

Inspection Report

Course provider: Nottingham Trent University

Course approval: BA (Hons) Social Work and
MA Social Work with PgDip Exit Route

Inspection dates: 2 – 5 August 2022

Report date:	17.11.2022
Inspector recommendation:	Approved with conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved with conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	14.02.2023
<i>(Delete if not required)</i> Date conditions met and approved:	01.09.2023

Contents

Introduction	3
What we do.....	3
Summary of Inspection	5
Language	5
Inspection.....	6
Meetings with students	6
Meetings with course staff.....	6
Meeting with people with lived experience of social work	6
Meetings with external stakeholders.....	6
Findings	7
Standard one: Admissions.....	7
Standard two: Learning environment.....	9
Standard three: Course governance, management and quality.....	13
Standard four: Curriculum assessment.....	18
Standard five: Supporting students	23
Standard six: Level of qualification to apply for entry onto the register.....	26
Proposed outcome.....	27
Conditions	27
Recommendations	29
Annex 1: Education and training standards summary.....	31
Regulator decision	37
Annex 2: Meeting of conditions.....	38
Findings	39

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. Nottingham Trent University BA (Hons) Social Work and MA Social Work 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. The inspection team also considered proposed changes to both courses as part of the inspection. There was also a second inspection team onsite at the same time looking at the reapproval of the BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship course.

Inspection ID	NTUR1
Course provider	Nottingham Trent University
Validating body (if different)	N/A
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Work MA Social Work with PgDip Exit Route
Mode of study	Undergraduate and Postgraduate
Maximum student cohort	BA – 45 MA - 25
Date of inspection	2 – 5 August 2022
Inspection team	Naomi Barrett - Education Quality Assurance Officer Jane Jones - Lay Inspector Anne MacKay - Registrant Inspector
Inspector recommendation	Approved with conditions
Approval outcome	Approved with conditions

Language

16. In this document we describe Nottingham Trent University as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the Social Work Degree Apprenticeship as ‘the course’.

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place between 2– 5 August 2022 in the Newton Building, where Nottingham Trent University is based. An additional inspection team was also onsite carrying out an inspection of the BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship course. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers, and people with lived experience of social work.

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

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with 25 students from both the BA and MA courses with representatives from all years of study, one of which was a student representative. Discussions included selection and admissions processes, experience of placement, provision of practice educators, experience of teaching, learning and assessment, ability to access student support services and mechanisms in place for them to offer feedback about the course.

Meetings with course staff

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

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with 7 people with lived experience of social work from Services for Empowerment and Advocacy (SEA), who work across all social work courses within the university. Discussions included involvement in admissions, training provided to fulfil their role, teaching on the course and how their feedback is incorporated into course design and review.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including employer partners from the local authority, a charitable organisation within the region and practice educators.

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 university provided the inspection team with documentary evidence relating to their admissions processes. Applicants to the course take part in a three-stage process comprising of a written test, a group task and a formal interview which tests their potential to develop the necessary skills and knowledge. ICT capabilities are tested using online processes and completion of a self-declaration relating to levels of ICT proficiency.

26. When meeting with the students from both courses the inspection team heard of their positive experiences throughout the application and interview processes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 1.2

27. As part of their application to the course, candidates are required to submit a personal statement which is via UCAS for the BA course and through the university applications form for the MA. These are passed to the social work recruitment lead or other social work qualified member of the academic staff for review to decide whether to progress to formal interview. During formal interview, specific questions explore previous professional and personal experience of social work. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 1.3

28. The university shared documentation used by interview panels to assess candidates as well as an email inviting partners to attend interviews but were not able to see any evidence of any uptake of the invitations prior to inspection. During the inspection the inspection team were shown a spreadsheet that indicated that some partners had attended and participated in the interview process. However, the inspection team did not meet with anyone who could confirm their attendance when they met with placement partners and the students confirmed that they had only met with academic staff as well as representatives from SEA during their interviews.

29. Documentary evidence highlighted the involvement of people with lived experience in the review of interview questions. Representatives from SEA confirmed that they play a

significant role within the selection of students to the course and feel valued as equal partners in the process.

30. As the university was unable to demonstrate the involvement of partners in the admissions process the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 1.3 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 1.4

31. The suitability of candidates is explored during the application and admissions stage through interview questioning and self-declaration forms in relation to previous experience of social work, health and criminal convictions. All candidates must also undergo a DBS check to confirm their suitability to practice. Representatives from the university admissions team confirmed that they screen these to identify any potential health issues which require referral to occupational health.

32. The inspection team were keen to understand more about university suitability panel which is used to screen disclosures from candidates in relation to convictions. The university explained that information is sent by the university admissions officer to partners from the local authority and teaching partnership (who form a virtual panel) for review, however there was no evidence of a defined process which outlined expectations from those involved nor potential timescales for candidates to receive an outcome. Additionally, there was not a clear point where the suitability panel jointly discussed issues arising from any disclosures.

33. The inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 1.4 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 1.5

34. A copy of the university Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy, which informs admissions processes, was provided as part of the inspection. The inspection team were also able to see evidence of the EDI committee terms of reference which includes ongoing

review of school level policy and processes, including those in relation to selection and admissions. Through inspection, the team were able to hear examples of how the policy had been implemented in practice through ensuring detailed advice and reasonable adjustments for prospective candidates.

35. The inspection team queried the level of training provided for stakeholders involved in interview processes. The university explained that all internal staff receive training in relation to EDI and unconscious bias during their induction period and each year thereafter. A copy of SEA's equality and diversity policy was also reviewed which outlined their commitment to providing training to all staff and volunteers within the organisation. Whilst there was some assurance that EDI training takes place there was no evidence to show how this is monitored or checked by the university.

36. The inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 1.5 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 1.6

37. The university's webpage for the courses highlighted entry requirements and the desire that applicants have some previous experience. Additional information such as the necessity of DBS and health checks were also on the website. The inspection team were told of additional methods that applicants could obtain information from, such as requesting a prospectus, open days, presentations, leaflets and direct enquiry.

38. During meetings with students, they confirmed that they felt well informed about the course and the expectations of them. Students had information about regulation and registration provided through presentations and selection processes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

39. Students undertake a placement of 80 days in their second year on the courses, followed by 90 days in year 3. In addition to placement days, students take part in 30 skills days which

are mapped to modules throughout both of the courses and are further supplemented by skills-based learning in employment. All students are required to keep a record of attendance at skills days which is signed by a member of academic staff to ensure all fulfil 200 days of practice-based learning. However, during meetings with students, the inspection team heard that there was confusion about what counted as a skills day as it wasn't made clear to the students how this was different to normal teaching. The inspection team also heard that for some students recently graduated on the MA course that they had completed the course with only ten skills days completed. When the inspection team raised this with the course team, they acknowledged that the process needed to be more robust and that they had plans to use assessment boards to ensure that students all have the required number of skills days before being allowed to complete the course.

40. When looking at contrasting experiences, the university explained that the Placement Learning Assessment Form (PLAF) completed by students ensures that appropriate contrast is identified for second placements. Further to this, placement learning agreement and review meetings offer opportunities to review placement tasks and expectations.

41. As students are unclear about their skills days and the university's own recognition of a more robust process being needed, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 2.1 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 2.2

42. The education provider outlined how students are introduced to the professional standards during their induction to the course and are then formally assessed against these during readiness for practice interviews at the end of their first year. Progress towards the professional standards and PCF is reviewed during supervision with the practice educator, and more formally as part of the Quality Assurance Monitoring Process (QAMP) and mid and end point review.

43. Currently, the Professional Standards have been mapped to the PCF but going forward the placement documentation will separate these out again to ensure that the Professional Standards are more explicit and have a greater focus when looking at placement opportunities. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 2.3

44. The inspection team were able to see an outline of the stages of the practice learning process, including the initial learning agreement meeting and induction period, through the placement handbook. The responsibility of ensuring effective induction was highlighted as a responsibility of the practice educator in liaison with the on-site supervisor where appropriate. The university is assured that induction has been successful through student write ups of the organisational context within their teams, which are submitted within four weeks of placement commencing. From September 2022, this write up is to be incorporated into the learning agreement form and reviewed through learning agreement meetings.

45. When discussing placement induction with the students, no concerns were raised over placement induction and supervision therefore the inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 2.4

46. The university outlined that all students are working to the level of the PCF that is relevant to their stage of learning whilst on placements. Typically, by the end of first placement, students are expected to demonstrate effective use of knowledge and skills in relation to social work theory and a commitment to the core values of social work. By the end of their second placement, students should have had experience of dealing with situations of higher complexity with reduced supervision and support.

47. Student roles and responsibilities are guided by the learning agreement meeting at the start of placement. These are continuously reviewed through supervision opportunities and mid-point review meetings which are attended by the practice educator, on site supervisor and practice tutors to ensure a holistic approach to student support. The university also outlined that their involvement in student review on placement means that they can step in if workloads or responsibilities are beyond expectations for their stage of learning. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 2.5

48. All students on the course are expected to take part in the module 'Preparing for Social Work Practice' prior to their first placement. For the BA this module spans the first year, for the MA it is the first term. Within the module, students engage with social work practitioners as well as people with lived experience of social work via the delivery of sessions. The assessment is made up of three components including written competency and understanding as well as verbal communication skills. Previously, if a student failed either of the first two components but passed the readiness for practice interview which made up the third element then they were able to progress to their first placement. In reviewing the module, the course team have made the decision that all three components must be passed to ensure that there is a more robust process to ensure students are deemed ready for practice.

49. When meeting with placement partners, the inspection team heard that for the most part, students were very well prepared for practice but there were concerns raised by partners in relation to students' professionalism and a lack of understanding how this applies in practice. There was another issue raised by some placement partners around students not being fully aware of relevant legislation or how this legislation might apply to placement.

50. When discussing these points with the course team they acknowledged the issues and confirmed that changes made to the MA course meant that the legislation was more interwoven and was given a greater emphasis to enable students to apply legislation when on practice. The changes include moving law modules on the MA from the second year to the first to ensure that students have an increased awareness and knowledge of legislation when embarking on placement. As a result, the MA course does cover the relevant legislation prior to placements and the university acknowledged that the issue in question had been due to one specific student's lack of learning. Regarding the professionalism, the university acknowledged that they were aware of this but assured the inspection team that this is covered this in various modules and as ongoing theme as a professional course. When discussing some of the specific incidents the inspection team agreed that this looked to be more of an issue regarding students' understanding of how to conduct themselves within a professional environment. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses but is making a recommendation in relation to standard 2.5. We recommend that the university continue to look at ways of reinforcing student's understanding and application of both legislation and professionalism and continue to gather real time feedback on this from their partners. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 2.6

51. The university outlined their role in supplying practice educator training within the D2N2 Teaching Partnership, meaning that most practice educators supporting students have received training through the university. The university ensures that all social workers who apply to the role of practice educator have completed their PEPS training or are working towards completion. Further to this they ensure that all applicants are at least 2 years post-qualification before attempting to take on the role.

52. All practice educators that are used by the university can access ongoing refresher training through the D2N2 partnership as well as mentoring opportunities and peer development sessions. The partnership maintains a register of current practice educators and dates of training to ensure that they are within two years of training to maintain the currency of knowledge and understanding of the role. The course team also highlighted that a close link is maintained with practice educators via providing the opportunity for some delivery of teaching on the course, which supports their own continuing professional development when maintaining registration.

53. However, when asked about the university oversight of the process such as the partnership keeping a register of practice educators and how the university is assured that each person has not only their training and qualifications checked but their registration is also checked to ensure it is up to date, the inspection team were told that there was no oversight process. The university relies on the relationships within the partnership and with practice educators themselves to raise any issues or concerns. The inspection team therefore agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 2.6 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 2.7

54. Documentary evidence provided outlined where students can access the university whistleblowing policy within the placement handbook. Students are also introduced to the whistleblowing policy of their organisation through induction to placement meetings. The placement learning agreement form includes a section for students to record their understanding of the policy and its use alongside key contact information.

55. Within the 'Preparing for Professional Social Work Practice' module there is dedicated content in relation to whistleblowing, where students are encouraged to reflect upon the professional requirements of the course which includes responsibilities towards service users and colleagues and raising concerns about organisational issues where appropriate. Student professional autonomy is enhanced throughout the modules alongside their ability to think critically to ensure the best outcomes. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

56. Social work sits within the department of Social Work, Care and Community (SWCC), which is part of the School of Social Sciences, alongside disciplines including youth studies, youth justice and careers guidance. The head of department for SWCC is a qualified social worker and maintains a supportive relationship with the course team. This includes liaising with key stakeholders who contribute to course delivery to ensure that the course remains fit for purpose and attending monthly monitoring meetings for the courses. There is also ongoing monitoring of staffing resources by the head of department to ensure that staff to student ratios remain appropriate and the courses are delivered effectively.

57. Governance of the course is managed by the School Academic Quality Committee (SAQC) which feeds into the wider university Centre for Academic Development and Quality. These systems ensure that the course teams remain aware of regulatory and compliance issues as well as providing opportunities for the sharing of good practice amongst the wider school. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.2

58. The inspection team reviewed documentary evidence submitted, which included the Placement Handbook, Practice Placement Audit Form and Memorandum of Understanding. During the inspection, the inspection team were given the opportunity to discuss these documents and how they work in practise with the course teams, placement partners and practice educators. At the start of each placement, all parties enter into a placement learning agreement which indicates where responsibilities lie and what is expected of each party.

59. Placement breakdown procedures were also explored during discussions and each group was able to talk the inspectors through the steps that would be taken and where the information can be located within the university documents. Placement partners spoke positively about their experiences when raising issues and concerns during placement and the support they received from the university to ensure the best outcome for all. When meeting with students, they were also able to give specific examples of placement adjustments to ensure they could meet their learning needs.

60. The evidence and discussions demonstrated to the inspection team the ways that the university works with placement providers to ensure they can provide education and training that appropriately meets the professional standards, and the education and training qualifying standards. Therefore, the inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.3

61. There is an expectation that all students should be introduced to the policies and procedures in relation to health, wellbeing and risk during their induction to placement. All placement partners receive the placement handbook that includes the university procedures relating to students health and wellbeing, policies such as whistleblowing and links to student support services. Personal tutor visits also act as a resource to students and partners alike and the placement learning agreement confirms where specific responsibilities lie.

62. Placement partners acknowledged that university staff are always on hand and supportive of student needs during placement and can provide clarity on processes where needs are identified. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.4

63. The university confirmed that there is employer representation at termly course committee meetings which are structured in line with priorities identified in the course development plan and more general meetings occur with practice mentors to explore general strengths and areas for development on the course.

64. The D2N2 teaching partnership is another mechanism by which employers are involved with the course and includes representation from local authority partners as well as the private, voluntary and independent sector. The memorandum of understanding provided by the university outlines the key tasks that the partnership covers which includes, oversight of admissions processes, curriculum for the social work courses offered by universities and practice education. The inspection team also heard about the practitioner pool developed by the university in liaison with D2N2 which provides opportunities for employer partners to deliver teaching on the course. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.5

65. The university outlined their processes for monitoring and evaluation of the courses on an annual basis through the Interim Course Review (ICR) which feeds into the overarching Course Development Plan (CDP). During the first semester of the academic year, the CDP and ICR is a key feature of the course committee meeting which includes representation from staff, students, employer partners and people with lived experience. During this meeting, key themes and areas for development are discussed with all stakeholders and priorities and actions are set. These are then reviewed at subsequent course committee meetings which continue to include representation from all partners. The course is also subject to Periodic Course Review (PCR) every three years and, again, this process continues to include representation from key stakeholder groups.

66. The university outlined other mechanisms through which feedback from key stakeholders is sought. The inspection team heard that there are regular module evaluations however, when the inspection team met with students the inspection team were told that in particular for the MA, not all modules had been evaluated in the past. The university stated that there were opportunities for modules to be evaluated, though uptake had been poor. The inspection team were also made aware that for the BA there had been poor uptake in module evaluation and feedback. Some students articulated that they were reluctant to give feedback to modules tutors when sought directly, though the inspection team noted this was standard practice. The university explained that the primary method for obtaining feedback, via 'My Say', is anonymous.

67. Representatives from SEA also outlined how they provided feedback about role play activities during a first-year module and have enjoyed developing their role within this.

Further examples were provided where a service user highlighted that a question used in interviews might have been worded in a way that did not draw out the best answers and following discussion with the course team, this was amended. However, none of the representatives at the meeting had any experience of being involved in module or course review, feedback or recent development changes made to the MA course. The university outlined their current plans in relation to working with people with lived experience of social work which included widening the range of groups they work with.

68. The inspection team agreed that the university had not been able to adequately demonstrate all aspects of the standard and therefore agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that two conditions are set against standard 3.6 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that conditions are 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 courses would not be required. Full details of the conditions, their monitoring and approval can be found in the [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.6

69. The university submitted evidence to demonstrate how the cohort for both the BA and MA courses considers local workforce needs following discussions and internal planning. Throughout the academic year, there is close liaison between the university and partners through the D2N2 partnership regarding proposed numbers which are shared with the head of department to ensure that proposals are aligned with targets. Placement partners who contributed to the inspection of the course were able to articulate how this process was planned. When meeting with senior university staff they confirmed an ongoing commitment to workforce needs in conjunction with what they can adequately resource both at the university and with placement capacity within the region.

70. When considering this information from the university, placement partners and teaching partnership, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.7

71. The course provider submitted evidence to demonstrate that the course leader is appropriately qualified and experienced and holds up to date registration with Social Work England. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 3.8

72. The university submitted the CVs of current course team staff alongside documentation, which highlighted training undertaken and scholarly activity of the team, outlining the range of specialist knowledge and expertise currently available to support the delivery of the

course. The inspection team heard about the commitment to research nationally from the university as well as plans to develop international research links through the International Parent Centred Network (IPCN) and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) in conjunction with the University of Potsdam.

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

Standard 3.9

74. The education provider submitted evidence of their monitoring and evaluation systems used across all courses within the university. This included access to dashboards, available to all staff, which provide data from a three-year range at all levels of the courses.

Documentary evidence also highlighted the Success for All initiative in place which explores outcomes and continuation rates for students from vulnerable groups. Meetings to review the impact of the initiative are attended by members of the course team and course level strategies are reviewed with partners from the wider organisation.

75. The course team were able to discuss how qualitative data informed course developments, and this could also be seen within course development plans. The inspection team were also able to view a snapshot of data relating to outcomes at a modular level using the PowerBi dashboard referenced above. Whilst the snapshot provided insight into the monitoring systems used by the university, it did highlight some imbalance between the success of white students and those from other minority ethnic backgrounds. The inspection team agreed the standard was met with a recommendation in relation to identifying next steps to address the apparent achievement gaps for students in their final year of the course. Full details of the recommendation can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 3.10

76. The university outlined how staff are encouraged to maintain their knowledge in relation to professional practice. The inspection team heard that all staff on the course team engage with scholarly Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and attend professional practice conferences with a focus that has been identified through staff appraisals. Staff have also engaged in research based upon contextual issues and several members of the course team have presented their subject specialisms at conferences, all of which was summarised through staff team expertise documentation. The inspection team heard that some staff are active in practice-based consultancy roles outside of the university which support with the currency of their own knowledge, and that of colleagues through contributions to course development and teaching. Prior to the pandemic, the D2N2 partnership had also begun to explore opportunities for academics to spend time in practice within partner organisations. This remains a feature of the teaching partnership executive board discussions. The inspection team agreed this standard was met for both courses.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

77. Documentary evidence submitted by the university outlined that the course is mapped to the Social Work England Professional Standards, the PCF, and the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Social Work. The curriculum coverage for the course is detailed and there are a wide range of topics studied, including those specific to supporting with preparation for professional practice.

78. Each of the module specifications submitted provide clear guidance around learning outcomes to ensure that students understand what is expected of them throughout the course however the inspection team were unable to see where the learning outcomes were linked to the Professional Standards meaning students would be unclear how and where they were progressing towards meeting the Professional Standards. When discussing this with the course team they agreed that they had focussed on mapping Social Work England Professional Standards for the practice placement modules and not all modules.

79. The inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 4.1 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 4.2

80. The involvement of key stakeholders was detailed through a range of course documentation as outlined in standard 3.5. and as per the conditions set against standard 3.5 the inspection team had not seen any evidence of people with lived experience of social work being involved with or being asked to engage with integral course updates, modifications or updates to the curriculum. When meeting with representatives of SEA, none in attendance had any current experience of this type of engagement.

81. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was also not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 4.2 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 4.3

82. The university outlined its commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) by ensuring capacity within timetables so that staff from all disciplines are represented at various strategic working groups, such as the Success for All initiative and Black Lives Matter group within the D2N2 teaching partnership. The inspection team were also able to review the university EDI policy which underpins the work and behaviours of the course team.

83. The inspection team were also able to identify how the curriculum had been shaped with EDI as a focus through the range of modules such as those with a focus upon human rights, equality legislation and exploration of diversity in social work. There are also procedures in place to support emotional wellbeing and resilience and these are promoted to students throughout their time on the course to ensure they are equipped to cope with challenging situations as they arise. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.4

84. The university outlined how their internal review processes supported them to ensure that the course remained current through regular scrutiny of curriculum, teaching and learning. Evidence of changes to the course included the development of the safeguarding module added to both courses, incorporated a focus upon contextual safeguarding and the importance of interdisciplinary working within the social work arena. The range of staff active in research also provided assurance that their knowledge informed the development of the course, this included the course teams current priorities in relation to international research projects.

85. The university also outlined how the D2N2 partnership facilitates training and events for staff where colleagues active in practice provide insight into issues affecting the sector which can then be fed down at course level.

86. The inspection team, in reviewing the modules across both courses noted a number of the reading lists for modules included some outdated reading and were limited in scope. Inspectors were informed that, in some instances, more up to date resources would be given to students within the individual VLE modules content. However, the approach taken in this regard was not consistent across all modules. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses, with a recommendation regarding the updating of resources and reading lists to ensure a wide breadth of knowledge and skills. Full details of recommendations can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.5

87. Throughout modules, the course team aim to facilitate opportunities where theories that are introduced are followed up with practical sessions that allow students to explore how they would integrate such approaches in a case study or role play scenario.

88. The inspection team heard how the role of the practice educator is vital in supporting this skill. Practice educators who the team met with outlined how this topic is a feature of supervision sessions with students, where they are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences in placements and consider how they could alter their approaches to case work based upon knowledge acquired thorough the course. Some practice educators also set tasks for students to focus on following supervision where they may be guided toward considering application of a specific theory linked to social work. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.6

89. The course promotes multi-disciplinary learning through the involvement of professionals from fields such as policing and healthcare on modules such as safeguarding children and adults and through skills day. Currently, the principal opportunity for students to learn alongside other professions comes through placement opportunities. During a meeting with the senior leadership team for the course, it was explained that there is a commitment to enhancing links with other courses within the department such as youth work, health and social care, education and allied health professions to enhance interdisciplinary learning opportunities. This is a feature of discussion through course committee meetings as an identified area for review.

90. Whilst the inspection team recognise the input to modules from other professionals, as placement is the main opportunity students have to learn alongside other professions the inspection team agreed that the standard was not met for either course as there is not a consistent range of opportunities for all. Therefore, the inspection team is recommending that a condition is set against standard 4.6 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 4.7

91. The evidence provided to meet this standard included module specifications which detailed the hours required for contact hours and directed learning as per the university regulations. Also, the recent changes to both courses were confirmed by the university as

meeting the requirements. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.8

92. The university provided assessment mapping for all modules which detailed the range of assessment methods used to ensure that students can meet the intended learning outcomes for the course. The range of assessments used within the course was reflective of the types of work students would be expected to undertake in practice. Furthermore, the variety of methods used to assess student capabilities showed recognition of the diversity of student cohorts. The university outlined that all assessments have a practice context, requiring students to apply theoretical knowledge to their professional practice.

93. Members of staff involved in marking assessments take part in marking calibration sessions to share grading and feedback, ensuring consistency for students. However, as discussed under standard 4.1, learning outcomes and assessment has not been appropriately mapped to the Professional Standards, meaning students are unaware how they are progressing and how the assessment links to necessary knowledge and skills that will enable them to meet the Professional Standards. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 4.8 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 4.9

94. The evidence provided by the university demonstrated that assessments are carried out at appropriate stages during the course and follow a graduated approach to student development. There is a combination of assignment and exam-based assessment methods used and study days are factored into timetabling to support preparation. The university outlined how they have responded to feedback and revised assessments that were administered closely together. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.10

95. The inspection team reviewed assessment processes within the university's quality handbook which outlined expectations in relation to how course teams should ensure effective feedback is provided to students. This included reference to the format of feedback which proposed an element of individualised feedback and timeliness of feedback, which was outlined as three weeks for assessed coursework. The course team have

developed an assessment and feedback group which was developed to promote consistency in the quality and format of feedback provided to students on the course. Reports from the external examiner also recognised that the processes in place were effective.

96. During meetings with students, the inspection team heard that feedback had been received that was detailed and supported students to improve in future assignments. Some students commented that there had been times where they felt that the quality of feedback was inconsistent, and comments did not match the expectations as they understood them, but this was linked to staffing changes and not identified as an area of on-going concern. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 4.11

97. Documentary evidence outlined that all course team staff involved in marking assessments had been awarded or were working towards appropriate qualifications within the higher education sector. The university outlined arrangements in place for moderation of marking by appropriate senior staff. The inspection team were advised that the external examiners appointed to the programmes are professionally registered social workers and have experience which is appropriate within the field however there was no evidence submitted in support of this statement either in relation to the external examiner themselves or the university recruitment process.

98. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 4.11 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 in the [conditions](#) section of this report.

Standard 4.12

99. Student progression is managed through a range of mechanisms including tutorials, readiness for practice interviews, placement review meetings and reports from practice educators which include elements of direct observation. Progression is also reviewed via more formalised processes such as Practice Assurance Panels (PAP) and Board of Studies.

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

Standard 4.13

101. The university outlined how the courses are designed in a way to promote research skills and evidence informed approaches through the content of modules and assessment design. Specific modules within the course structure incorporate learning outcomes which

make specific reference to understanding the value of research and analysis, as well as being able to apply these to practice.

102. The course team highlighted an incremental approach to developing research skills year on year which supports students to be able to integrate research findings to written work by the end of their course. Furthermore, the commitment of the course team to developing their own research skills was evidenced through inspection which also impacts upon course delivery. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

103. The inspection team reviewed evidence in relation to student support services within the university which focused upon issues such as mental health and wellbeing, occupational health services, physical needs, disability support services and careers advice and support. It was confirmed that all services can be accessed directly by students or via referral from personal tutors.

104. The inspection team queried the availability of support outside of usual hours and term times due to placement activity and it was confirmed that the online nature of many services meant that students could access services throughout the year. During meetings with students, they confirmed that where support had been required this had been easy to navigate and students with specific needs highlighted that they felt well supported by the university.

105. The university shared details of the emotional calendar initiative that has been introduced across the organisation. This calendar is used by student support services and course team staff to map out any times that may create more pressured situations or be more demanding for students. The presence of the calendar ensures that university staff can be pro-active in responding to student needs rather than reactive. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 5.2

106. The inspection team met with representatives from academic services within the library who outlined how all services could be accessed via NOW learning rooms. All students can request a 1:1 appointment for support with a range of topics including academic referencing and writing as well as applying to take part in group workshops. Representatives from library services outlined how they had responded to the needs of mature students who might struggle to access academic literature by developing targeted support in understanding academic language, bringing theory into reflection, and through offering workshops on reflective writing and thinking.

107. Students receive frequent support through their personal tutor on themes specific to the course and personal tutors also engage in a cycle of tutorials in which academic, professional and pastoral issues are discussed. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 5.3

108. The education provider submitted their fitness to practice procedure as part of course documentation, which outlined their commitment to ensuring that all students meet Social Work England's Professional Standards whilst studying on the course. Within the procedure, the education provider outlined its commitment to sharing information pertaining to fitness to practice between all agencies involved in supporting the student in the interest of public protection.

109. Following admission to the course when students complete DBS, health and character checks, they are asked to declare if they have any changes to the status of their checks at the start of each academic year and before commencing placement. Where changes occur, the university works collaboratively to signpost students to support where appropriate. However, as discussed under standard 1.4 and the subsequent condition attached to it, the current university suitability process, should someone declare a change that may result in the need to use this process, has been identified as needing improvement. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met for either course and is recommending that a condition is set against standard 5.3 in relation to the approval of these courses. Consideration was given as to whether the finding identified would mean that the courses would not be suitable for approval. However, it is deemed that a condition is appropriate to ensure that the courses 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 5.4

110. The university submitted documentary evidence to demonstrate the range of support that is available to students to allow them to access the course successfully. This included an example of an access statement which detailed the adjustments required for students for both academic learning and during placement experiences. During placement periods, the university works with employers to raise awareness of adaptations and revisit these during placement meetings.

111. The inspection team heard how the university had provided specific support to students with neurodiverse conditions as well as physical impairments to allow them to experience success on the course. This included the implementation of strategies such as

assistive technology, alternative exam arrangements, note takers and 1:1 study skills sessions.

112. The course team outlined measures in place to encourage students to declare disabilities early in the application and admissions process. However, where needs have not already been identified, there are processes in place to help with diagnosis or support where difficulties arise after commencing study. These processes were confirmed by representatives from student support services and students that the inspection team was able to meet with. Students did advise that this support was not always clear to them and timelines were varied. Whilst there had been some backlog in relation to dyslexia assessments post-Covid, the university explained that it was committed to ensuring students had a response as soon as possible and committed to inputting financially to support processes. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses with a recommendation regarding review of the pathways and information being made clearer and more straightforward to students about support with particular reference to dyslexia assessments. Full details of recommendations can be found in the [recommendations](#) section of this report.

Standard 5.5

113. The university submitted documentation, provided to students during induction, which outlines the curriculum, modules, student expectations, placement arrangements, assessment processes and feedback mechanisms. The course team reinforce this at the start of the academic year to ensure that students remain well informed about the course. Students can access the above documentation on an ongoing basis through NOW learning rooms.

114. When asked about information provided to students in relation to the transition to qualified social worker, registration and the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), The course team explained that all students take part in 'moving on' sessions which include taught content by qualified practitioners towards the end of their final year. This is further supported by work-based supervisors and practice educators who advise students of expectations as a qualified and registered social worker during their final placement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 5.6

115. Students are reminded of the course as a professional programme and subsequent attendance requirements during induction. This is reinforced during tutorial sessions and students are made aware that skills days and placement days are mandatory to ensure all on the course fulfil the 200-day requirement. To effectively monitor attendance, the university uses Microsoft Teams attendance reports.

116. When meeting with students from both courses they all confirmed they understood the requirements around attendance and what they needed to do in the event of an absence being necessary. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 5.7

117. The inspection team observed a range of feedback mechanisms being used throughout the courses to ensure that students understood how to support their ongoing development. This included a range of formative and summative assessments that included written and verbal feedback from module leaders, observations from practice educators whilst on placement and mid/end point review meetings. The university were able to articulate the processes in place to support students where appropriate progress was not being made. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Standard 5.8

118. Documentary evidence included the process in place within the university to support students to make academic appeals. This process is also made available within learning rooms to ensure that students have ease of access to information if required. When meeting with students they all confirmed they knew about this process and how to access it should it be necessary. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

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

Standard 6.1

119. As the qualifying courses are a BA (Hons) Social Work and an MA Social work, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met for both courses.

Proposed outcome

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

Conditions

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

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

	Standard not currently met	Condition	Date for submission of evidence	Link
1	Standard 1.3	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates partner involvement in the interview and admissions processes.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 30
2	Standard 1.4 Standard 5.3	The education provider will provide evidence that the process in relation to assessing suitability during admissions has been formalised (including clear points for discussions between panel members where appropriate) and outlines the responsibilities and expected timescales for all involved.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 33 Paragraph 109
3	Standard 1.5	The education provider will provide evidence that shows university oversight of ensuring all interview panel members have had up to date and relevant EDI training prior to interviews taking place.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 36
4	Standard 2.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how the university ensures that all students have completed the necessary number of skills days prior to completion of the course.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 41

5	Standard 2.6	The education provider will submit evidence to show a robust quality assurance process is in place that enables the university to ensure that practice educators are on the register and that they have relevant and current knowledge, skills and experience.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 53
6	Standard 3.5 Standard 4.2	The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates improvements to the ways that students are able to give feedback against all modules or aspects of the course and how any actions or feedback is then communicated to students. The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where both people with lived experience of social work and partners are involved in the more integral parts of the course design, course changes and their opportunities to feed back on the ongoing monitoring of the course.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 68 Paragraph 81
7	Standard 4.1 Standard 4.8	The educator will provide evidence that shows how they make it clear to students how the module and course learning outcomes link to the Professional Standards and their progression towards meeting those by the end of the course.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 79 Paragraph 93
8.	Standard 4.2	This condition links to the condition set against 3.5 above about the lack of involvement of people with lived experience of social work.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 81
9.	Standard 4.6	The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where students are able to both work with and learn from other professions through the implementation of proposed plans.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 90

10.	Standard 4.8	This links to the condition set against 4.1 above about how the educator demonstrates to students their progression towards the Professional Standards specifically relating to assessments of learning outcomes.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 93
11.	Standard 4.11	The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates how external examiners are confirmed as having the relevant registration and experience by the university.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 98
12.	Standard 5.3	This condition links to the condition set against standard 1.4 above about the lack of a robust suitability process should a student declare something that could impact their continuation on the course.	Within 3 months of the regulator decision.	Paragraph 109

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.	2.5	The inspectors are recommending that the university ensure greater emphasis on obtaining feedback from partners in relation to student conduct whilst on placement to evaluate the impact of teaching about legislation and conduct within modules.	Paragraph 50
2.	3.9	The inspectors are recommending that the university consider identifying clear next steps to address the apparent achievement gaps for students on the course.	Paragraph 75
3.	4.4	The inspectors are recommending that the university considers updating and broadening reading lists and ensure that there is consistency in the quality of information across all modules on the VLE.	Paragraph 86

4.	5.4	The inspectors are recommending that the university continues to address the complications around pathways and access and backlogs around some of the support mechanisms but especially ones related to dyslexia diagnosis and support.	Paragraph 112
----	-----	---	-------------------------------

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Regulator decision

Approved with conditions.

Annex 2: Meeting of conditions

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

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

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

	Standard not met	Condition	Inspector recommendation
1	1.3	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates partner involvement in the interview and admissions processes.	Condition met.
2	1.4, 5.3	The education provider will provide evidence that the process in relation to assessing suitability during admissions has been formalised (including clear points for discussions between panel members where appropriate) and outlines the responsibilities and expected timescales for all involved.	Condition met.
3	1.5	The education provider will provide evidence that shows university oversight if ensuring all interview panel members have had up to date training prior to interviews taking place.	Condition met.
4	2.1	The education provider will provide evidence that demonstrates how the university ensures that all students have completed the necessary number of skills days prior to completion of the course.	Condition met.
5	2.6	The education provider will submit evidence to show a robust quality assurance process is in place that enables the university to ensure that practice educators are on the register and that they have relevant and current knowledge, skills and experience.	Condition met.

6	3.5, 4.2	The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates improvements to the ways that students are able to give feedback against all modules or aspects of the course and how any actions or feedback is then communicated to students. The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where both people with lived experience of social work and partners are involved in the more integral parts of the course design, course changes and their opportunities to feed back on the ongoing monitoring of the course.	Condition met.
7	4.1, 4.8	The educator will provide evidence that shows how they make it clear to students how the module and course learning outcomes link to the Professional Standards and their progression towards meeting those standards by the end of the course.	Condition met.
8	4.6	The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates how and where students are able to work both with and learn from other professions through the implementation of proposed plans.	Condition met.
9	4.11	The educator will provide evidence that demonstrates how external examiners are confirmed as having the relevant registration and experience by the university.	Condition met.

Findings

In relation to the condition set against standard 1.3, the course provider submitted evidence of emails which confirmed the attendance of employer partners at interviews for the courses. Within the emails, the inspection team were able to review details of the interview dates and locations, along with a briefing video that was provided to members of panels. The inspection team agreed that this standard was now met.

In relation to the condition set against standards 1.4 and 5.3, the education provider submitted a copy of their revised suitability process which was due to be shared with the

D2N2 teaching partnership for agreement. Within the documentation, details were provided of the challenges with the current model, proposed changes and details of representation within suitability decisions. At the time of the initial submission, the inspection team acknowledged that the paper had not been shared with the wider partnership but was due to be considered at an upcoming meeting. As a result, it was agreed to reconsider the evidence against this standard once the meeting and occurred.

Following the initial submission of evidence, the university were able to confirm that the proposal had been shared with the D2N2 teaching partnership on the 8th of June 2023 and was subsequently accepted by the D2N2 executive on the 22nd June 2023. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 1.5, the course provider submitted a copy of their social work practitioner availability form which included a question in relation to whether representatives had completed EDI training organised by their employer. For those who answered the question positively, they were asked to provide details of when the training had taken place which allowed the university to determine the relevancy of this to support being a member of an interview panel.

In order to assure the inspection team that appropriate training was in place for SEA representatives, the university provided details of planning that had been undertaken in collaboration with SEA operations manager. The documentation outlined planning for three training sessions for SEA representatives which covered a range of topics, including relevant EDI topics. As this was presented as a working proposal, the inspection team requested clarification that this had been accepted by both parties.

The university confirmed that there was a plan in place with the organisation and this included an agreed outline of the training that would be offered. The university provided a copy of a newly developed document titled 'People with Lived Experience: Participation and Strategy 2023/24' which referenced the training for those involved in selection and admissions. Inspectors also noted that the strategy document clearly outlined how they will evaluate the involvement and engagement with SEA representatives on an ongoing basis. As a result of the additional evidence provided, the inspection team agreed that the condition was now met.

In order to satisfy the inspection team that the condition in relation to standard 2.1 was met, the university submitted skills development monitoring forms for both courses. The forms required students to maintain a record of the sessions attended and obtain signatures to confirm engagement. Furthermore, the university outlined that attendance at mandatory skills days was a prerequisite for progression to year 2 of the courses. In addition to the forms described above, the university also outlined their plans to record skills days online using 'pebblepad' to enable ease of access to up to date attendance information. As a result of the evidence provided, the inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

The course provider submitted a copy of the placement audit form that was used to quality assure placement provision alongside minutes from meetings relating to the PE database that had been held between February 2021 and November 2022. The inspection team acknowledged that the placement audit form included details relating to PE qualification and registration but were not clear when the completed forms were received. As a result, further clarification was requested from the university about the timing for completion of placement audit forms.

The course provider confirmed that the placement audit form is completed and received by the university prior to any placement starting. The academic member of staff with responsibility for practice placements managed the audit process and it was their role to follow up on any forms with partner agencies. Issues that the university would follow up on included lack of, or unclear, information within placement audit forms or a level of qualification that isn't commensurate to what is required. As a result of the information provided, the inspection team agreed that this condition was met.

In order to assure the inspection team that the condition in relation to standards 3.5 and 4.2 were met, the course provider submitted details of a range of methods employed to gain feedback from students and the forums in which this would be discussed. The evidence submitted in relation to obtaining feedback from people with lived experience in course design and review included details of SEA's involvement in course committee meetings, communications with Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service to and details of plans to develop a procurement agreement with SEA which would ensure close partnership working and mutual accountability. The university also provided details of a new job role within the course team which was dedicated to overseeing engagement with people with lived experience of social work in all aspects of course design. The inspection team agreed that this standard was now met.

In response to the condition applied to standards 4.1 and 4.8, the course provider submitted materials used within teaching sessions and the social work student placement handbook which detailed the ways in which Social Work England's Professional Standards were linked within the curriculum. The course provider also outlined the ways in which students were directed to this information through the virtual learning environment. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

The university provided two examples of how students across the courses had been provided with multidisciplinary learning opportunities over the academic year. The sessions included collaborative working with students from other disciplines such as forensic psychology and youth justice. The course provider outlined their plans to extend these opportunities to include students from disciplines such as nursing and policing. The inspection team agreed that this standard was now met.

In relation to the condition set against standard 4.11, the course provider submitted a copy of the Nottingham Trent University External Examiner Moderation form. Completed forms included details of the external examiners experience, qualification and registration with the appropriate professional body. As a result of the evidence provided, the inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Regulator decision

Conditions met.