

Education quality assurance – Course change review report

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Documentary review details

Inspection ID	KIU_2233
Course provider	Kingston University
Validating body (if different)	N/A
Course name	BA (Hons) Social Work Apprenticeship PgDip Social Work Apprenticeship
Mode of study	Full time
Proposed first intake	Changes come into effect from December 2025/January 2026.
Maximum student cohort	25
Review type	Course change
Review team	Surj Sall-Dullat – Registrant Inspector Rebecca Regler – Lay Inspector Caroline Reynolds – Education Quality Assurance Officer
Review team recommendation	Approved
Regulator decision	Approved

About the review

Kingston University are proposing to make the following changes to their BA Social Work Apprenticeship and the PgDip Social Work Apprenticeship.

The first change is in relation to the reduction of direct observations which take place within the Contracting Learning Experience (CLE) module at level 5. Currently apprentices have two direct observations. The change is to reduce this to one observation.

The CLE module encompasses the 70-day placement. This takes place in the second year of each programme. The module is the second of three practice placement modules.

Both before and after the change, apprentices are required to submit a portfolio of evidence designed to demonstrate practice, skills, knowledge and behaviours in accordance with the relevant standards.

Apprentices would continue to have two direct observations at level 6 and an assessed interview at level 4 as part of the readiness for direct practice (RfDP).

The second change is in specific relation to the BA Social Work Apprenticeship programme. The change is a minor modification to the level 4 RfDP module. This change relates to the observation of practice; this will now take the form of an assessed interview with a person with lived experience of social work.

Both changes would come into effect from December 2025/January 2026 depending on whether the apprentice is full time or part time.

The course provider gave rationale for these changes. The changes were agreed by the university after the annual review of the course content. The course team sought to streamline the assessment load in the context of demands of working in practice and studying, and the impact of increasingly restricted resources within the department.

The university has provided evidence in support of this change request which has been reviewed by the allocated inspectors.

Findings

The university identified two standards that would be impacted by the changes they wanted to implement. After reviewing the evidence submitted, the inspectors identified the following:

1. For all standards, with the exception of standards 2.2 and 2.5, the university showed there was a continuation of their ability to meet the education and training standards.
2. Standards 2.2 and 2.5 were directly impacted by the proposed changes and required evidence to satisfy the inspectors that the university would continue to meet the standards.

Supporting evidence was submitted for the relevant standards to show how the university will manage the proposed change. The university provided narrative and a range of evidence including the direct observation template, the on the job learning handbook for 2025-2026 which covers both courses, details of the module, mentor information session guidance dated August 2024, the CLE agreement, and the single point of contact (SPoC) meeting minutes dated 24 June 2025.

The inspection team's review of each of the impacted standards is outlined below.

Standard 2.2

The university provided a clear rationale for the change in relation to the reduction of direct observations. The comprehensive direct observation template demonstrated the opportunities for reflective practice, and this is clearly mapped to the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) domains. The template comprises an action plan which identifies learning needs and a

plan for development. Documentation states that there is also the potential for an additional direct observation if required if the apprentice has not demonstrated capability to practice.

The on the job learning handbook confirms the number of placements and skills days that apprentices are required to complete.

The module guide clearly outlined the timescales for each part of the module. This encompasses planning for the direct observation with a recall day dedicated to this topic. The inspectors agreed that the dedicated recall day provided assurance in terms of the learning and development of apprentices.

The CLE agreement template provided detailed information on the responsibilities of each person involved in supporting the apprentice, and the responsibilities of the apprentice. This form included designated space to confirm that the direct observation has taken place.

Evidence provided by the course provider sets out the learning opportunities, the involvement of all parties and the oversight to ensure that the students learning and development will not be compromised by the reduced number of observations.

The inspectors have reviewed the documentary evidence and consider that this standard is met.

Standard 2.5

The university provided a clear rationale for the change. A minor modification is proposed for the RfDP assessment in relation to the direct observation on the BA Social Work Apprenticeship programme. This will now take place online with a person with lived experience of social work and will be arranged by the university.

Within the on the job learning handbook there is clear guidance around what it will entail, how students will prepare for it, the scenario and points for consideration when writing the reflective account. It was clear that this information will provide the opportunity for the apprentice to reflect on how they did and for the person with lived experience to provide direct feedback to them. Documentary evidence stated that there is also an opportunity for a practice interview before the assessed one which provides a useful learning and development opportunity and apprentices will be required to reflect on the feedback provided by the person with lived experience.

The inspectors have reviewed the documentary evidence and consider that this standard is met.

Conclusions

The inspectors are recommending approval of the course change.

Regulator decision

Approved.