

Inspection Report

Course provider: Northumbria University

Course approval: Reapproval MA Social Work,
Reapproval and Approval BSc (Hons) Social Work

Inspection dates: 19 – 22 March 2024

Report date:	20 May 2024
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	15 July 2024
Date conditions met and approved:	20 February 2025

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

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

Summary of Inspection

15. Northumbria University reapproval MA Social Work and reapproval and approval BSc (Hons) Social Work courses were inspected as part of the Social Work England reapproval cycle; whereby all course providers with qualifying social work courses will be inspected against the new Education and Training Standards 2021.

Inspection ID	NUNR1_CP107_CP106_CPP428
Course provider	Northumbria University
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	Reapproval MA Social Work Reapproval and Approval BSc (Hons) Social Work
Mode of study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	MA 27 students BSc 60 students
Date of inspection	19 – 22 March 2024
Inspection team	Priscilla McGuire (Lay Inspector) Lee Pollard (Registrant Inspector) Sam Jameson (Education Quality Assurance Officer)

Language

16. In this document we describe Northumbria University as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the MA Social Work and BSc Social Work as ‘the courses’ or ‘the programmes’.

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place from 19 – 22 March 2024 at the Coach Lane Campus in Newcastle where Northumbria University is based. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, placement providers, 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 10 students from the MA and 25 students from the BSc, all from a range of levels of study within those courses, including a mix of student reps and graduates. Discussions included their experiences of the teaching and learning within the courses, their access to support services of the university, admissions process, placements and how ready they felt for practice.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from; both social work course teams, senior leadership team, admissions team, staff involved in practice and placement learning, library and academic support services, disability support services and student support.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work, who have been involved in the courses, referred to as educators by experience by the members of the group and university. Discussions included what areas of the courses they were involved with, how much input and feedback they had from the university and the courses and what training they received in this role.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners from Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Newcastle City Council, including practice educators, independent and from local authorities.

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. The inspectors agreed that based on the documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection, and from discussions with university staff involved in selection and admissions that entry to the courses were via a holistic and multi-dimensional assessment process.

26. The inspection team were assured that a candidate's capability to meet the academic requirements of the course and their use of information and communication technology methods were tested as part of this process. Within the admissions and assessment process an applicant's command of English and potential to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards is examined further through the written task and interview questions.

27. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 1.2

28. Following their review of the documentary evidence provided and discussions with university staff involved in selection and admissions during the inspection, the inspection team were able to triangulate how an applicant's prior relevant experience is considered as part of the admissions process.

29. The inspectors heard from members of the course teams, university admissions manager, the lead for each of the courses, social work practitioners and members of the educators by experience group, all of whom had been involved in the admissions interviews and process. The inspectors heard how the interview procedure and questions focus upon what relevant experience the applicant has identified within their application form.

30. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 1.3

31. As a result of their review of documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection and their discussions with key stakeholders throughout the inspection, the inspection team were able to confirm that members of the educators by experience group and placement providers were involved in the admissions process for the courses.

32. In discussions with the educators by experience group, one of the members told the inspection team that they had worked alongside the other members of the admissions panel, to ensure that there was equity throughout their involvement and the process. The members of the educators by experience group told the inspection team that they felt valued and empowered throughout their role in the admissions process.

33. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 1.4

34. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the social work professional suitability form 2023, disclosure and barring service application form and information. The inspection team were assured that this documentary evidence provided insight into the university and courses procedure for ensuring that applicants' suitability is checked, including their conduct, health, and character.

35. The inspection team were able to meet with staff involved in selection and admissions who identified that the process supports applicants who identify any reasonable adjustments that they may require, including support for care leavers. The inspection team were able to triangulate this information with evidence gathered from meetings with student representatives and university support services.

36. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 1.5

37. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to the inspection included the university equality, diversity and inclusion policy and the university admissions policy. The application of these policies was discussed with the admissions staff for both courses. Minutes from the practice learning sub-committee provided further insight into the effectiveness of these policies in meeting the needs of applicants with specific support needs. Examples of reasonable adjustments that had been made for applicants were given during discussions with student representatives from both courses and the staff involved in selection and admissions.

38. Students confirmed that at both the application and interview stages, they were asked to provide information about any specific support needs. They also said they were aware that any disclosures made during this process would not impact on the decision as to whether they were offered a place on either course.

39. However, during discussions with the educators by experience, placement providers and staff involved in selection and admissions, the inspection team were not assured that all individuals involved in the admissions process had completed appropriate training in areas such as unconscious bias and equality, diversity, and inclusion.

40. The inspection team concluded that this standard was not met for either course.

41. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 1.5 in relation to the approval of both courses. 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 1.6

42. The inspection team met with student representatives from a range of years and levels within both courses, including graduates, who identified that they were given appropriate levels of guidance and information during their application and admissions process. They confirmed they felt in a position to make an informed decision regarding whether to take up a place on their course.

43. The inspection team were able review documentary evidence prior to the inspection which included university information that is sent out to all applicants and an overview of the open day presentation. The inspectors heard from staff involved in selection and admissions about the courses' experience days that applicants can attend to support their decision-making process.

44. The inspectors agreed this standard was met for both courses.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

45. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to the inspection included both courses' programme and placement handbooks, including information regarding the university arc database that enables the placement team to identify which students require a statutory placement and ensure that each student has contrasting learning experiences.

46. The inspectors were assured from their review of the above documentary evidence and discussions with the course team and staff involved in practice-based learning that students on both courses spend at least 200 days, including up to 30 skills days, gaining different experiences, and learning in practice settings is clearly set out.

47. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 2.2

48. The university submitted documentary evidence that indicated both courses provided practice learning opportunities to students that enable them to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards. This was outlined within

the courses' programme handbooks, placement handbooks and programme specifications, which outlined the knowledge and skills required and the learning opportunities for students whilst on placement. That included administrative and practical information about the placement and what the student should expect to do and learn during the placement.

49. The inspection team heard from the staff involved in practice-based learning of the quality assurance process in place for both courses, regarding how they check and maintain new and current placement providers to ensure that they are providing appropriate learning and development opportunities for students. This includes how the university arc system checks and stores confirmation from the placement provider that they can meet all requirements. The inspectors learnt that the placement learning agreement meeting sets out the learning opportunities for the student and that these are reviewed and discussed within supervisions and review meetings.

50. Following their meetings with the course lead and staff from the MA, student representatives and staff involved in practice-based learning, the inspection team was assured that students were provided with appropriate opportunities on placement to help them gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.

51. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for the MA.

52. Regarding the reapproval of the BSc course, following their discussions with student representatives and the course team, the inspectors were not satisfied that there was a thorough and robust process in place for the quality assurance of placement learning opportunities for students. This was specifically for how the new 20 days structured practice learning experience will be planned and provide students with appropriate opportunities on placement to help them gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.

53. The inspectors determined that they required further clarity and evidence of how these days will demonstrate clear links to social work relevant learning and development opportunities for students. The inspectors did not feel adequate information was provided regarding the content, assessment, and quality assurance of the 20 days structured practice learning experience.

54. Therefore, the inspection team were not satisfied that this standard was met for the BSc course.

55. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 2.2 in relation to the approval of the BSc 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 2.3

56. Prior to the inspection the inspectors were able to review the service level agreement, both courses' practice learning agreement and placement handbooks. The inspectors were satisfied that this documentary evidence identified the responsibilities of placement providers and requirements for students having access to an appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload whilst they are on placement.

57. The inspection heard from practice educators, placement providers and students from the MA course of how the practice learning agreement meeting and documentation sets out, discusses, and records these requirements, and how these are monitored and recorded within supervision and placement reviews.

58. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for the MA.

59. Regarding the reapproval of the BSc course and as identified within standard 2.2 of this report, following their discussions with student representatives and the course team, the inspectors were not satisfied that there was a thorough and robust process in place for the quality assurance of placement learning opportunities for students. This was specifically for how the new 20 days structured practice learning experience will be planned and ensure that whilst on placements, students have access to an appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload.

60. The inspectors determined that they required further clarity and evidence of how these days will demonstrate clear links to social work relevant learning and development opportunities for students. The inspectors did not feel adequate information was provided regarding the content, assessment, and quality assurance of the 20 days structured practice learning experience.

61. Therefore, the inspection team were not satisfied that this standard was met for the BSc course.

62. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 2.3 in relation to the approval of the BSc 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 2.4

63. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included anonymised examples of practice learning documents, interim review meetings and module specifications to highlight that planning and monitoring is undertaken regarding students' progression throughout the course, and that this is appropriate to their stage of learning and development.

64. Following the review of this information the inspectors were assured that students would have an allocated practice educator, a practice educator assessor if required, a named personal tutor and a placement supervisor if appointed. Discussions with staff involved in placement-based learning identified that they have the formal meetings and reviews, practice learning agreement, mid-point, and end reviews within placements and that these are an established mechanism to ensure that the work students undertake whilst on placement is suitable for their level of skills and experience. The inspectors heard that practice educators' drop-in sessions and university student recall days are other methods of checking student learning is appropriate and that they are being supported accordingly during their placements.

65. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for the MA course.

66. Regarding the reapproval of the BSc course and as identified within standards 2.2 and 2.3 of this report, following their discussions with student representatives and the course team, the inspectors were not satisfied that there was a thorough and robust process in place for the quality assurance of placement learning opportunities for students. This was specifically for how the new 20 days structured practice learning experience will be planned and ensure that whilst on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training.

67. The inspectors determined that they required further clarity and evidence of how these days will demonstrate clear links to social work relevant learning and development opportunities for students. The inspectors did not feel adequate information was provided regarding the content, assessment, and quality assurance of the 20 days structured practice learning experience.

68. Therefore, the inspection team were not satisfied that this standard was met for the BSc course.

69. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 2.4 in relation to the approval of the BSc 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 2.5

70. The inspectors agreed that, based on the documentary evidence provided and from discussions with the staff involved in placement-based learning and course teams, all students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to make sure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.

71. The inspectors were assured from module specifications, identified assessment processes and discussions with the above key stakeholders that relevant learning and assessment was undertaken in each course's respective modules. The inspection team agreed that these were appropriate and robust in the process for determining a student's preparedness to safely undertake practice learning.

72. During their meeting with staff involved in practice-based learning, the inspection team were provided with narrative evidence of the process of assessing a student's readiness for practice. The example highlighted how a student was not engaging with the required teaching and learning within the modules for assessing and preparing practice, and how both the course team and university student support services contacted and engaged with the student to support them to make a decision regarding remaining on the course.

73. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 2.6

74. In discussions with the practice learning team, examples were provided of how they ensure that practice educators are on the Social Work England register, and that they have the relevant knowledge, skills, and experience to support safe and effective learning for students on both courses. The inspection team heard of the work done with placement providers and the partnership working, and checks done to ensure that practice educators were registered and completed the appropriate level of practice educator professional standards training. This information is input into the university arc system and recorded within the practice learning agreement documentation and meeting.

75. The inspection team met with practice educators employed by local authorities and organisations, who confirmed that they are asked for the above information regarding their registration and that they attend practice educator drop-in sessions run by the university. The independent practice educators expressed they are asked for their registration and DBS information but were uncertain regarding how their continuous professional development and maintaining their professional currency was checked and recorded by the university.

76. Therefore, the inspection team were not satisfied that this standard was met for either course.

77. 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 the BSc and MA courses. 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

78. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection provided information on the policies and processes in place for students regarding whistleblowing, challenging unsafe behaviours and reporting concerns. The inspection team reviewed the placement whistleblowing policy and procedure, that outlined actions students should take if they have concerns, including further guidance within the raising and escalating concerns policy and procedure.

79. All students that the inspection team met with identified that during their placements, they had the required knowledge and awareness of policies and procedures that would support them to challenge unsafe behaviours and cultures, organisational wrongdoings, and report concerns openly and safely without fear of adverse consequences. The inspectors heard from the practice learning team regarding the teaching sessions in place for students on the challenges of raising concerns and recall days to review this learning and ensure students' awareness was upheld about how and where to seek support in these matters.

80. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

81. Prior to the inspection, the inspectors were able to review the faculty of health and life sciences management structure. From their review of documentary evidence and discussions with the senior management team, the inspectors were assured that the courses were supported by a management and governance plan to meet the requirements of this standard. The inspection team met with the course leads who are both registered social workers, with appropriate additional educational qualifications and experience.

82. The inspection team received narrative evidence within their meeting with the senior management team that enabled them to triangulate information regarding the governance

and structures that the courses have in place and their quality improvement mechanisms, including but not limited to the staff student programme committee and programme management committee.

83. The inspection team were satisfied that there was a system for quality assurance and oversight of academic standards, including allocation of resources within both courses and the university.

84. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.2

85. During the inspection, the inspectors met with the practice learning team from the university and representatives from the placement providers. This enabled the inspectors to triangulate documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard, highlighting the social work placement agreements that are agreed between the university and placement providers. The agreements set out and ensure that placements must provide education and training opportunities that meet the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards.

86. The practice learning documentation submitted as part of the documentary evidence identified the process to be followed in the event of placement issues and/or breakdown. The inspection team heard from placement providers and practice educators of how this process works in practice. Documentation clearly outlined the procedures in place to manage placements at risk of breakdown.

87. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.3

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

Standard 3.4

89. The inspectors agreed, based on the documentary evidence provided and from discussions with placement providers and senior management team, that employer partners and placement providers were involved in elements of the course, including the management and monitoring of the courses. The university provided information regarding the programme management committee meetings and practice learning sub-committee that both involve employers and placement providers.

90. During the inspection, the inspectors were able to triangulate documentary evidence that highlighted the active role social work practitioners from employer partners and placement providers have in both courses because of the university secondment scheme. The inspectors met with a social work practitioner who was seconded from a local authority

to teach and work within the courses and university setting. All key stakeholders involved in this scheme spoke of the benefit of having embedded partnership working within the course and the value this builds regarding currency of the courses and strengthening employer involvement.

91. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.5

92. As identified within standard 3.4 the inspection team were assured that employer partners and placement providers were involved in the monitoring and evaluation of both courses. Documentary evidence, including the eVision module evaluation, identified how both courses' modules are evaluated annually through internal and external moderation.

93. Within their meeting with members of the educators by experience group, the inspectors heard of how they felt valued and respected within their work with the course teams and leads. The inspectors were informed of members from the group being involved in the programme management committee. They identified that their views and feedback regarding both courses are always sought, listened to, and spoke of the equity of their role throughout these areas of the courses monitoring, evaluation, and development.

94. Documentary evidence, anonymised minutes from staff student programme committees for both courses, provided insight into how the courses involve students in their monitoring, evaluation, and improvement systems. Within their meeting with student representatives from both courses, the inspection team heard of students attending these meetings and providing feedback within these settings, as well as module evaluation and feedback.

95. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

96. Within the meeting with student representatives from the BSc course, the inspection team heard of varying levels of actions and changes made from the feedback that the students had provided within the staff student programme committee. As a result of this and following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a [recommendation](#) in relation to 3.5. We recommend that there is a more robust process put in place to reflect the feedback that students provide within the staff student programme committee, how this feedback is actioned and then communicated to students.

Standard 3.6

97. The university was able to demonstrate that the number of students admitted to both courses are aligned to a strategy, which includes consideration of local and regional placement capacity. Documentary evidence identified the work and planning carried out within the programme management committee meeting, practice learning sub-committee and North East Social Work Alliance. Discussions with the senior management team, staff involved in placement-based learning and placement providers indicated that this planning

for student admission numbers and placement capacity is agreed and reflects the number of placements available and the needs of the local workforce requirements.

98. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.7

99. Documentary evidence included information in the mapping document and both course leads CVs, which confirmed their registration with Social Work England, appropriate qualifications, and experience. The inspection team agreed that, based on the documentary evidence provided and from discussions with the course team and senior management team, this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.8

100. Prior to the inspection, the inspectors were able to review the course team's CVs, which gave the inspection team a summary of both course teams backgrounds, registration status, expertise, and continuous professional development. The inspectors were assured from this information and discussions with the course team and senior management team that there were an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, including those registered with Social Work England, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise to deliver effective courses.

101. The university was able to demonstrate through the documentary evidence reviewed by the inspection team and within the inspection meetings, that the course team are appropriately resourced and supported by the senior management team and wider university support services.

102. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.9

103. Documentary evidence and information submitted within the education and training standards mapping forms for both courses identified that students' performance, progression, and outcomes are measured through module exams and assessment. The inspection team were informed that this information is evaluated at multiple levels, through tutorials, at module level, course level through the programme assessment board and at staff student programme committee meetings.

104. Within their meetings with the course team, the inspectors heard how important the role of the personal tutor is in monitoring and supporting students' performance and progression, identifying any patterns of non-engagement, and offering support, or linking into appropriate services for the student.

105. The inspectors considered the course teams' use of equality and diversity data, and the inspection team were informed that the university equality, diversity, and inclusion board actively gathered this data within its annual monitoring and review of the courses. However, the inspection team were not provided with any specific details or insight into how this data was being evaluated, applied, or used to monitor student performance and progression.

106. The inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course.

107. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 3.9 in relation to the approval of the BSc and MA courses. 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 3.10

108. The inspection team received narrative evidence of how the university sabbatical policy supports its teaching staff to have time away from direct teaching for developing their own research, and how the workload tool is utilised for staff continuous professional development and research time. This allows the social work teaching staff to bring this research, expertise, and development into the courses' curriculums.

109. Within the meeting with the senior management team, the inspection team heard how staff have access to a professor mentoring programme, internal funding for further development, research, and departmental development days to share and learn about these areas for staff.

110. The inspectors were provided with examples of how members from the educators by experience group were offered training and an accredited teaching role on the course, including involvement in research projects.

111. Social work practitioners, through the university secondment scheme, work as part of the development and delivery of the courses' curriculums to ensure current social work practice and learning from those who have direct experience of social work services is incorporated into the delivery of the courses. The inspection team heard one example of a local authority safeguarding team manager being part of the teaching staff for part of their working week whilst also working in their frontline role, that benefited the currency of the courses.

112. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

113. The course handbooks, provided in advance of the inspection, set out how both courses' curriculums and module learning outcomes are mapped to appropriate standards, frameworks, guidance, and benchmark statements to meet the requirements of this standard.

114. The inspection team were satisfied that the documentary evidence demonstrated that the content, structure, and delivery of both courses 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 upon completion of their respective course.

115. This was triangulated within meetings with the course teams, placement providers and practice educators who identified that students were at the expected level of knowledge and competency for their stage of learning and development. The inspection team heard from students who had graduated from both courses that they felt the learning and development they had taken from the programmes' teaching had prepared them for the transition from student to newly qualified social worker. This included their awareness and understanding of the requirements of the professional standards.

116. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.2

117. As identified within standard 3.10 of this report, the inspectors were provided with examples of how members from the educators by experience group were offered training and an accredited teaching role on the course, including involvement in research projects. Within this meeting, the inspectors heard that they felt valued and respected within their work with the course teams and leads. The inspectors were informed of members from the group being involved in the programme management committee. They identified that their views and feedback regarding both courses are always sought, listened to, and spoke of the equity of their role throughout these areas of the courses development and teaching that they are involved in.

118. As identified within standard 3.4 of this report, the university provided information regarding the programme management committee meetings and practice learning sub-committee that both involve employers and placement providers.

119. Social work practitioners, through the university secondment scheme, work as part of the development and delivery of the courses' curriculums to ensure current social work

practice and learning from those who have direct experience of social work services is incorporated into the delivery of the courses.

120. The inspectors were able to triangulate documentary evidence that highlighted the active role social work practitioners from employer partners and placement providers have in the courses because of the university secondment scheme. The inspectors met with a social work practitioner who was seconded from a local authority to teach and work within the courses and university setting. All key stakeholders involved in this scheme spoke of the benefit of having embedded partnership working within the course, and the value this builds regarding currency of the courses and strengthening employer and social work practitioner involvement.

121. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.3

122. The inspection team concluded that the documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection, and discussions within the students, course teams and university student support services meetings, was able to demonstrate that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

123. As a result of their review of documentary evidence and their meetings with the course team, placement providers, students and practice educators, the inspectors were provided with insight into how both courses are continually updated due to developments in research, legislation, government policy and social work practice.

124. Documentary evidence highlighted that this is achieved through course team meetings to focus on curriculum development, and annual reviews to focus on both programmes and any updates and developments for the next year. The inspection team met with the university library and academic support services, who provided an overview of the educational resources and tools that support the course teams to maintain contemporary material within their teaching and access to any developments in research, policy, and social work practice.

125. As identified in standard 4.2, frontline social work practitioners are involved and have roles within the teaching of the curriculums through the secondment scheme with local employers and placement providers. The inspection team were assured from their meetings with key stakeholders that this supports students' development and learning regarding current social work practice, pressures, and service developments, that are brought into the teaching and learning on both courses.

126. The inspection team were able to meet with the course teams and review CVs which identified their ability to draw upon and incorporate their own recent research, study, and development that they have carried out, supported by the university sabbatical programme.

127. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.5

128. The inspectors were able to review both courses' programme handbooks, module specifications and teaching schedules. These indicated the learning outcomes, linking to the professional standards and relevant frameworks, highlighting where and how social work theory and practice is integrated into both courses.

129. The inspectors heard from practice educators that their supervisions include a focus on reflection, which seeks to support the student's development and ability to link their placement practice to their learning and application of social work theoretical frameworks.

130. Documentary evidence was triangulated within meetings with the course teams, students, and practice educators, which enabled the inspectors to hear directly how social work theoretical frameworks are introduced to students, developed through modules, and consolidated within skills days, placements, and further academic learning.

131. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.6

132. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the faculty of health and life sciences interprofessional education strategy, interprofessional education facilitators guide and interprofessional education presentation. The inspection team heard from students of the diverse settings in which they had the opportunity to work with, and learn from other professions within their placements, including schools, hospitals, and police.

133. Discussions with the course team and documentary evidence indicated students, from both courses, are given the opportunity to work with other professionals during their placements and in teaching, including the interprofessional education sessions. The inspection team learnt that these sessions include students from a range of other professional disciplines, including all nursing disciplines, midwifery, and occupational therapy, with teaching staff from both social work and other professional courses running the sessions.

134. The inspection team noted the innovative work between an interprofessional student group, including social work students, and people from another country. This sought to build working relations and develop knowledge and tools, including hospital building, water supply and community work, facilitated by staff from the social work courses.

135. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.7

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

Standard 4.8

137. Prior to the inspection, the inspectors were able to review both programmes specifications and handbooks, that set out the overall specifications for the programme. This included the individual module specifications that set out how the required knowledge, skills and values are to be met in each module. As part of their evidence review the inspectors reviewed the university assessment for learning and achievement policy and the academic regulations for taught awards, which set out the standards that the assessment strategy for both programmes and each module must meet.

138. The inspectors learnt from their discussions with students, course teams and review of documentary evidence that assessments were from a range of sources, including written assignments, practice portfolio, oral exams, workbooks, written exams, and direct observations of practice.

139. Documentary evidence regarding assignment moderation, identified that at the start of every academic year, each module leader must submit their assessment task via the eVision system to be moderated by an internal moderator prior the module commencing. The assessment task for each module is displayed on the Blackboard e-learning portal for students to refer to.

140. From their review of documentary evidence, including the external examiner reports and discussions with students, the inspectors were satisfied that the course assessment strategy and design was robust, fair, reliable, and valid.

141. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.9

142. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included module learning outcomes mapped against Social Work England professional standards, both courses' module specifications and the university assessment guidance and policy.

143. This enabled the inspectors to identify that the module learning outcomes are aligned to appropriate standards, with assessments sequenced at suitable stages of both courses to match students' expected progression through their learning and development.

144. Within their meeting with students from the MA course the inspection team heard of an example of the work done to address assessment 'pinch points', following feedback from now graduated students.

145. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

146. Within their meeting with students from the BSc course, the inspection team were provided with feedback regarding how they would have benefited from a session or workshop regarding the transition between years/levels of the course. They identified that a focus on this would have helped prepare them for the requirements and expectations for this increase in academic workload and create a supportive space to ask questions or seek clarity during this time. As a result of this and following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a recommendation in relation to 4.9. We [recommend](#) that there is a formal session put in place for students to support them during the transition between levels/years of the course.

Standard 4.10

147. The university was able to demonstrate that students are provided with feedback from a range of sources, within personal tutorials, formative and summative feedback and within placements from practice educators. A sample of assignments are selected for internal moderation in line with the university moderation policy, and students can access further input from their tutors within an assessment feedback action plan.

148. Within their meeting with university student support services the inspection team heard of the library and academic support services that can provide support regarding academic development for students.

149. The inspection team learnt of the work being done following feedback from the courses' external examiners regarding how constructive the feedback to students was, and whether marking was overgenerous. The course teams spoke of the internal review of marking this feedback triggered and the planned further work on marking and feedback to be done within staff meetings, training, and development days.

150. The inspectors considered whether the feedback that students receive was provided in a timely manner and meaningful in supporting their progression and performance in course assessments.

151. Within their meeting with student representatives from the MA course, the inspectors heard that they received feedback within the required timescale, helped with development and their learning and was constructive.

152. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for the MA course.

153. In their meeting with student representatives from the BSc course, the inspectors were informed from many of those present that in their experience, the feedback they had received was not provided in a timely manner, did not provide them with areas to build upon or areas of strength and development.

154. The inspection was not satisfied that this standard was met for the BSc course.

155. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 4.10 and 5.7 in relation to the approval of this course. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the course would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the course would be able to meet the relevant standard, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [proposed outcome](#) section.

Standard 4.11

156. As part of the documentary evidence submitted the inspectors were able to review the CVs of the course teams and staff involved in assessment on both courses. The inspectors were satisfied that appropriate expertise, qualifications, and experience were held, including registration of the external examiners with Social Work England.

157. From their meetings with the course teams, the inspectors learnt that internal and external moderation regarding marking and assessment is carried out, in line with the university moderation policy, including the university assessment for learning and achievement policy and the academic regulations for taught awards. The inspection team were assured that new members of the course teams underwent appropriate training and induction, including for the assessment, and marking requirements for both programmes.

158. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.12

159. The inspectors agreed that, based on the documentary evidence provided and from discussions with the course teams, student progression is monitored through a range of mechanisms, including their personal tutor that forms part of the discussion with students during their tutorials. The inspection team met with social work practitioners, placement providers, practice educators and members of the educators by experience group who confirmed their involvement in the assessment of students' progression on both courses.

160. Within the placement setting the placement learning documentation clearly outlined that whilst on placement, student progression is monitored by their practice educator, and wider practice learning team, on a regular basis and at the interim review stage. During the placement, there are at least 3 direct observations of practice undertaken, as identified within the placement learning documentation submitted as part of the documentary evidence.

161. Student progression is also monitored via the practice assessment board, with information regarding university assessment policies and procedures available via the university website and Blackboard for students to refer to.

162. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.13

163. Documentation submitted in support of this standard included the university's programme framework for Northumbria University research rich learning design pillars and module specifications for both courses. The evidence identified the requirement for all courses' modules to meet the above framework to ensure that *"students will be actively engaged in research rich learning in this module through research/enquiry-based learning, research tutored learning, research led learning and/or research-oriented learning"*.

164. The inspection team were able to triangulate documentary evidence within their meetings with the course teams, practice educators and students. These discussions assured the inspectors that there were appropriate modules and teaching in place to support the learning, development and application of research, critical analysis, and evidence informed practice within social work practice settings.

165. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

166. In advance of the inspection, the inspectors were able to review documentary evidence provided by the university regarding the access to support services that students on both courses have in relation to supporting their health and wellbeing. This satisfied the inspectors that students on both courses have access to a variety of services including but not limited to confidential counselling services, careers advice and support, and occupational health services.

167. During the inspection, the inspectors met with representatives from the university's range of academic and pastoral support services. This enabled the inspectors to triangulate documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard, that highlighted the range of student support services on offer to students both on campus and on placement, and that is available from application to offer being accepted onto the course, and for graduates.

168. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

169. As identified above the inspection team were assured of the robust and varied support services in place for students. However, within their meeting with students from the BSc course the inspection team heard varied responses regarding their awareness and use of these services to support them during their learning and development on the course. As a result of this and following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a recommendation in relation to standard 5.1. We [recommend](#) that there is a review and development of the awareness and promotion of the university support services for the students on the BSc course.

Standard 5.2

170. The inspectors were able to triangulate documentary evidence within their meeting with library and academic support services that outlined how students on both courses have access to a robust level of resources to support their academic development throughout the programmes. The inspection team were assured from their meeting with the specialist student study skills support that these resources were in place for all students and offered a range of services and methods for students to engage and access them.

171. Prior to the inspection the inspectors were able to review the university personal tutor policy and guide. The inspectors were able to triangulate this information within discussions with the course teams, that assured them of the support that students had access to in supporting their academic development, including from their personal tutor.

172. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

173. Within their meeting with representatives from students from the BSc course the inspectors heard varying levels of the timely and clear communication they received from their personal tutor. As a result of this and following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is making a recommendation in relation to standard 5.2. We [recommend](#) that there is a review and development undertaken to strengthen the awareness, consistency, and promotion of the personal tutor support on offer to students on the BSc course.

Standard 5.3

174. The university and course teams were able to demonstrate that there was a process in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of a student's conduct, character and health through its documentary evidence submission and meetings with the inspection team.

175. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection included the programmes' handbooks, social work professional suitability form, handbook of student regulations taught programmes august 2023-24 and occupational health forms and process. The inspectors were satisfied there was a process in place for ensuring ongoing suitability of students post admissions stage.

176. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 5.4

177. Information within documentary evidence, university reasonable adjustments policy, and the education and training mapping forms for both courses identified that students could access support and assessment for reasonable adjustments via a student accessibility plan. The inspection team were provided with information within the evidence submission of this process, and guidance via the university website and student Blackboard portal.

178. The inspectors were able to triangulate this information within their meetings with the course teams, student representatives from both courses and the university student support services. Hearing from students from the MA course of adjustments put in place to support them with an assessment and diagnosis for dyslexia and support put in place following a bereavement, were some of the examples given.

179. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for the MA course.

180. In their meeting with student representatives from the BSc course, the inspectors were informed of the positive experience a number of students who required reasonable adjustments had regarding the input, support and guidance from student support services and the completion of their student accessibility plan. However, some students felt that their needs for reasonable adjustments had not been met in a timely manner either at the point of applying for the course or once enrolled onto the programme. The inspection team was not satisfied that this standard was met for the BSc course.

181. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 5.4 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 5.5

182. The documentary evidence provided by the university prior to the inspection outlined that students are provided with information on the university website, Blackboard portal, within skills days, and teaching sessions, regarding all elements of the course and curriculum. As well as the transition to registered social worker, the assessed and supported year in employment, and continuous professional development requirements, with a Social Work England representative invited to talk to all level 6 students regarding these areas of progression.

183. The inspection team was able to triangulate this information within their meetings with the course teams and representatives from the student cohorts, who identified that this information was discussed throughout the course, recall days at level 6, and available to them to access online to refer to as required.

184. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 5.6

185. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the student attendance monitoring process and the university attendance policy. The inspection team

were informed that there are no optional modules, students are expected to attend all teaching sessions, including the 200 days placement and skills days. The inspection team learnt that attendance is monitored electronically through a centralised attendance monitoring team, if a student's attendance falls below 80%, then additional assessment is assigned.

186. During their meeting with the student representatives from the MA course, the inspection team heard experiences of knowing the attendance requirements for the course, how this is recorded and identifying the timely follow up and support they received if they had not recorded their attendance.

187. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for the MA course.

188. In their meeting with student representatives from the BSc course, the inspectors were informed from many of those present that they did not see the attendance requirements being adhered to from their peers. The student representatives spoke of their experiences of numbers of students who were not attending the required days of teaching and learning, reading through material online, not joining the classroom sessions, having peers signing them in but unaware that there was any recognition, monitoring, or consequence for this lack of attendance and potential engagement.

189. The inspection was not satisfied that this standard was met for the BSc course.

190. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 5.6 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 5.7

191. As identified within standard 4.10, in their meeting with student representatives from the MA course, the inspectors heard that the feedback students received was within the timescale, helped with their ongoing development and learning and was constructive.

192. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for the MA course.

193. In their meeting with student representatives from the BSc course, the inspectors were informed from many of those present that in their experience the feedback they had received was not provided in a timely manner, did not provide them with areas to build upon or areas of strength and development.

194. The inspection was not satisfied that this standard was met for the BSc course.

195. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 4.10 and 5.7. 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 5.8

196. The inspectors were able to review the university handbook of student regulations that contains information and guidance to students regarding academic appeals. Students from both courses confirmed they were aware of this procedure and how to access this through the university website and Blackboard portal. As a result of these discussions and review of documentary evidence the inspection team was satisfied that there is an effective process in place for students from both courses to make an academic appeal.

197. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

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

Standard 6.1

198. As the qualifying courses are BSc Social Work and MA Social Work, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

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

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	Standard 1.5	For both MA and BSc courses. The education provider will provide evidence, that all staff involved in selection and admissions have undertaken up to date EDI training and that there is a regular monitoring and recording process for this.	15 January 2025	Paragraph 37
2	Standard 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence that it has a thorough and robust process in place for the planning, implementation, and quality assurance of the new 20 days structured practice learning experience for students.	15 January 2025	Paragraph 48 Paragraph 56 Paragraph 63
3	Standard 2.6	For both MA and BSc courses. The education provider will provide evidence of having a mechanism in place for formalising the checking and recording of independent practice educators' details regarding their professional currency and professional development being maintained and upheld.	15 January 2025	Paragraph 74

4	Standard 3.9	For both MA and BSc courses. The education provider will provide evidence of how the course's students' equality and diversity data is being evaluated, applied, and/or actioned to monitor performance and progression.	15 January 2025	Paragraph 103
5	Standard 4.10 and 5.7	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence of arrangements for ensuring that throughout the course all students are consistently provided with timely, meaningful feedback and guidance to support their ongoing learning and development.	15 January 2025	Paragraph 147 Paragraph 191
6	Standard 5.4	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence that the student accessibility plans and reasonable adjustments students require are consistently applied and in place.	15 January 2025	Paragraph 177
7	Standard 5.6	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence of its development and implementation of a robust attendance monitoring system that clearly identifies the attendance requirements and takes appropriate action for students not attending or engaging with mandatory parts of the course.	15 January 2025	Paragraph 185

Recommendations

In addition to the conditions above, the inspectors identified the following recommendations for the education provider. These recommendations highlight areas that the education provider may wish to consider. The recommendations do not affect any decision relating to course approval.

	Standard	Detail	Link
1	Standard 3.5	BSc course only. The inspectors are recommending that the university consider a more robust process to reflect the feedback that students provide within the staff student programme committee, how this feedback is actioned and then communicated to students.	Paragraph 92
2	Standard 4.9	BSc course only. The inspectors are recommending that the university consider inputting another formal session in place for students to support them during the transition between levels/years of the course.	Paragraph 142
3.	Standard 5.1	BSc course only. The inspectors are recommending that there is a review and development of the awareness and promotion of the university support services for the students on the BSc course.	Paragraph 116
4.	Standard 5.2	BSc course only. The Inspectors recommend that there is a review and development undertaken to strengthen the awareness, consistency, and promotion of the personal tutor support on offer to students on the BSc course.	Paragraph 170

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.	☒ MA	☒ BSc	☐
2.3 Ensure that while on placements, students have appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload.	☒ MA	☒ BSc	☐
2.4 Ensure that on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training.	☒ MA	☒ BSc	☐
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.	☒	☐	☒ BSc

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
4.10 Ensure students are provided with feedback throughout the course to support their ongoing development.	☒ MA	☒ BSc	☐
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	☒	☐	☒ BSc
5.2 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their academic development including, for example, personal tutors.	☒	☐	☒ BSc
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.	☒ MA	☒ BSc	☐
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.	☒ MA	☒ BSc	☐
5.7 Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments.	☒ MA	☒ BSc	☐
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

199. Approved with conditions.

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

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

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

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Recommendation
1	Standard 1.5. Ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.	For both MA and BSc courses. The education provider will provide evidence, that all staff involved in selection and admissions have undertaken up to date EDI training and that there is a regular monitoring and recording process for this.	Met.
2	Standard 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4. 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	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence that it has a thorough and robust process in place for the planning, implementation, and quality assurance of the new 20 days structured practice learning experience for students.	Met.

	and a realistic workload. 2.4: Ensure that on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training		
3	Standard 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	For both MA and BSc courses. The education provider will provide evidence of having a mechanism in place for formalising the checking and recording of independent practice educators' details regarding their professional currency and professional development being maintained and upheld.	Met.
4	Standard 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	For both MA and BSc courses. The education provider will provide evidence of how the course's students' equality and diversity data is being evaluated, applied, and/or actioned to monitor performance and progression.	Met.
5	Standard 4.10 and 5.7 4.10: Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence of arrangements for ensuring that throughout the course all students are consistently provided with timely, meaningful feedback and guidance to support their ongoing learning and development.	Met.

	performance in assessments. 5.7: Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments		
6	Standard 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	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence that the student accessibility plans and reasonable adjustments students require are consistently applied and in place.	Met.
7	Standard 5.6. Provide information to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory	For BSc course only. The education provider will provide evidence of its development and implementation of a robust attendance monitoring system that clearly identifies the attendance requirements and takes appropriate action for students not attending or engaging with mandatory parts of the course.	Met.

Findings

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

documentary evidence that was reviewed by the inspectors. The inspectors asked for further information regarding the conditions set against standards 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 for the BSc and for both the MA and BSc against standards 2.6 and 3.9.

201. In relation to the condition set for standard 1.5 for both the MA and BSc courses, the education provider evidenced and confirmed that all staff involved in selection and admissions undertake EDI training and that there is a regular monitoring and recording process for this. The university Human Resources team provide this mandatory training through an online resource, which must be complete from the point of induction, with emails to prompt staff to complete and a refresher course ran for staff, including alerts to line managers to ensure this is complete. Evidence submitted by the course provider identified that the programme teams have produced a framework to incorporate the involvement of social work practitioners and Educators by Experience into this process. This has been approved by the Programme Management Committee and submitted to the Faculty Education Committee for final approval. Included within this framework it refers to arrangements for EDI training for academic staff, including social work practitioners and Educators by Experience. The inspection team were satisfied that the evidence met the condition, and the standard is now met.

202. In relation to the condition set for standards 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 for the BSc course, the education provider submitted documentary evidence in support of this condition. This included, but was not limited to, Placements Handbook (updated Oct 24), Quality Assurance of Practice Learning (Updated) 2024-25, BSc Social Work Year 01 Skills in Practice Opportunity (SiP) - (20 Days) document) 2024/25 and 2024/5 Social Work – Skills in Practice Opportunity Form. Following their review of this information, and supporting narrative guidance in the conditions mapping form, the inspectors were assured that it outlines the process, support arrangements for students on placement and the quality assurance framework for the 20 days structured learning experience for students. The inspection team were satisfied that the evidence met the condition, and the standard is now met.

203. In relation to the condition set for standard 2.6 for both the MA and BSc courses, the education provider submitted documentary evidence, including but not limited to QAPL (Updated) and anonymised examples of follow up emails to potential off-site practice educators. Narrative information within the conditions mapping form confirmed that independent practice educators will be required to attend yearly updates provided by the Practice Learning Lead and Practice Placement Facilitator. The course provider confirmed that the information they require now includes details of professional currency in relation to their role as an independent practice educator, information is stored within the university placement system. The inspection team were satisfied that the evidence met the condition, and the standard is now met.

204. In relation to the condition set for standard 3.9 for both the MA and BSc courses, the education provider submitted the university Access and Participation Plan 2024-25 and the

Continuous Programme Performance Review dashboard. Through the documentary evidence submission and narrative guidance within the mapping forms the course provider outlined how course's students' equality and diversity data is evaluated, applied, and/or actioned to monitor performance and progression, including both at a programme level and the wider university. The inspectors were assured that student data and progression, including equality diversity and inclusion, is reviewed and discussed as a standing agenda item for staff meetings and student programme meetings. The inspection team were satisfied that the evidence met the condition, and the standard is now met.

205. In relation to the condition set against standards 4.10 and 5.7 for the BSc course, the course provider submitted supporting documentary evidence, including Assessment Feedback and Action Plan Forms and the BSc Marking Criteria. The information outlined the university procedures for marking, including standardisation, internal and external moderation and presentation of marks to the Programme Assessment Board (PAB, exam board). The inspection team were assured of the university personal tutor support system and framework that provides feedback, strengths and developmental areas, within summative assignments and feedforward opportunities to students. The inspection team were satisfied that the evidence met the condition, and the standard is now met.

206. In relation to the condition set against standard 5.4 for the BSc course, the education provider submitted the Student Accessibility Action Plan (SAP), including flowchart, and guidance for the Personal Tutoring Programme for the course. Information within the mapping forms confirmed that all students who require a SAP will meet with the Specialist Student Support Team to plan for any reasonable adjustments. This information is shared with their personal tutor for a tutorial (information also shared with the programme lead and module leads) to discuss and clarify what support the student should receive. The process includes the role of the personal tutor to work with module leads to ensure the SAP is being implemented for teaching sessions, students are provided with this information during their inductions and can access as they require from the online programme sites. The inspection team were satisfied that the evidence met the condition, and the standard is now met.

207. In relation to the condition set against standard 5.6 for the BSc course, the education provider submitted supporting documentary evidence, including Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy, Engagement and Attendance on the Programme, Programme Handbook. The information reinforced that student attendance on taught teaching is monitored electronically through a centralised attendance monitoring team. The inspectors learnt that attendance on placement and skills days is monitored by a paper register of attendance. The attendance sheet is monitored by the students' personal tutor. Where students miss any of these 200-days, they are expected to make them up to complete the 200-days. The programme provides alternative equivalent learning opportunities, such as additional work based on missed learning and reflection, simulated

learning/exercises. If necessary, an action plan will be negotiated with the personal tutor to ensure the student meets the 200-days requirement. If days are still missing following action planning, then a student will be referred to the university fitness to practice procedure, with information provided to students within teaching sessions, course materials and reminders within online programme sites. The inspection team were satisfied that the evidence met the condition, there is clear expectations for attendance and non-engagement, and the standard is now met.

208. Following the review of the documentary evidence submitted, the inspection team are satisfied that the conditions set against the approval of the BSc Social Work and MA Social Work are met.

Regulator decision

Conditions met.