



Inspection Report

Course provider: University of Chichester

Course approval: PG Dip Social Work Level 7
Degree Apprenticeship

Inspection dates: 25 March – 28 March 2024

Report date:	16 October 2024
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	18 November 2024
Date conditions met and approved:	20 March 2025

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Summary of Inspection

15. Course details: the University of Chichester wish to run a postgraduate diploma in Social Work as a level 7 apprenticeship.

16. The inspection also considered the revalidation of the BA (Hons) Social Work and BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship to be taught out, and the updated version of the 3-year Bachelor of Arts in Social Work and 3-year Degree Apprenticeship in Social Work which is covered under a separate report.

Inspection ID	UCHIR2
Course provider	University of Chichester
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	PG Dip Social Work Level 7 Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of Study	Full-time
Maximum student cohort	20 students
Proposed first intake	2025/26
Date of inspection	25 March – 28 March 2024
Inspection team	Nikki Steel-Bryan, Education Quality Assurance Officer Michelle Loughrey, Lay Inspector Mary Macdonald, Registrant Inspector

Language

16. In this document we describe the University of Chichester as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the PG Dip Social Work Level 7 Degree Apprenticeship as ‘the course’, ‘the programme’ or ‘the apprenticeship’.

Inspection

17. A remote inspection took place from 25 March – 28 March 2024. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

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

19. It was decided during the inspection that the recommendation for the PG Dip Social Work would be considered, and delivered, after the inspection as the inspectors requested additional documentary evidence.

20. Following the inspection an additional meeting was held with the professional lead and the co-director of the institute of education and social sciences.

Conflict of interest

21. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

22. The inspection team met with 7 students, 6 were enrolled on the undergraduate degree programme, 5 of these were student representatives, and one was enrolled on the undergraduate apprenticeship and was a student representative. Discussions included the student experience of placements, the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment, feedback, support available through the university, the student voice and attendance monitoring.

Meetings with course staff

23. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course team, those involved in selection and admissions, the senior leadership team, staff involved in placement-based learning and student support services. Following the inspection, the inspectors held an additional meeting via MS Teams with the course management team to explore lines of enquiry specific to the course. Discussions included admissions, resourcing, student numbers and the curriculum.

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

24. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work, known within the university as experts by experience, who have been involved in the degree and apprenticeship courses. Discussions included their role in the admissions

processes, their contributions to curriculum development, course design and course delivery and any support they received to carry out their duties.

Meetings with external stakeholders

25. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including West Sussex County Council, Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice and Homestart Hampshire.

Findings

26. 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.

27. In addition to documentary evidence, the university also supplied a mapping document for the social work degree apprenticeship programmes. The mapping document included narrative against the education and training standards and highlighted specific documentary evidence to be considered against each standard. This document is referred to as 'the mapping document'.

Standard one: Admissions

Standard 1.1

28. The course provider submitted documentary evidence that included links to the university web pages for apprenticeships, the admissions case study used as the interview task, the questions asked at interview and the institutional suitability and fitness to practice at admissions policies.

29. The narrative included on the mapping documents detailed that applicants to all courses were interviewed face-to-face, were required to undertake and pass a written test and a digital skills test and take part in a group task, which considered a case study. Apprentices also underwent a selection process with their employer; however, the final decision on acceptance to the programme sat with the university.

30. The entry criteria included an undergraduate degree, or equivalent, at 2.2 or above and a minimum of level 2 in English and maths by the gateway to the end point assessment (EPA). The inspection team understood that candidates included people with a professional background, and that the first degree did not have to be in a field related to social work. The university retained discretion to consider an outcome lower than a 2.2 should an applicant demonstrate excellent potential for a career in social work in other areas of the application process.

31. During inspection, the university provided further information about the digital and written tasks undertaken as part of the interview. These tasks required applicants to demonstrate their knowledge of commonly used IT packages and produce a 500-word summary of an article of interest. Through discussion with the course team, the inspection understood that the written task was appropriately assessed for entry to

level 7 where applicants were expected to demonstrate a complex level of reflection and analysis.

32. Through discussion with staff involved in admissions, the inspection team heard that the written task was marked using the standard assignment marking criteria in use within the department. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

33. The inspection team understood that relevant experience for the PG Dip was considered to be employment in a social work or social care setting.

34. Through discussion with relevant stakeholders, the inspection team heard that applicants were expected to draw on their experience when responding to interview questions and during the written task. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

35. The university provided narrative within the mapping document that detailed that the interview panels were made up of registered social workers from partner agencies, experts by experience and academic staff. Interview questions were co-produced with the experts by experience network. The inspectors triangulated the approach with employers and experts by experience during the inspection and agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

36. The inspection team considered the professional suitability and fitness to practice policy and procedure which detailed that an enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) check was required to be carried out at the point of admission. The university also submitted a social work charter which clearly set out the expectations for behaviour and conduct for social work staff, students and apprentices, including the expectation that students should immediately notify the university of health, and other circumstances, that might impact their studies. Students and apprentices were required to sign a declaration form at interview, a consent form at registration and the social work charter during induction, which is subsequently signed each year at re-enrolment.

37. Through discussion with course staff, and via additional evidence submitted during the inspection, the inspection team understood that all applicants were required to have a new DBS check undertaken to enrol on the courses and that the university funded these checks. International students were required to have a criminal record check from their home country and a DBS was also completed in the UK. Students and apprentices were expected, but not required, to join the DBS update service.

38. Applicants were encouraged to make any health declarations early in the process to enable reasonable adjustments to be made at interview. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

39. The university submitted documentary evidence that included a narrated admissions equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) training presentation that was provided to all members of interview panels. They also supplied a link to a course website, and flyer, for the bridging programme: a 12-week course commissioned by employers to support staff into higher education (HE) prior to joining the social work or occupational therapy degree.

40. Through discussion with staff involved in admissions, the inspection team heard that applicants who disclosed additional needs were supported during the interview processes with reasonable adjustments. The disability team attended open days and welcome days, and applicants had access to that service if they required support or advice. Moreover, EDI data from the admissions cycle was available to the course team through the online data system, OLICview. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

41. The course provider provided a Social Work brochure in support of this standard and the mapping document referenced an admissions portal available to applicants and included information on registration. Welcome letters, reading lists, up-to-date research outputs and a list of staff research interests and publications were also provided.

42. Applicants to social work apprenticeship programmes within the university were offered briefings by members of the social work team. The inspection team reported that a course webpage was not available at the time of the inspection.

43. The students met by the inspection team were positive about the level of information provided to them to allow them to decide whether to take up a place on a course. They reported that the application process was smooth and that the interview felt personalised to them.

44. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met with the recommendation that the course team creates a webpage for the course. Full details of the recommendation can be found in [the recommendations section of this report](#).

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

45. The assessed practice 1 and 2 module handbook for students, on-site supervisors and practice educators (hereafter the practice placement handbook) was in place for all social work programmes within the university and detailed that students undertook 2 practice placements. One placement of 70 days and one placement of 100 days. The 100-day placement was documented to be undertaken with a contrasting service user group and the handbook specified that students were required to undertake one placement in a statutory setting. The inspection team triangulated practice in relation to the 170 placement days with relevant stakeholder groups and had no concerns over the availability of statutory placements.

46. In addition to the two assessed practice placements, students were also required to complete 30 skills days. As part of the submission of additional documentation for the PG Dip apprenticeship, the university provided an overview of the skills days which inspectors considered to be comprehensive and appropriate. It was also noted that the handbook clearly communicated that skills days were mandatory. The inspectors agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

47. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included the practice learning agreement (PLA) and the practice placement handbook. The university provided narrative on the mapping document which explained that all practice learning placements were supported by a dedicated academic tutor. PLA meetings were carried out at the start of placements and academic tutors kept in touch with students throughout their placements.

48. Throughout the inspection, the inspection team triangulated the ways placements supported the development of the professional standards, including the ways in which students understood they were meeting the professional standards. This included new placement provider audits, practice educator support and training, the practice placement portfolio and placement suitability concerns procedures. The inspectors heard practice educators talk confidently about resolving concerns and students reported that they were clear who provided feedback to them on whether they were meeting the professional standards. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

49. The PLA was submitted as evidence in support of this standard, which included an induction checklist, information on student well-being and set out supervision arrangements.

50. In addition, apprenticeship progress reviews were understood to be conducted every 12 weeks. These involved the apprentice, a university representative and the

employer. The meeting monitored progress against the apprenticeship knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) and it also ensured that the apprentice was being adequately supported whilst on placement.

51. The practice educators met by the inspection team reported being conscious of student workload on placement and provided examples of where they had intervened with workload allocation concerns. The students met by the inspection team did not raise any concerns over their workload, support, supervision or inductions whilst on placement and the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

52. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included an apprenticeship placement preferences form, practice placement handbook and the PLA.

53. The inspectors noted that progress reviews took place every 12 weeks and that apprentices undertook a self-assessment tool called the skills scan to track their progress against the KSBs. The university used a system called MAYTAS to record and track apprentice skills scans, which was demonstrated to the inspectors during inspection. It was understood that progress against the professional standards was discussed during the tripartite review meetings.

54. Through discussion with the practice educators, the inspection team heard that the 70-day placement report was used to develop the learning needs for the 100-day placement, and the 100-day placement report was used to identify development needs for the assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE). The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

55. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included the practice placement handbook.

56. Students on the apprenticeship programme did not undertake a formal assessment for readiness for direct practice. However, during the inspection the inspection team heard that readiness was built into the admissions processes through pre-screening and was embedded into the 12-weekly progress review meetings. Through discussion with the course team, the inspection team understood that theoretical understanding was assessed during summative assessment. In addition, apprentices undertook regular skills scans to consider their practice against the KSBs and the professional capabilities framework (PCF) and the 12-weekly review provided multidimensional feedback from a variety of sources to students on their performance. The practice educators met by the inspection teams considered apprentices to be prepared for

practice. The inspection team considered that the mix of recorded activity constituted assessed readiness for direct practice and concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

57. The university submitted a practice educator information form in support of this standard. Through discussion with the staff involved in practice education, the inspection team understood that all practice educators were asked to complete the information form on an annual basis. The form collected information about qualifications and their Social Work England registration number. The university actively cross-checked the registration status of practice educators with the Social Work England register. New practice educators were required to have a new DBS check. Those who were re-engaged were required to be on the DBS update service which was checked by a university representative at reappointment. Independent practice educators were subject to the same requirements, and registration with the update service was funded by the university for this group. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

58. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included the course handbook, and the practice learning form in use for all social work programmes within the university.

59. The practice learning form included a section on university and agency whistleblowing policies and procedures and the inspectors acknowledged that organisational wrongdoing and whistleblowing was embedded in the curriculum across the course. However, the inspectors reported that the course handbook was incomplete and did not appear to include information on the institutional policy on whistleblowing for students.

60. The students met during the inspection were clear about whistleblowing, and reported feeling confident should they need to enact the policy.

61. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 2.7 in relation to the approval of the 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 courses would not be required. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions section of this report](#).

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

62. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included a management and governance structure and an experts by experience handbook. In addition, for the apprenticeship, the university submitted the institutional quality handbook (section F), that provided detail on quality assurance and governance for apprenticeship programmes.

63. The inspection team were clear about the lines of accountability within the school. The programme coordinators met regularly and recorded discussions in the form of notes that fed into the social work operational management group (SWOMG). The SWOMG met fortnightly to discuss any operational, or quality assurance issues. The group included programme directors, the experts by experience coordinator and the administrative manager, and was chaired by the lead social worker. The university also held partnership meetings with employers, programme boards, an innovations committee and a dedicated governor for apprenticeships.

64. The apprenticeship was subject to the standard quality assurance processes within the university for degree apprenticeship programmes. The course would be considered at the degree apprenticeship forum (DAF) that maintained oversight of the apprenticeship provision and was chaired by the deputy vice chancellor (DVC). Other aspects of compliance were monitored by an apprenticeship compliance officer within the institution's apprenticeship team.

65. Through discussion with the senior leadership team (SLT), the inspection team heard that social work was supported within the institution at a high level and was considered in university future planning. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

66. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included the PLA and the practice placement handbook, which included the processes to follow in case of placement breakdown.

67. During the inspection, the university also supplied apprenticeship employer agreements which outlined the roles and responsibilities of the university and the employer and included an apprenticeship training plan.

68. From the narrative provided within the mapping document, the inspection team understood that the PLA was standard to all courses which covered equality principles, attendance, induction, supervision and managing difficulties. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

69. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the PLA which was understood to be standard across all social work courses. The PLA included a clear induction checklist for social work students and referenced policies such as lone working and service user / apprentice safety issues. In addition, the PLA incorporated a risk assessment and management tool which required the placement provider to assess student well-being across a number of domains and covered experiencing challenging behaviour by a service user, lone working and maintaining health and well-being on placement. Placement providers had to clearly declare if students would have access to a workplace wellbeing scheme.

70. Through discussion with university support services the inspection team heard that wellbeing support, including counselling, continued to be available to students when on placement, and agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

71. The inspection team reviewed the documentary evidence submitted by the course provider and noted that the university was a member of a Teaching Partnership. During the inspection, the university supplied minutes from a partnership meeting that was chaired by the strategic head of social work and social policy. The partnership meeting included attendees from the university, West Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council and Southampton City Council and reported discussions on admissions, practice education and general updates. Through discussion with the course team, the inspection team heard that employers were members of the practice assessment panel (PAP) and sat on programme boards. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

72. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included quality assurance in practice learning (QAPL) documentation, an expert by experience handbook and section 7 of the University's quality handbook relating to apprenticeships.

73. The inspection team noted that employers were involved in the QAPL, had been invited to comment on curriculum changes via a survey and were involved in the PAP. Experts by experience were members of the PAP, the readiness for direct practice panels, selection panels for new staff and were members of the programme boards. The experts by experience coordinator also sat on SWOMG. All students were invited to cohort meetings, to complete module evaluation and had access to staff in an informal way. Student representatives were members of the programme board and the staff student liaison committee. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

74. As an apprenticeship programme, the inspection team were satisfied that the number of students admitted to the course took into consideration the local and regional placement capacity. Through discussions with course staff, the inspection team heard that employer partners nominated the applicants for the apprenticeship that they were able to provide placements for and that a minimum number of 10, and a maximum of 20 students, were required for the course to be viable. Where applicant numbers fell below the minimum threshold for viability the apprentices would be team taught alongside the existing PG Dip cohort. The inspectors understood that there had been a high level of employability at the end of the university's other social work programmes and that the university were also reported to be contributing to the local placement capacity through PEPs training and Masters' workshops. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

75. The evidence provided to support this standard included the CV for the lead social worker which detailed relevant qualifications, experience and a registration number. This was cross checked with the Social Work England register. The inspection team noted that the lead social worker was the same for all courses and agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

76. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included CVs for the social work staff and noted a broad range of experience, research interests and continued contact with practice. Through discussion with the professional lead and the co-director of the institute of education and social sciences, the inspection team heard that the university had no plans to increase the number of staff to accommodate this new course; however, they had no concerns over the capacity of staff, and clearly articulated the institutional process to request additional resource should it be required in the future. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

77. The inspection team reviewed the staff handbook, which set out requirements for tutorial support and cohort meetings, including the frequency and recording of those sessions. The inspection team also understood that apprentices undertook 12-weekly progress review meetings. It was noted that the social work team had a triangulated system to support students which included the completion of a spreadsheet to track student progress. The narrative included on the mapping documents explained that the university hosted an online information system where staff could access data on equality, student profiles and additional needs. Through discussion with the course

team, the inspection team heard that the team record and consider bespoke data points, for example, student extensions, and students who are taking a break from learning. The data was used to support students in individualised ways.

78. During inspection the university provided further narrative evidence and noted that the institutional annual monitoring system included scrutiny of departmental EDI data, access provision and outcomes data by a sub-committee of the university's education committee. As part of this process the sub-committee generated targeted questions that required a written departmental response at a senior level. The inspection team further acknowledged that the university's apprenticeship team, and the degree apprenticeship forum, monitored data relating to the progress, performance and outcomes of apprentices. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

79. The inspection team reviewed the performance review and development (PRPD) guidance, a PRPD form, PRPD self-assessment form and an observation of teaching form, noting that formal performance reviews took place annually. The inspection team understood that staff had protected time within their workload to undertake practice or scholarly activity, and through discussion with the course team, the inspection team heard about a diverse range of research interests that were directly related to practice. Examples were shared of academic staff being supported to spend time back in practice, staff holding additional external professional roles, and staff new to academia being supported through the postgraduate certificate in academic practice (PG Cap). The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

80. Documentary evidence submitted to support this standard included the course handbook and mapping documents to the Social Work England Professional Standards. Clear mapping was provided within the handbook to the professional capabilities framework (PCF), the knowledge and skills statements (the KSS), the KSBs required by the institute for apprenticeships and technical education (IfATE) and the Social Work England Professional Standards. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

81. The documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection in support of this standard for all courses included an employer survey relating to curriculum changes, an expert by experience handbook, an agenda from an experts by experience networking and

innovation day which included an item on mapping the curriculum and co-production of learning, and the notes from this agenda item.

82. Experts by experience reported positively on their contributions to the development and design of the curriculum citing opportunities to review curriculum documentation. Additionally, the newly validated courses contained modules that had been co-produced in their entirety with experts by experience. Employers and practitioners were less clear about how they contributed to the development of the curriculum, highlighting the survey that was provided as the main way they had been asked to engage. The inspection team had only one set of partnership minutes available to them; however, following consideration of the evidence, they acknowledged the role of the teaching partnership as a space to discuss curriculum development with employers and practitioners.

83. The inspection team considered all the evidence and concluded that the standard was met with a recommendation that the course provider reviews the ways in which employers and practitioners are consulted on the curriculum, and, how their involvement can be made more explicit to them. Further details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations section of this report](#).

Standard 4.3

84. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the university's social work charter, the programme handbook, the expert by experience handbook and notes from 3 student focus groups.

85. The inspection team noted that the course included a 20-credit module that embedded EDI into the curriculum entitled *Value Dilemmas and Conflicts in Social Work Practice*. The module asked apprentices to consider real world examples of conflicts and explore them with an emphasis on working through them.

86. Throughout the inspection, the inspectors recognised a strong commitment to EDI, including the development of a diverse assessment strategy that included EDI thinking in the assessment criteria. The skills day timetable covered a wide variety of sessions related to anti-oppressive practice. The inspectors further noted that the virtual learning environment (VLE) pages adhered to the web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) at level AA. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

87. Through review of the documentary evidence the inspection team considered the currency of the programme modules, and the research articles submitted in support of this standard. The inspection team noted that all staff were employed on teaching and research contracts and, that the university institute the social work department was

housed within, had two dedicated research centres. Throughout the inspection, the inspection team heard examples of research informed practice both pedagogically and within the social work profession. The inspection team did not hear any evidence that suggested that the courses were not continually updated, or any concerns from stakeholders about the currency of the programmes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

88. The inspection team reviewed the programme handbook and the skills day programme.

89. Through discussion with the professional lead and the co-director of the institute of education and social sciences, the inspection team heard that theory and practice was integrated into the curriculum through apprenticeship progress reviews which required students to record how they were meeting the apprenticeship KSBs in practice. In addition, the university were able to provide examples of research within the institute that had links to practice, including the impact of dogs in social work, and a series of films made with practitioners.

90. Practice educators spoke confidently about supporting students to make links between theory and practice, highlighting the tools, games and cards they used to facilitate these discussions in supervision. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

91. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the skills day programme, an agenda from an experts by experience day that students on current programmes had been invited to attend and showcased the work of staff from the health department. Through discussion with the students met by the inspection team, the inspectors heard that a wide variety of guest speakers were built into the curriculum. All students attended a court skills day delivered in partnership with the law department taught alongside law students, undertook skills days with professionals from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) and adult mental health services and undertook a contrasting placement. In addition, the inspection team noted that the lead social worker was also a qualified, registered, psychodynamic therapist. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

92. The inspection team reviewed the module descriptors provided in the handbook and noted that a standard credits accumulation and transfer system (CATS) was in

place allocating 1 credit to 10 hours of notional learning time. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

93. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed the programme handbook which included the teaching learning and assessment strategy identified for each module within the module specification document (MSD). The inspection team noted a range of formative and summative assessments which were linked to practice and had a focus on case studies. Through a demonstration of the VLE, the inspectors were able to satisfy themselves that appropriate detail was provided to students regarding module assessment. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

94. The programme handbook was considered in evidence of this standard. The inspection team reported that the handbook appeared to be incomplete and did not include an assessment schedule, and as a result were unable to consider whether assessments were appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.

95. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that two conditions are set against standard 4.9 in relation to the approval of the 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 conditions are 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 courses would not be required. Full details of the conditions and the monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions section of this report](#).

Standard 4.10

96. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the staff handbook for qualifying programmes, the course handbook, information on the tutorial process, templates for a tutorial, and assessment feedback, the readiness for direct practice presentation slide deck and part 7 and 8 of the university's academic regulations which covered assessment regulations. The 12-weekly progress review template was also provided.

97. Through discussions with stakeholders across the inspection, the inspection team identified that feedback was provided to students on both formative and summative assessment and from practice educators and service users during placement. Placement portfolios were understood to be moderated by academic staff and experts by experience, providing another avenue for feedback. The academic advisor system

provided an additional avenue for feedback, and apprentices also received feedback from the 12-weekly progress review meetings. The inspectors further acknowledged that there was a skills day on giving and receiving feedback in order to support students to make the best use of any feedback provided.

98. Through discussion with the students, the inspection team heard that feedback was generally useful.

99. The feedback forms submitted were structured and included a templated response with a designated number of bullet points, feed forward and advice for the volume of discursive feedback provided on each assignment. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

100. The inspection team reviewed the CV of the external examiner, section 8 of the university's academic standards covering assessment and the programme handbooks which included information on boards of examiners. The inspection team also considered the staff CVs that had been submitted as evidence for standard 3.8.

101. The inspection team cross referenced the Social Work England register for the external examiner and confirmed that they were appropriately qualified and on the register. Staff were considered to have appropriate expertise to undertake assessment. It was noted that experts by experience were involved in the assessment of readiness for direct practice and the end-point assessment. Through discussions with relevant stakeholders, the inspection team heard that experts by experience were provided with training from the lead social worker to enable them to undertake assessment activities which was considered by the experts by experience network as rigorous. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

102. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the placement handbook, the staff handbook, information about MAYTAS and information relating to the EPA.

103. The inspection team noted that a diverse range of people were involved in assessment decisions (c.f. [para 97](#)) and acknowledged that the PAP included academics, practitioners and experts by experience, the midway and final review reports included practice supervisors, practice educators and service users and external examiners were involved in moderation. In addition, the DAMG monitored compliance, and progression was considered as part of the 12-weekly review meetings. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

104. The inspection team reviewed interview questions and the admissions case study, the skills day programme and pages from the university library VLE submitted as evidence for this standard. The inspection team reported that the department was research based and recognised the identified links between theory and practice already reported (c.f. [para 89](#)). Through discussion with the course team the inspection team heard examples of how evidence informed practice was embedded into the course from the start, including searching for evidence to support a theory, and reading designated articles and presenting them.

105. Through discussion with the professional lead and the co-director of the institute of education and social sciences the inspection team heard that apprentices were required to complete the skills scan, undertake interim reviews and log on the job activities, all of which enabled them to think about sharing their professional experience ethically and how it linked to the evidence base. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

106. The inspection team found that, throughout the inspection, student support was articulated clearly within the documentary evidence submitted prior to inspection and through discussions with stakeholders.

107. Central services reported that counselling, careers advice and support and occupational health services were available flexibly, on and off campus. Through discussions with central wellbeing staff the inspection team heard that professional models of practice were in place and that some services had clinical oversight from an external professional. Students spoke positively about the support they were offered. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

108. The inspection team met with representatives from academic support services and heard that students had access to library services, academic development and academic skills services to support academic writing. Within the department, students were allocated academic advisors and undertook 12-weekly reviews. More widely, there was a team available to support international students. During the inspection a demonstration of the library web pages was provided and the inspection team noted that introduction to resources, academic databases and reading lists were easy to access. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

109. Prior to inspection, the inspection team reviewed the Chichester social work charter, signed annually by students, which declared that students were expected to immediately notify the university of any changes to health or other circumstances that may impact their studies and required familiarity with the fitness to practice policies. Also supplied was Section 8 of the university's academic regulations relating to fitness for professional practice, the university's professional suitability and fitness to practice policy and the placement handbook which included information relating to fitness to practice. Information relating to the use of the MAYTAS system for record keeping was also supplied.

110. Through discussion with the course team the inspection team heard that students were required to sign the social work charter each year and were expected, but not required, to register with the DBS update system. It was noted that return to study interviews were completed for those who had taken a break in their studies and students spoke positively about, and provided examples, of the support provided when breaks had been required. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

111. The inspection team understood that learning support plans were known as a student additional requirements agreement (SARA) at the University of Chichester. They reviewed the social work departmental guidance for using a SARA which detailed the process, expectations and funding of recommendations made in the agreement; a SARA template and the template for recommendations on reasonable adjustments for work experience (RAWE) agreement form.

112. Throughout the inspection, the inspection team heard from a variety of stakeholders that arrangements for study and placement were considered via the SARA and RAWE processes which were widely understood. The processes included staff from the disability team and the course team, and included the student and employer, where appropriate. Through discussion with the employer partners the inspection team heard that options for funding were explored to ensure that individual students were not disadvantaged. The inspection team also heard that health support plans (HSP) were put in place for students who may require a first responder.

113. Although not protected by the Equality Act (2010), the university also offered support to students with English as an additional language providing extra time in exams, and allowing access to a first language to English dictionary as standard in open book exams. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

114. Evidence submitted in support of this standard included the social work induction handbook which was understood to be in use on the university's undergraduate social work programmes, practice placement handbook and the programme handbook.

115. The students met by the inspection team reported that they felt that they had a good understanding of the role of the regulator, the need to register with Social Work England and that they were clear about what title they were able to use when on placement. Students noted having information about the ASYE that they considered to be appropriate for their level of study.

116. Inspectors reported that the handbook submitted for the course appeared to be incomplete and that the practice placement handbook included a reference to the HCPC standard of proficiency (SoP), which was considered to be out of date.

117. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition and two recommendations are set against 5.5 in relation to the approval of the 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 courses would not be required. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions section of this report](#). Full details of the recommendations can be found in the [recommendations section of this report](#).

Standard 5.6

118. Prior to the inspection, the inspection team reviewed the induction handbook which included a clear statement that all timetabled sessions were compulsory and that this included lectures, tutorials, seminars, practical classes, school, work experience or other activities prescribed by the student handbook. However, it was not clear to the inspectors if this handbook was provided to PG Dip students. The practice placement handbook stated that skills days were a mandatory requirement of the professional qualification. From the narrative provided on the mapping documents, the inspection team understood that the university operated a swipe card system to monitor attendance and paper registers were also taken as a contingency.

119. The inspection team noted that, as the course handbook submitted for the course seemed incomplete (c.f. [para 58](#)) they were unable to assess the information provided to students about attendance on the course.

120. The students met by the inspection team reported that they were clear about the expectations around attendance, which was highlighted to them in induction, and reiterated across the programme.

121. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 5.6 in relation to the approval of the 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 courses would be able to meet the relevant standard, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions section of this report](#).

Standard 5.7

122. Following a review of documentary evidence provided, and through discussions with key stakeholders throughout the inspection, the inspection team were assured that students had access to satisfactory points of feedback. Feedback was provided formatively, as well as on assessments. Feedback was also provided by practice educators, on students' placement portfolios and through their academic advisor tutorials and group meetings. Students reported that feedback was useful (c.f. standards [3.9](#), [4.8](#) and [4.10](#) for more information on student feedback). The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

123. Documentary evidence reviewed prior to inspection included the institutional academic regulations on appeals and the course handbook. The inspection team noted that the policy was available. The inspection team noted that as the handbook submitted for the course seemed incomplete (c.f. [para 58](#)), they were unable to assess the information provided to students about academic appeals.

124. Following a review of the evidence, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against 5.8 in relation to the approval of the 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 courses would be able to meet the relevant standard, and we are confident that once this standard is met, a further inspection of the course would not be required. Full details of the condition, its monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions section of this report](#).

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

Standard 6.1

125. The inspection team reviewed the course handbook and agreed that the award of PG Dip Social Work Degree Apprenticeship met the standard, noting that non-qualifying exit routes were clearly distinguished from the registered award.

Proposed outcome

The inspection team recommend that the PG Dip Social Work, Level 7 Degree Apprenticeship be approved with conditions. These will be monitored for completion.

Conditions

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

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	2.7 4.9 5.5 5.6 5.8	The course provider will supply the completed course handbook.	22 February 2025	Paras 59 94 116 119 123
2	4.9	The course provider will provide documentary evidence that assessments are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.	22 February 2025	Para 94

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
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1.	1.6	The inspectors are recommending that the course provider creates a website for this course so that applicants have the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a course.	Para 42
2.	4.2	The inspectors are recommending that the course provider review the ways in which employers and practitioners are consulted on the curriculum and how their involvement can be made more explicit to them.	Para 82
3.	5.5	The inspectors are recommending that the Assessed Practice 1 and 2 Module Handbook for Students, On-Site Supervisors & Practice Educators is reviewed and any references to the SoPs are updated.	Para 116
4.	5.5	The inspectors are recommending that the Social Worker Degree Apprenticeship Induction Handbook be replicated for this course.	Para 114

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

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

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

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
take up an offer of a place on a course. This will include information about the professional standards, research interests and placement opportunities.			
Learning environment			
2.1 Ensure that students spend at least 200 days (including up to 30 skills days) gaining different experiences and learning in practice settings. Each student will have: 1. placements in at least two practice settings providing contrasting experiences; and 2. a minimum of one placement taking place within a statutory setting, providing experience of sufficient numbers of statutory social work tasks involving high risk decision making and legal interventions.	☒	☐	☐
2.2 Provide practice learning opportunities that enable students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.	☒	☐	☐
2.3 Ensure that while on placements, students have appropriate induction, supervision, support, access to resources and a realistic workload.	☒	☐	☐
2.4 Ensure that on placements, students' responsibilities are appropriate for their stage of education and training.	☒	☐	☐
2.5 Ensure that students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to make sure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.	☒	☐	☐
2.6 Ensure that practice educators are on the register and that they have the relevant and	☒	☐	☐

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

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

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

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

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

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

Regulator decision

Approved with conditions

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

1. 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](#).
2. Inspectors will undertake the conditions review and make recommendations to Social Work England's decision maker.
3. This section of the report will be completed when the conditions review is completed.

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	2.7 4.9 5.5 5.6 5.8	The course provider will supply the completed course handbook.	Met
2	4.9	The course provider will provide documentary evidence that assessments are appropriately sequenced to match students' progression through the course.	Met

Findings

4. The conditions review was undertaken as a result of the conditions set during the course approval as outlined in the original inspection report above.
5. The course provider submitted a bundle of evidence against the conditions and completed a mapping form which provided further narrative evidence for each condition (hereafter referred to as 'the mapping document').
6. In response to condition 1 the course provider submitted the course handbook. The inspection team noted that references to HCPC had been removed and that the handbook included information and / or links to the following:
 - Links to the University Complaints policy and the University Whistleblowing policy, as well as information regarding the student union complaints process.

- Expectations for attendance on the programme, including attendance at skills days and placements.
 - Links to the University academic appeals process, and the associated regulations.
 - An appendix which included clear mapping to the apprenticeship knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs), the professional capabilities framework (PCF), the knowledge and skills statements (KSS) and Social Work England's Professional Standards and Education and Training Standards.
7. The inspection team noted that the mapping document reported that it was not University practice to include an assessment schedule within the course handbook. They further acknowledged that an assessment schedule had been submitted in response to condition 2, and that the assessment schedule was distributed to students via the virtual learning environment (VLE). The inspection team agreed that this condition had been met.
 8. The university supplied an assessment schedule in response to condition 2. The mapping document reported that the assessment schedule was devised annually and was provided to students in a printed format and was published for students on the VLE.
 9. The inspection team noted that the assessments appeared to be appropriately sequenced. The inspection team agreed that this condition was met.
 10. Following the review of the documentary evidence submitted, the inspection team are satisfied that the conditions set against the approval of the PG Dip Social Work Level 7 Degree Apprenticeship are met.

Regulator decision

Conditions met.