the register. The CV of the current external examiner was reviewed, this demonstrated their academic and professional qualifications, programme experience, research, consultancy and scholarly activities. The inspection team concluded that assessments are carried out by people with the appropriate experience, and the external examiner is appropriately qualified, experienced and registered. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

84. Progression on the programme is formally overseen by the Board of Examiners in line with the university's regulations, as outlined within the Programme Handbook. The Programme Specification sets out the structure of the programme, the progression requirements and the programme-specific regulations. Student performance and progression is monitored in practice by the placement tutor, and this is overseen by the Practice Learning Panel. The inspectors heard that the mandatory interactive skills days and the readiness for direct practice must be passed before students can progress to practice experience. Students' direct observation of practice is formally observed on two occasions in each practice placement and placement portfolios are assessed by PEs, and this is monitored by placement tutors. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

85. The programme lead outlined that the importance of evidence based practice underpins the programme philosophy and students are encouraged to undertake an evidence informed approach to practice as outlined within the Programme Specification. At a modular level, assessments call upon students to apply evidence to practice in their assessments and analyse and express this verbally and in writing, this was evidenced within the DMDs. During the inspection, the course team outlined that students are encouraged to look at 'what works in social work' and the 'conceptual safeguarding' websites, and to look at signs of safety, the research behind it, and explore issues. The inspection team were

satisfied that the course is designed to enable students to develop an evidence-informed approach to practice and concluded that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

86. The inspectors reviewed the university's pastoral student services website information and heard that the university has a full suite of confidential counselling services including individual counselling, group counselling, online and self-help resources, and mental health advice to support students to help deal with emotional and psychological difficulties during their studies and practice placements. This includes a free 24/7 helpline if students need immediate emotional support at any time of the day. The mental health advice team offers a range of support and adjustments for study, they offer practical skills to manage a mental health difficulty and liaise with the NHS or other university services. Social work students must have occupational health clearance before starting their placement as outlined in standards 1.1 and 1.4 and students are encouraged to declare health issues.

87. The careers and employment service is open to all current students and graduates for up to four years after their course ends. The service offers daily video, phone, and in-person appointments with careers advisors. The inspectors heard that appointments are available at both university campuses – College Lane and De Havilland. All students have access to CV and interview resources, including support with preparing for interviews. The programme lead outlined that as students on the programme are on a trainee contract with a local authority, students predominantly obtain a job within that specific borough council. During the inspection, the programme lead outlined that graduates can top up their qualification to masters level.

88. The inspectors heard from one graduate who spoke of knowing how to access the broad range of support services. The inspection team were satisfied that students have access to resources and support for their health and wellbeing and concluded that this standard was met.

89. Within the documentary evidence supplied by the university, reference is made to mentors. During the inspection meetings, there was no recall by the employer partner, PEs and students who the mentors were, and what was their role. The inspection team would like to attach a recommendation to this standard. Further details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 5.2

90. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed the Personal Tutor Pack 2022 provided by the university. This documentation outlines the role, key responsibilities and duties of the personal tutor, including the requirement for the planning and scheduling of

structured programme meetings, ensuring students know how to contact them, providing tutees with feedback and the opportunities to discuss their progress, as well as offering them guidance. The evidence reviewed clearly sets out that at the beginning of the programme, students will be given the name of their personal tutor. Information contained within the Programme Handbook outlines what students can expect from their personal tutor, and the inspection team heard that personal tutors reach out to their students at least once per term.

91. The course team commented that there is a spreadsheet on Sharepoint where each personal tutor records when they have met with a student, and this includes a coding system to record any issues. The programme lead and other members of the course team can access this information so they know when the students were contacted, the outcome of issues, and the responses given.

92. The inspectors heard from the dean of students regarding the range of support available for mature students, disabled students, students with caring responsibilities and those who have financial difficulties. The dean of students outlined that all student support goes through one central hub and the inspectors reviewed the student services online information.

93. During the inspection, the information manager outlined that sessions are run on searching for literature in relation to the modules on the programme and they outlined that students have two pathways to access academic support; through physical pathways such as study clubs or drop in sessions, and online services such as the library chat function and online tutorials/workshops that cover a range of themes including referencing, critical writing, research skills and plagiarism. Bookable one-to-one appointments are available, and students can book these online. The inspectors heard that a new coaching service has recently been introduced; students are offered four to five sessions over a semester and topics covered include career planning.

94. The inspectors heard that there are a range of student networks, events and activities open to all students, including non-academic networks such as the student parent network and international student events, and students have access to IT digital skills support. The inspectors agreed that students have access to academic support which transitions throughout the programme and beyond and therefore agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

95. As outlined in standards 1.1 and 1.4, the inspectors reviewed documentary evidence which demonstrated that students undergo an occupational health screening and DBS check prior to starting the programme and students must make a self-declaration at the start of their placements to confirm their ongoing suitability. Failure to declare any health or criminal convictions which affect their ongoing suitability are dealt with under the

university's Fitness to Practise Policy and processes; these were reviewed by the inspection team. Fitness to practise information is included within the Programme Handbook and the inspection team were informed that this is readily available on the university's website.

96. During the inspection, the School's fitness to practise officer talked through the process for a fitness to practise case, and they acknowledged the impact this has on a student particularly in regards to their mental wellbeing, and that support is provided to them. The documentary evidence showed that there are clear processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health and therefore the inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

97. During the inspection, the dean of students provided an overview of the pastoral support services including on campus and online information which is available to all students. The university's wellbeing service provides specific advice and support for all students who have, or think they might have, a disability, mental illness or a health condition and students are encouraged to contact the service at the beginning of each term so a meeting can be arranged, and an individual Study Needs Agreement (SNA) can be drawn up. Students are also encouraged to provide information in relation to disability during their Placement Learning Agreement meeting to ensure their needs are met. The SNA which was reviewed by the inspectors is a formal agreement between a disabled student and the university to identify the support and adjustments that will be provided to remove unnecessary barriers.

98. The Programme Handbook sets out the support provided to students if they have disclosed a disability, including that help is available to obtain appropriate support and adjustments for study, and information is available on potential sources of funding to pay for disability related requirements. Reasonable adjustments for exams and in class assessments are also outlined on the university's website.

99. The Occupational Health Referral Form facilitates the occupational health assessments. This logs the reasons for the referral and records the specific advice that is required from occupational health in relation to numerous circumstances including, for example, being fit for placement, medical problems that are likely to be made worse by placement and adjustments and modifications that would be required. The dean of students outlined that not all candidates and students disclose disabilities but the university always works with students in terms of their consent so they can access additional help and support. The inspection team concluded that students are provided with support and reasonable adjustments for health conditions or impairments to enable them to progress through the course, and agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

100. The information provided to students about their curriculum, practice placements, assessments and transition to registered social worker including information on the requirements for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is clearly presented in a range of documents provided by the university. The Step Up to Social Work introduction PowerPoint presentation shown to students discusses CPD. This is encompassed in module five, Developing Practice Learning. The Programme Handbook has detailed information about the curriculum, the assessments, the completion of the programme and the application to register with Social Work England. The DMD for each module sets out the intended learning outcomes and these are mapped to the professional standards and the Placement Handbook and Portfolio Guidance sets out the essential guidance for students undertaking their practice placements. The inspectors heard that a professional development plan is introduced for all students during their induction. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

101. Information regarding mandatory attendance is presented in a range of course documentation. As outlined in standard 2.1, the programme includes 30 days of interactive skills development, and two practice placements. It is clear within the Programme Handbook that participation in these activities are compulsory components of the course, and attendance is mandatory. Students on the programme are employed on a trainee contract by their local authority, and attendance is a professional obligation akin to their employment contract.

102. Students are expected to attend all timetabled sessions and assessment, and these are monitored by paper registers and students scanning QR codes. The Programme Handbook outlined that all modules have an attendance component of 80% and students cannot pass a module unless they attend this proportion of classes. Attendance is checked routinely. Non-attendance is monitored and failure to attend sessions without a justifiable reason is treated seriously and may be brought to the attention of the Board of Examiners.

103. During practice placements, student's attendance must be registered and this has to be signed off by their PE. Where placement breakdowns have occurred, options are explored to avoid students having to start from scratch and placement extensions are put in place if necessary. The inspection team were satisfied that students are provided with information about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory and therefore they agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

104. The university's standard for the return of marked work is four weeks. During this period, work is marked and it is internally moderated. Students are given written feedback

on every piece of submitted work. This includes scaled feedback against the marking criteria, and written commentary on the strengths and points for developing work further. Following the receipt of feedback students can meet with the marker for amplification and clarification of the points raised. Information regarding this process is clearly expressed within the course documentation including the Programme Handbook and the School of Health and Social Work Assessment Handbook 2022-23, which were reviewed by the inspection team. In addition to marker feedback, the course team have developed a means of supporting students to reflect on and implement feedback as an incremental process. This process encourages students to employ the marking criteria to grade their own work on submission and consider previous feedback and implement this in current and future submissions. The inspection team concluded that the university provides timely and meaningful feedback to students on their profession and performance and were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

105. Students are able to make academic appeals regarding the assessment process in line with the university's assessment principles, this is clearly presented within the Programme Handbook. The academic appeals process is available on the university's website and this includes information on informal and formal academic appeals. Students are encouraged to seek additional feedback if they are unsure once they have received their assessment results. The inspectors heard that the Students' Union Advice and Support Centre can also offer guidance and support on academic appeals. The inspectors were satisfied that there is an effective process in place for students to make academic appeals and agreed that this standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

106. As the qualifying course is the Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) Social Work (Step up to Social Work), the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

107. The inspection team recommend that the course be approved with one condition. This will be monitored for completion.

Conditions

108. 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.

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates the oversight of practice educators, and the regular review of their knowledge, skills and experience.	Two months from the date of the Regulator's decision.	Paragraph 49

Recommendations

110. In addition to the conditions above, the inspectors identified the following recommendation 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	5.1	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider updating documentation where there is reference to the mentor role to make it clearer what this role entails.	Paragraph 89

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
Admissions			
1.1 Confirm on entry to the course, via a holistic/multi-dimensional assessment process, that applicants: i. have the potential to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards ii. can demonstrate that they have a good command of English iii. have the capability to meet academic standards; and iv. have the capability to use information and communication technology (ICT) methods and techniques to achieve course outcomes.	☒	☐	☐
1.2 Ensure that applicants' prior relevant experience is considered as part of the admissions processes.	☒	☐	☐
1.3 Ensure that employers, placement providers and people with lived experience of social work are involved in admissions processes.	☒	☐	☐
1.4 Ensure that the admissions processes assess the suitability of applicants, including in relation to their conduct, health and character. This includes criminal conviction checks.	☒	☐	☐
1.5 Ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.	☒	☐	☐
1.6 Ensure that the admissions process gives applicants the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a course. This will include	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
information about the professional standards, research interests and placement opportunities.			
Learning environment			
2.1 Ensure that students spend at least 200 days (including up to 30 skills days) gaining different experiences and learning in practice settings. Each student will have: i) placements in at least two practice settings providing contrasting experiences; and ii) a minimum of one placement taking place within a statutory setting, providing experience of sufficient numbers of statutory social work tasks involving high risk decision making and legal interventions.	☒	☐	☐
2.2 Provide practice learning opportunities that enable students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
2.3 Ensure that while on placements, students have appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload.	☒	☐	☐
2.4 Ensure that on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training.	☒	☐	☐
2.5 Ensure that students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to make sure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.	☒	☐	☐
2.6 Ensure that practice educators are on the register and that they have the relevant and current knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.	☐	☒	☐

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

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
employers, people with lived experience of social work, and students.			
3.6 Ensure that the number of students admitted is aligned to a clear strategy, which includes consideration of local/regional placement capacity.	☒	☐	☐
3.7 Ensure that a lead social worker is in place to hold overall professional responsibility for the course. This person must be appropriately qualified and experienced, and on the register.	☒	☐	☐
3.8 Ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise, to deliver an effective course.	☒	☐	☐
3.9 Evaluate information about students' performance, progression and outcomes, such as the results of exams and assessments, by collecting, analysing and using student data, including data on equality and diversity.	☒	☐	☐
3.10 Ensure that educators are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice.	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum and assessment			
4.1 Ensure that the content, structure and delivery of the training is in accordance with relevant guidance and frameworks and is designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
4.2 Ensure that the views of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of social work are incorporated into the design,	☒	☐	☐

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

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

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

Regulator decision

Approved with conditions.

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

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

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

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Recommendation
1	2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates the oversight of practice educators, and the regular review of their knowledge, skills and experience.	The condition is met.

Findings

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

After the review of the documentary evidence, which included placement briefing documents and process documents, the inspection team are satisfied that all of the conditions set against the approval of the PG Dip Social Work Step Up course are now met.

The university have adopted a partnership approach to addressing the condition. There is a clear application process, applications are reviewed and data stored.

Data is monitored through the existing programme management structures. A series of briefing sessions are in place. Those unable to attend the briefing sessions are required to complete activities and complete a piece of reflective writing to demonstrate their engagement.

Regulator decision

Conditions met.