



Inspection Report

Course provider: University of Derby

Course approval: BA (Hons) Social Worker
Integrated Degree Apprenticeship

Inspection dates: 03 – 05 December 2024

Report date:	30 January 2025
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	21 March 2025
Date conditions met and approved:	20 August 2025

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

officer if they have any queries that may be able to be addressed in advance of the inspection.

9. During this time a draft plan for the inspection is developed and shared with the education provider, to make sure it is achievable at the point of inspection.

10. Once the inspectors and officer are satisfied that an inspection can take place, this is usually undertaken over a three- or four-day visit to the education provider. We then draft a report setting out what we found during the inspection and if and how our findings demonstrate that the course meets our standards.

11. The inspectors may recommend in this report that the course is approved with conditions, without conditions or that it does not meet the criteria for approval.

12. A draft of this report is shared with the education provider, and once we have considered any comments or observations they may wish to provide, we make a final decision about the approval of the course.

13. The decisions that we can make are as follows, that the course is approved without conditions, the course is approved with conditions or that the course does not meet the criteria for approval. The decision, and the report, are then published.

14. If the course is approved with conditions, we will write to the education provider setting out how they can demonstrate they have met the conditions, the action we will take once we decide that the conditions are met, and the action we will take if we decide the conditions are not met.

Summary of Inspection

15. Course details: University of Derby wish to run a BA (Hons) Social Worker Integrated Degree Apprenticeship.

Inspection ID	UDCPP479
Course provider	University of Derby
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Worker Integrated Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of Study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	50
Proposed first intake	May 2025
Date of inspection	3-5 December 2024
Inspection team	Kate Springett (Education Quality Assurance Officer) Sarah Mcanulty (Lay Inspector) Aidan Phillips (Registrant Inspector)

Language

16. In this document we describe the University of Derby as ‘the education provider’, ‘the course provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the BA (Hons) Social Worker Integrated Degree Apprenticeship as ‘the course’ or ‘the programme’.

Inspection

17. An on-site inspection took place from 3-5 December 2024 at the University of Derby (Keddleston Road campus) where the education provider is based. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

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 students from the BA and MA, across all levels of study. The student group included a student representative. Discussions included admissions, placements, feedback, involvement in the course, and support.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course team, practice based learning team, senior leadership team and admissions team.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work, the course provider referred to this group as being experts by experience. Discussions included admissions, feedback, and involvement in the course generally.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including Derby City Council, NHS and independent employers.

Findings

24. In this section we set out the inspectors' findings in relation to whether the education provider has demonstrated that it meets the education and training standards and that the course will ensure that students who successfully complete the course are able to meet the professional standards.

Standard one: Admissions

Standard 1.1

25. Evidence and narrative provided prior to inspection demonstrated that the admissions process included a written test, interview, skills scan and group exercise. The inspection team felt the assessment methods were multi-dimensional and holistic, and were designed to display the applicants academic abilities.

26. Applicants applied to the course electronically, which demonstrated they had the ability to use information and communication technology.

27. Additionally, the interview marking sheet was reviewed prior to inspection which showed that the course provider carefully considered whether applicants had the potential to develop the knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards, based on the content of the questions.

28. Mathematics and English were also taken into consideration as part of the admissions process and there was an opportunity for these to be obtained whilst studying, where appropriate. This information was triangulated with the course team during the inspection.

29. The inspection team were satisfied the standard was met.

Standard 1.2

30. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included an interview crib sheet. The inspection team agreed that the questions enabled consideration of prior relevant experience and how this has informed knowledge, skills and behaviors. The inspection team also felt that the personal statement was an opportunity for applicants to showcase their prior relevant experience.

31. During the inspection, the inspection team met with staff from the admissions team who explained that they considered nontraditional qualifications and equivalence, and the course provider was in line with the university's widening participation agenda.

32. The inspection team were satisfied the standard was met.

Standard 1.3

33. Evidence submitted prior to inspection demonstrated that employers/placement providers, people with lived experience of social work (PWLE) and academics were all involved in the interviews and group exercise which formed part of the admissions process.

34. The inspection team met with PWLE who confirmed they were involved in the same and explained that shadowing opportunities were available for new members. PWLE reported they scored applicants independently and they were involved equally in discussions about the assessment of candidates.

35. Employers also confirmed they were involved in interviews and provided feedback.

36. As the apprenticeship was a new course, the input and involvement of PWLE and employers discussed in meetings was in relation to the current social work provision. Despite this, the inspectors were assured this involvement would also apply to the apprenticeship programme.

37. The inspection team agreed the standard was met.

Standard 1.4

38. Narrative information provided pre-inspection explained there were criminal convictions checks, a health declaration form, and self-declarations about previous social work involvement.

39. Narrative evidence explained that successful candidates must pass an occupational health check and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. During the inspection, the course team explained that there was a robust process for checking DBS, and there was a suitability panel which was convened when necessary/applicable.

40. The inspection team requested and had sight of a declaration of interest form prior to the inspection. This referenced ongoing responsibilities of students; however the inspection team were keen to hear about how often this was completed. The course team confirmed that the form was completed an annual basis.

41. The course team heard about the course providers approach to reasonable adjustments for the admissions process including examples of this, and the inspection team felt this was sufficient.

42. The inspection team agreed that there were clear admissions processes which assessed the suitability of applicants, including in relation to their conduct, health and character, and therefore agreed the standard was met.

Standard 1.5

43. Prior to the inspection, the university wide EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) policy was provided. The inspection team were keen to hear more about how this was applied to the apprenticeship programme.

44. Staff involved in admissions told the inspection team that data was looked at through an EDI lens, and the course provider was supportive of supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and there were processes in place to reduce the attainment gap and widening participation.

45. The inspection team also heard about the course providers outreach, where they ensured that information on the programme was delivered to sixth forms, colleges and local employers.

46. The inspection team felt that EDI was embedded within the admissions policy, and examples of reasonable adjustments were provided such as providing applicants with scribes, colored paper, building access, extra time etc.

47. The inspection team heard that on social work courses, there had been an increase in neurodiverse candidates. It was explained that consideration was given as to how to support these candidates on the assessment day, and a clear timetable for the day was provided so they knew what to expect.

48. In addition to the above, all staff have mandatory EDI and unconscious bias training, and this was confirmed by the relevant stakeholders during the inspection week.

49. As the apprenticeship was a new course, the above heard evidence applied to current social work courses, however the inspectors were assured this would also apply to the apprenticeship programme.

50. The inspection team agreed the standard was met.

Standard 1.6

51. Documentary evidence for this standard demonstrated that the course provider had considered what was required for ensuring applicants could make an informed choice about whether to take up and offer of a place on the course.

52. The inspection team reviewed a mockup of the apprenticeship course webpages and it was understood there would be live Q and A sessions for employers and applicants.

53. Evidence provided included an open day PowerPoint presentation titled 'Making an informed choice' where the following topics are covered: the role of Social Work England, professional standards, off the job hours, teaching methods, attendance requirements, and assessment methods.

54. During the inspection, the course team explained there was a relationship coordinator whose role was to support organisations taking in apprentices for the first time, and help ensure that applicants know what an apprenticeship involves logistically as well as academically.

55. The inspection team also heard that there was a briefing session on interview day, which not only set out requirements for joining the programme, but also the next steps.

56. Despite the course not yet running, the inspection team met with students on similar courses who felt the information given to them was sufficient to enable them to make an informed choice. This was based on the open day and information provided on the website. The inspection team felt satisfied this would also apply to the apprenticeship course.

57. Information on the website included details on research interests, costs of the course, and course content.

58. The inspection team did however identify that it was not made clear on the website that completing the course successfully is not a guarantee that students will be able to register with Social Work England. Additionally, it was identified that the course was referred to as a BA (Hons) in applied Social Work, and not BA (Hons) Social Worker Integrated Degree Apprenticeship.

59. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 1.6 in relation to the approval of this course. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [proposed outcome](#) section.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

60. Documentary evidence provided included the placement handbook, module specifications and placement learning agreement. The inspection team felt that it was clearly evidenced that students had to complete 2 placements, and these were 80 and 90 days in length.

61. In addition to placement days, students had to complete at least 30 skills days, however there was 40 skills days available. The inspection team felt that the content of skills days was suitable.

62. The inspection team agreed that the process in place to ensure suitability of placements was appropriate, the placements were contrasting, and they felt assured there was a statutory placement for each student. The inspection team were not able to meet with apprenticeship students due to the course being yet to begin, however students on similar courses were also able to confirm that placements were contrasting.

63. The inspection team heard from staff involved in practice-based learning that there were ongoing talks with new placement providers and there was assurance given that there would be enough placements.

64. The inspection team explored attendance at placement days and skills days. The course team were able to confirm that attendance was monitored closely, and the inspection team felt the processes were robust.

65. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 2.2

66. Prior to inspection, documentary evidence was reviewed which set out the role of the placement lead in quality assuring placements. The inspection team learnt that consideration was given to student's prior experience, caring, travel and other needs in placement matching.

67. Documentary evidence demonstrated that the learning agreement and midpoint meeting provided opportunities to identify and review learning opportunities, which contributed to students gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards.

68. The inspection team heard how the practice learning application form (PLAF) was used to find out what students require from their placements. Furthermore, students reported that on other social work courses, their choices and learning needs were taken into consideration.

69. The inspection team met with the course team who explained that there was a clear quality assurance process for considering placements. Examples were provided where students on similar courses were removed from placements which did not meet the learning needs for students, or offered them sufficient opportunities, and in these situations alternative placements were found.

70. The inspection team felt assured that the above practice would apply to the apprenticeship, when running, and were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 2.3

71. Documentary evidence reviewed demonstrated that information relating to inductions, supervision and support was contained within the practice learning handbook.

72. The handbook demonstrated to students that they would be supported through the placement and provided clear details of the same.

73. The inspection team met with practice educators (PEs) who confirmed that supervisions happened every week for 1.5 hours, and students advised the same.

74. PEs also reported that the workload of students varied, and whilst the placement learning agreement (PLA) set out the expectations of the students, students were able to let the PE know if they felt they needed new or varied opportunities.

75. When the inspection team met with students, they did not have any concerns about their placement inductions, and did not mention any concerns in relation to their workload, or resources.

76. The course provider required students to complete placement evaluations, which enabled any issues to be highlighted.

77. The inspection team understood that placement providers ensured students had access to resources to enable them to complete their placement, such as access to company laptops. Additionally, they heard examples of reasonable adjustments made for students.

78. Whilst the examples provided above were provided by students on similar courses, the inspection team felt this would also apply to the apprenticeship.

79. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 2.4

80. Narrative and documentary evidence provided for this standard demonstrated that the PLAF, midpoint review, and PLA ensured that there were clear learning objectives for students, and that these were monitored to ensure they were being met whilst on placement.

81. During the inspection, the inspection team explored the above with all key stakeholders who felt work allocated to students was appropriate for their stage of training. Students explained that there was an incremental feel to the placements, and they felt that expectations of them were clear.

82. As the inspection team were unable to triangulate evidence for the apprenticeship (as it had not yet commenced) the above evidence was applicable to other social work provision at the university, and the inspection team felt this would apply to the apprenticeship programme.

83. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 2.5

84. Documentary evidence provided prior to inspection showed that there was a preparation for practice module which must be passed before students go on placement. This module ensured students were safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.

85. The inspection team felt the assessment process was clear and accommodated different learning styles of students, as this comprised of a timed PowerPoint and verbal reflection.

86. Students on other social work courses told the inspection team that they felt the module was useful and provided them with confidence.

87. The inspection team also met with employers, and whilst they had some comments around the lack of preparation of students, they felt this was not a reflection on the module and teaching, but the realities of going into a service delivery setting.

88. The inspection team felt satisfied that the apprenticeship course would prepare students for placement, and agreed that the standard was met.

Standard 2.6

89. Documentary evidence and narrative provided demonstrated that the placement lead had systems in place for checking the registration and currency for independent or 'offsite' PEs, this was triangulated during the inspection.

90. It appeared from the narrative that onsite, or local authority employed PEs followed their own processes for checking registration and currency, and the course provider trusted this was done.

91. The inspection team were keen to explore this standard during the inspection, and learned that the teaching partnership maintained a log of PEs and conducted the appropriate checks, and the university did not have oversight of this.

92. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 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 [proposed outcome](#) section.

Standard 2.7

93. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated there was a university whistleblowing policy which was outlined in the practice learning agreement, the university website, and the programme handbook.

94. The practice learning agreement required the student to have read the agency policy and note a whistleblowing contact at both the agency and university.

95. Students on other social work provision advised the inspection team that they felt safe to challenge unsafe practice, and they knew where to find information on whistleblowing. The inspection team felt this would also be applicable to apprenticeship students.

96. The inspection team felt there was a clear focus on early intervention, with students being invited to follow the concerns meeting processes.

97. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

98. Narrative and documentary evidence presented prior to inspection outlined that management and governance was in place. The inspectors felt there were clearly defined strategic and operational levels in relation to the delivery, resourcing, quality support and management across the Institution.

99. During the inspection, the inspection team met with the senior leadership team who presented to the inspection team. The presentation had some focus on the management structure which the inspection team found helpful. The inspection team agreed there were clear lines of accountability, and communication between the senior leadership team and course team was open and fluid.

100. The inspection team were satisfied there was a clear structure in place in terms of governance, and the course was led by people with relevant experience of the social work profession.

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

Standard 3.2

102. Narrative evidence provided prior to inspection explained that apprentices undertook their placement within their sponsoring organisations, and whilst the course provider did not provide the placements, they were monitored and quality assured to ensure they met the required standard.

103. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated how the course provider ensured quality and that the relevant standards were met, this included reviews of placements and agreements.

104. It was clear to the inspection team that there were contingencies in place to deal with placement breakdown, and detailed examples of these were provided when the inspection team met with employer partners and PEs. It was understood that relevant stakeholders knew about the procedures in place. The inspection team heard about the implementation of action plans and concerns meetings, and heard examples of placement providers being removed from the courses' placement provision list due to concerns.

105. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met

Standard 3.3

106. The PLA was provided in the documentary evidence submission, which demonstrates students had to read relevant policies. The policies included health and safety, whistleblowing, risk assessment and EDI.

107. Narrative provided prior to inspection explained that PEs and placement providers are given a briefing session and written information about supporting health, wellbeing and managing risks for students on placement.

108. During the inspection week, the inspection team explored this area with the course team who provided assurance there was a process in place for ensuring all policies were in place, and these were stored on the university systems. They also explained they check the PLA to ensure the student had an appropriate induction.

109. When meeting with students on other social work provision, they explained that they could get support from their PE as well as their PAT (personal academic tutor), or module leader. Students were also confident they knew who to contact, should they need support with their wellbeing.

110. The inspection team felt that despite the course being yet to start, the standard was met.

Standard 3.4

111. The course provider explained in their evidence submission that they worked in partnership with: Nottingham Trent University, University of Nottingham, University of

Derby, Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council (D2N2 partnership), and the D2N2 partnership lead on the allocation of practice education.

112. Narrative explained D2N2 employers were involved in offering guest lectures and working with the programme around interviews, the interview process, validation and revalidation of the curriculum. In addition to this, they were invited to committee meetings and were part of the Practice Assurance Committee.

113. The inspection team met with the course team as part of the inspection. They heard about cluster A meetings, which took place regularly throughout the year providing an opportunity for stakeholders, including employers, to raise issues.

114. The inspection team met with employers during the inspection and were able to triangulate employer involvement, as it was confirmed they attended stakeholder meetings. The inspection team felt that relationships between employers and the course team were strong, and the standard was met.

Standard 3.5

115. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that there were processes in place to ensure the inclusion of employers, PWLE and students in relation to monitoring, evaluating and improving the course.

116. Student involvement included but was not limited to; there being a student voice portal, module evaluation forms and time in teaching sessions for students to check in with academic staff and provide feedback. It was heard during the inspection week that the course provider listened to feedback from the student voice portal, recorded this and also responded.

117. In terms of involvement from PWLE, a feedback form was completed after every visit to the course provider and there was a meeting every 6 months to ensure PWLE voices were heard in relation to the course.

118. Employers reported being invited to and involved in meetings held by the course provider and reported feeling included in the course.

119. The course team explained that all stakeholders were involved in programme committee meetings (or cluster A meetings). These involved staff, students, PWLE, external employers and focused on student feedback and improvements.

120. The inspection team were satisfied there were enough mechanisms in place to ensure involvement of all relevant stakeholders in monitoring, evaluating and improving the course, and agreed the standard was met.

Standard 3.6

121. Narrative evidence provided explained that the number of students admitted was considered based on discussions with the teaching partnership regarding the statutory placement capabilities.

122. The inspection team spoke to the course team, senior leadership team, placement leads, and heard evidence of how and when discussions on growth, placement availability and Practice Educator capacity takes place.

123. When the inspection team met with the senior leadership team, it was explained that consideration was given to minimum student numbers not only across the apprenticeship programme, but across all social work provision.

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

Standard 3.7

125. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed the programme leader's CV and confirmed they were a registered social worker and had the appropriate qualifications and experience.

126. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 3.8

127. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed the academic staff CVs, which showed they were appropriately qualified and experienced.

128. It was heard during the inspection that recruitment was under consideration and whilst the course providers brought in associate lecturers, there were definitive plans to recruit depending on student numbers.

129. The inspection team understood that there was a dedication for 60% of the course staff to be registered social workers, and staff were supported to maintain their currency.

130. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 3.9

131. Narrative provided explained that the course provider had a data platform which was utilised to collate data. Additionally, the data was used to inform the curriculum and outcomes, and close awarding gaps for those with protected characteristics.

132. The inspection team were keen to hear about this during the inspection. The course team explained that meetings were held every 3 months where data was scrutinised with the view to closing the awarding gap. The inspection team heard that

there was a process in place where students identified in the data as falling behind, or missing lectures were supported and monitored.

133. The course team spoke about how, when considering data, this was not done with a narrow lens, and other factors were considered in addition to protected characteristics, such as fairness for non-driving students.

134. It was reported that assessment results/data was analysed at a detailed level so the course provider could understand how different groups were performing.

135. The inspection team agreed that the course provider had a clear focus on closing the awarding gap, and there was evidence of evaluating information about students' performance, progression and outcomes based on different data.

136. The inspection team were satisfied the standard was met.

Standard 3.10

137. Whilst narrative supported this standard, the inspection team were keen to hear during the inspection how the course team were supported to maintain their understanding in relation to professional practice.

138. The course team advised that the course provider supported them in completing voluntary work, bringing research back into teaching and completing further study such as PhDs.

139. In addition to the above, the inspection team heard that some of the course team were part of the BASW forum, and one was co-chair of the race and equality network for the university.

140. All staff in the course team meeting reported feeling supported to maintain their knowledge and CPD.

141. The inspection team were satisfied the standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

142. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that the course provider had carefully considered that the content, structure and delivery of the course was relevant to the professional standards.

143. The inspection team felt that the module descriptors clearly outlined the professional standards and mapping to the standards was robust. In addition to this there was evidence that frameworks were mapped to module learning outcomes and the course was designed in accordance with the relevant professional standards.

144. The inspectors agreed that there was an incremental learning journey for the students, based on the evidence and this enabled students to demonstrate they had the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to meet the professional standards.

145. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.2

146. The inspection team felt that documentary evidence demonstrated that PWLE, practitioners and PEs were meaningfully involved in the course as there was evidence of involvement in co-production in teaching and learning, as well as evidence of consultation on the design, development and delivery of the programme.

147. The inspection team were keen to triangulate with stakeholders during the inspection week.

148. When the inspection team met with PWLE, they reported feeling listened to and valued, and that their contributions to the programme were not tokenistic. They heard that PWLE were invited to regular meetings where they could provide feedback to the course team.

149. Employers/practitioners advised that they were involved in admissions, stakeholder events and teaching on the course.

150. In relation to the curriculum, the inspection team heard there had been some initial meetings, and there were plans for further meetings to bring in all stakeholders to provide further feedback.

151. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.3

152. Documentary evidence and narrative demonstrated that there were disability support services and student wellbeing services which students were signposted to when relevant, and students were encouraged to declare mental and physical health concerns.

153. The inspection team felt that EDI principles were strong and thorough as there was a focus on EDI in many of the modules, and course content appeared to be updated regularly.

154. When meeting with the course team, the inspection team felt that they were alive to the needs of the community and had considered this when designing the course.

155. In terms of the needs of the students, the inspection team heard that they had implemented a later start time to accommodate students who had caring

responsibilities, and there was a screening tool used in lectures which enabled students to recognise whether they had any additional learning needs.

156. Students were able to provide examples of how EDI was incorporated for them, which included support plans for students with disabilities or additional needs.

157. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.4

158. Documentary evidence and narrative provided demonstrated that the course was continually updated, as there was a periodic review process in place which evaluated the modules on the course.

159. Additionally, it was explained prior to the inspection that staff were supported to maintain their currency. This was confirmed during the inspection week and aligned with staff CVs which showed they were involved in research.

160. The course team explained during the inspection that their teaching was influenced by their own experiences in practice, research, and current affairs.

161. Additionally, employers reported giving the course provider suggestions about topics to cover in modules, and told the inspection team these suggestions were implemented.

162. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.5

163. Documentary and narrative evidence provided supported the integration of theory and practice as students engaged in activities such as case study analysis, role-playing, and simulations.

164. The inspection team were able to triangulate the evidence provided prior to inspection throughout the inspection week.

165. They heard from the course team that there were simulation settings used which included a house, and a court room and they were able to use real situations for students to make links between research and practice.

166. PEs reported that students were able to make links between theory and practice and this was discussed in supervisions.

167. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.6

168. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that consideration was given to interprofessional learning and this had been implemented, as the programme included interactions with students from other disciplines such as Health and Social Care, Nursing, Policing and Primary Education.

169. During the inspection week, the inspection team triangulated the documentary evidence and heard various examples of multidisciplinary and interprofessional learning. This included sessions planned where police would present, cross examination from students on the Law course, and bringing in different professionals for skills days such as nurses, psychologists and youth workers.

170. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.7

171. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that the course structure provided students with the required structured learning hours, under the direction of an educator, which enabled them to meet the required level of competence.

172. The inspection team felt that the programme handbook was clear about on the job and off the job, the learning hours were clear, and the inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.8

173. Documentary evidence and narrative submitted prior to inspection showed how the programme had complied with the university guidance on assessments and there was support outlined for students including rubrics, one to one academic support, checklists and bespoke assessment guidance systems.

174. The assessment methods were varied and included, but were not limited to; PowerPoint presentations, verbal discussions, academic posters, and written essays. The inspection team felt that the assessments were appropriately sequenced, and the breadth of assessment methods was adequate.

175. The inspection team agreed that it was clear that assessments on the programme were designed to ensure that students developed the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the Professional Standards and therefore agreed the standard was met.

Standard 4.9

176. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that there was incremental progression throughout the programme in relation to assessments and the inspection team felt that this was appropriate and aided student progression.

177. The course team explained that on the first day of each module they informed students about when assessments were due, and these were timetabled a year in advance. They also advised that feedback was to be sought from students from module evaluations and this was done at the mid-point of modules, and consideration was given to feedback on sequencing.

178. As referenced in standard 4.8, the inspection team agreed that they felt the assessments were appropriately sequenced throughout the programme.

179. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.10

180. Narrative evidence explained that formative and summative feedback was given on all modules, and feedback is given by a variety of sources which included personal tutors, tripartite meetings and progress review meetings.

181. The inspection team understood from documentary and narrative evidence that all assessments were marked using a rubric matrix that outlined each learning outcome, the expectations and feedback. This was triangulated during the inspection week, with the course team confirming the same.

182. The requirement for the timeliness of feedback was that the course provider had 15 days to provide any formative feedback and during the inspection, students confirmed that on similar courses, this was complied with. The inspection team understood from the narrative that there are no exams which is in line with university wide policy

183. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.11

184. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed the course team CVs that demonstrated they had the appropriate expertise to undertake student assessments.

185. The inspection team were satisfied that the external examiner for the education provider appointed was appropriately qualified, registered with Social Work England, and experienced to oversee the course assessment and marking methods.

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

Standard 4.12

187. Documentary evidence provided prior to inspection demonstrated that student progression was managed by having input from a range of stakeholders including academic tutors, PWLE, and the students mentor from the place of employment.

188. It was evidenced that students must pass a readiness for direct practice interview which is assessed by an academic tutor and PWLE, prior to beginning placement.

189. Additionally, consideration was given to student's progression through the following channels: tripartite meetings, tutorials, group learning agreement meetings, mid-point reviews, and mentor sessions with the employer.

190. The inspection team triangulated the above with the course team, employers and PWLE and were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 4.13

191. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence prior to inspection, which they felt demonstrated there was a focus on critical thinking and analysis in many of the modules.

192. During the inspection the inspection team triangulated with library support services, the course team, and students on similar courses that there was a clear focus on research, and students could access materials to enable them to research.

193. Library services explained that reading lists were kept up to date and reviewed by course staff to ensure they were current and relevant.

194. The inspection team also felt that as staff completed relevant research, and used this in their teaching. This reflected in the students.

195. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

196. Support services outlined prior to inspection included counselling services, a wellbeing centre, online wellbeing support, disability support, occupational health assessments, financial support, academic skills support, and functional skills support.

197. In addition to this, the narrative explained that training and learning opportunities were organised by the Teaching Partnership which included conferences with a focus on careers.

198. The inspection team met with support services as part of the inspection to triangulate documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection.

199. The inspection team heard that apprentices can self-refer to services, and the personal academic tutor played a strong role in ensuring apprentices were supported throughout their studies.

200. It was agreed that services available to apprentices in relation to confidential counselling services, careers advice and support from occupational health services were adequate and the inspection team agreed the standard was met.

Standard 5.2

201. Narrative provided prior to inspection explained that students had support from a personal tutor (PAT) and support was available in both group tutorials, and one to one sessions. It was explained in the narrative evidence that in tutorials, apprentices were provided with resources to support their academic learning or are signposted to relevant services by their tutor.

202. During the inspection, the inspection team were able to confirm the above when they met with course team and support services, and in addition heard that personal tutors were available to students outside core hours, there were adequate library services and resources, and lectures were recorded.

203. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

204. Documentary evidence provided to support this standard demonstrated that as students progressed through the course, their conduct, character and health were checked and continually reassessed on an annual basis. In addition to this, it was established in standard 1 that robust suitability checks were done at the admissions stage.

205. Furthermore, narrative explained that students were asked to update and declare if they have any changes to their health and DBS status, character or conduct.

206. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

207. Narrative provided prior to inspection stated that the course provider offered a range of health and wellbeing services to support students, including mental health and counselling services, disability support, and assistance with managing long-term health conditions.

208. The inspection team felt that based on narrative and documentary evidence there was clear support on the course for students, and there were various supportive mechanisms throughout the course to aid progression and to meet the professional standards.

209. During the inspection, the inspection team heard examples of reasonable adjustments made for students and these included having learning materials provided

in different formats, providing scribes, different colored paper, recording lectures as well as a specific example provided that the course provider was able to accommodate a student with a severe physical disability.

210. The inspection team met with students on similar courses, who report feeling supported during their studies, and support was accessible and adequate.

211. The inspection team agreed this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

212. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that relevant information on the curriculum, placements and assessments was made clear to students and this information was included across the website, VLE, handbooks, timetables and module descriptors.

213. The inspection team met with the course team who explained that in relation to providing information to students on the transition to registered social worker, the ASYE and CPD requirements, someone from Social Work England came in to the university to talk to students about this. Whilst the course was not yet running, students on similar courses explained to the inspection team that they were due to have sessions on the same.

214. The inspection team agreed the standard was met.

Standard 5.6

215. Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that there were clear attendance policies in place on the programme, this was that 100% attendance on the course was mandatory. This included students spending 200 days in practice learning settings.

216. The course team were able to explain how attendance was monitored, and the inspection team understood that there were procedures in place for when students missed sessions.

217. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 5.7

218. Whilst the course was not yet running, the course provider assessment policy confirmed that formative and summative feedback was given to students.

219. The course team explained to the inspection team that they used an assessment rubric, and they fed forward as well as feedback.

220. The inspection team met with students on similar courses who confirmed that the 15 day turnaround for feedback was adhered to, and feedback received was clear and meaningful.

221. The inspection team felt this would be replicated on this programme, and were satisfied that the standard was met.

Standard 5.8

222. Documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection demonstrated the university had an academic appeals process, which was available to students on all programmes.

223. Narrative stated that students were signposted to both the student union and the university academic appeals policy and process if they wished to make an appeal.

224. The inspection team were satisfied that the standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

225. As the qualifying course is BA (Hons) Social Worker 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 are binding and must be met by the education provider within the agreed timescales.

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	Standard 1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that a. It is made clear to students that completing the course will make them eligible to apply to register with Social Work England b. The website and student facing documentation will refer to the course as BA (Hons) Social Worker Integrated Degree Apprenticeship	21 st June 2025	Paragraph 51
2	Standard 2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that they have oversight of all practice educators in relation to their Social Work England registration and currency, and this process must be documented.	21 st June 2025	Paragraph 89

It should be noted that all qualifying social work courses will be subject to re-approval under Social Work England's [2021 education and training standards](#).

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	☐	☒	☐

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

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

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

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

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendati on given
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 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	☒	☐	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendati on given
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.	☒	☐	☐
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			

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendati on given
6.1 The threshold entry route to the register will normally be a bachelor’s degree with honours in social work.	☒	☐	☐

Regulator decision

Approved with conditions.

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

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

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

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	1.6	The education provider will provide evidence that <i>a.</i> It is made clear to students that completing the course will make them eligible to apply to register with Social Work England <i>b.</i> The website and student facing documentation will refer to the course as BA (Hons) Social Worker Integrated Degree Apprenticeship	Condition met
2	2.6	The education provider will provide evidence that they have oversight of all practice educators in relation to their Social Work England registration and currency, and this process must be documented.	Condition met

Findings

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

With respect to the condition set against standard 1.6, the education provider submitted documentary evidence demonstrating that both the programme specification and course page on the University website stipulates the desired wording to satisfy part (a) of the condition, and refer to the course as the 'BA (Hons) Social Worker Integrated Degree Apprenticeship'

With respect to the condition set against standard 2.6 the education provider submitted narrative and documentary evidence which demonstrates that the University have a clear process for ensuring oversight of both independent and employer PEs Social Work England registration and currency.

The inspectors' recommendation is that these conditions are now met.