

Inspection Report

Course provider: University of West London

Course approval: BSocial Work (Hons)

Inspection dates: 8th – 10th May 2024

Report date:	10 th June 2024
Inspector recommendation:	Not Approved
Regulator decision:	Not Approved
Date of Regulator decision:	22 nd August 2024

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

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

Summary of Inspection

15. The University of West London, BSocial Work (Hons), was inspected as part of the Social Work England reapproval cycle; whereby all course providers with qualifying social work courses will be inspected against the new Education and Training Standards 2021.

Inspection ID	UWLR1
Course provider	University of West London
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BSocial Work (Hons)
Mode of study	Undergraduate
Maximum student cohort	50
Date of inspection	8 th – 10 th May 2024
Inspection team	Catherine Denny Education Quality Assurance Officer Sally Gosling (Lay Inspector) David Childs (Registrant Inspector)

Language

16. In this document we describe University of West London as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the BSocial Work (Hons) as ‘the course’.

Inspection

17. A remote inspection took place from 8th – 10th May 2024. As part of this process the inspection team planned to meet with key stakeholders including students, course staff, employers and people with lived experience of social work.

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

Conflict of interest

19. No parties disclosed a conflict of interest.

Meetings with students

20. The inspection team met with 9 students from all levels of the course. Of those who attended, 6 were student representatives for their year groups. Discussions included their experience of admissions, placement allocation and support, readiness for practice, how their views were sought in relation to the course, the curriculum, assessments, attendance expectations and the provision of student support services.

Meetings with course staff

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

Meeting with people with lived experience of social work

22. The inspection team met with people with lived experience of social work who have been involved in supporting courses within the College of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Care where social work was situated. Discussions included their involvement in admissions, training received to undertake their role and opportunities to be involved in and provide feedback on course delivery.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with representatives from placement partners including the London Borough of Brent, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, Nubian Life, Dreamfo Housing and KADS Support Services. The inspection team also met with practice educator representatives from Change Grow Live and Islington Council, alongside independent 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 submitted a narrative which outlined how admissions processes for the course were conducted in line with institutional policies, with a commitment to widening participation. The tasks and checks outlined within the assessment process included a specific academic entry criteria, appropriate English language skills, a written test and panel interview. Members of the admissions team for the course outlined how interview processes assessed applicants' motivation to become a social worker, their understanding of social work values and practice, past experience and written English skills.

26. The inspection team sought to understand how the process described was applied consistently by members of interview panels to ensure a robust and reliable process. Staff involved in admissions explained that there was an admissions lead within the course team who oversees the process. Decisions about candidates were not made in isolation and required discussion between the three panel members, which included two academics and a person with lived experience of social work.

27. Whilst decisions made were informed by multiple people, the inspection team were unable to see evidence which demonstrated that there was consistency in judgements made. Written tests, for example, were not marked and scored against criteria but read and discussed by panel members when making decisions, and there was not evidence of the use of a criteria to assess responses to interview questions. It appeared that there was a reliance upon positive discussion and engagement between panel members as a means of making decisions, rather than the use of a formal criteria.

28. During the course of the inspection, the inspection team learned that there had been issues in relation to retention on the course. Whilst the course provider outlined that this had been impacted by issues such as personal circumstances of the cost of living crisis, the inspection team noted that the figures provided were higher than they would have expected to see. As a result, the inspection team reasoned that there may be wider ranging concerns, some of which could be attributable to how candidates were selected to join the course and supported to develop their understanding of social work as a profession. The inspection team agreed that a full review of admissions processes would be required to ensure that they were fit for purpose and produced consistent judgements about

candidates' ability to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 1.2

29. The course provider outlined that prior relevant experience of social work was not a requirement for the course but that it was desirable. Where applicants held prior experience that was relevant to the course, this was explored via their personal statement and through their responses to assessment tasks. Despite there being points in the admissions processes where prior relevant experience might be outlined, as with standard 1.1, there wasn't evidence of how this was consistently considered by interview panels, nor an indication of how this impacted decision making in a formalised way. The inspection team were unable to assure themselves that there was a fair and robust process in place which would allow comparisons between candidates. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 1.3

30. Documentary evidence received in advance of the inspection outlined that employers and people with lived experience of social work were involved in the design and review of admissions processes, and that interview panels included a person with lived experience. When exploring the involvement of employers, the inspection team reviewed a copy of the social work partnership board agenda which referred to discussions around recruitment activity, however the minutes from the meeting did not reflect an opportunity for employers to contribute to the design of processes. During conversations with employer representatives, there was not evidence of a consistent approach to engaging employers within recruitment and admissions.

31. When exploring the involvement of people with lived experience, the inspection team heard that all interview panels included a representative from the university network alongside two academics. Two representatives who were involved in meetings held as part of the inspection explained that they had provided input into the design of questions used during interviews, with one representative identifying that they had seen a change as a result of their feedback. Those who had actively sat on interview panels explained that they felt heard within the admissions process and were able to contribute to decision making.

32. When considering the evidence against the standard, the inspection team agreed that aspects of the standard had been met, however the course provider had not ensured there was representation of all partners in the process. During meetings with employer partners, some concerns were raised about preparedness of students on the course and their understanding of the requirements of social work practice, with the sense this could have been partly addressed by how the admissions process was enacted. Furthermore, some representatives outlined that there had not been consistent opportunities to engage in

course development alongside the university or be involved in developing and enacting the admissions process. There was also a lack of evidence of how this was actively being addressed by the course provider. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 1.4

33. The course provider outlined the mechanisms in place to assess the suitability of applicants at admission to the course, which included a character reference and a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The inspection team heard that the university paid for DBS checks for successful applicants whilst the applicant was required to sign up to and pay for subscription to the update service. This was clearly stated on the course provider website.

34. In addition to the mechanisms outlined above, all candidates were required to complete a self-declaration of suitability which contained reference to health, wellbeing and disabilities. The course provider explained that this offered an opportunity to consider whether referrals to occupational health might be required and if any reasonable adjustments might be needed for the candidate to undertake the course successfully. Where issues relating to suitability were raised throughout the admissions process, the inspection team heard that there was the provision of a suitability panel which would discuss and consider individual cases. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

35. Documentary evidence received in advance of the inspection outlined how recruitment and admission to the course was in line with institutional equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies and procedures. This included ensuring that academic staff and people with lived experience involved in admissions processes received annual training, which included consideration of unconscious bias.

36. The inspection team heard and reviewed details of the processes in place for candidates to request and access reasonable adjustments throughout the admissions process, and examples of adjustments that had been made. The admissions team also outlined how every candidate received a telephone call from a member of the team on the day before their interview to ensure they were prepared. This also offered a further opportunity for candidates to ask questions and for the panel to be made aware of specific needs. During a meeting with student representatives, the inspection team heard that there had been positive communication during admission to the course and they had felt well supported.

37. The inspection team explored how the admissions team gathered data in relation to EDI as part of their admissions process to better understand cohorts and made adjustments to the process. The course provider explained that the majority of data in relation to needs and

demographics was gathered by UCAS and could be downloaded by the university at the end of the admissions cycle. The admissions lead explained it was possible for the course team to request this information, however this was not practice at the time of the inspection.

38. Upon reviewing the evidence available, the inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Standard 1.6

39. The course provider outlined how information in relation to the standard was available on the website for applicants to review. The website included links to organisations such as the British Association of Social Workers (BASW), where more detail about the role of a social worker could be found, and the Social Work England website. In addition to this, the inspection team were able to see an example presentation which was used as part of open day activity for the course.

40. Despite there being information available to applicants, the inspection team heard evidence of a potential lack of understanding from students about the realities of the course and what the role of a social worker entailed. At times, student expectations were not in line with what was deemed appropriate in practice and it appeared they had not received detailed information in relation to university attendance and engagement requirements or placement expectations. This, combined with higher than average rates of attrition for the course and issues with student attendance, led the inspection team to deduce that the information provided to applicants was not sufficient to prepare them for the course and the expectations of a student social worker.

41. The inspection team agreed that, in order to address issues with student conduct, understanding of expectations and rates of attrition, an in depth review of admissions processes would be required. This included the university's approach to recruitment, including information provided during the recruitment process to enable them to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the course. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

42. Documentary evidence received in advance of the inspection provided details about how students were supported to gain experience within practice settings. The was delivered via a first placement of 70 days which occurred within year 2 of the course, a second placement of 100 days, which occurred within year 3 of the course and 30 skills days which were distributed across the entirety of the course. Skills days were planned in conjunction with the course lead and included specific skills which were delivered in advance of placements commencing.

43. First placements took place within statutory or Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) sector settings, with second placements often taking place within local authority services which involved high risk decision making and legal interventions. The course team ensured contrast in placements by offering one setting in a children's social care environment and another within an adult setting. Whilst students were able to express their preferences for placements and were encouraged to consider potential career paths, the course team ensured that students understood the requirements of the standard would be upheld and preferences could not always be met.

44. The course provider outlined that appropriate mechanisms were in place where students missed any aspect of practice based learning, including skills days, to ensure the required 200 days were consistently met. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

45. The course provider outlined that all practice learning opportunities available on the course were audited to ensure they were able to provide learning opportunities that enabled students to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards. During meetings held as part of the inspection, the inspection team heard that all members of the course team had a responsibility to undertake site visits to audit placements and that these took place on an annual basis. The placement lead explained that the purpose of the visit was to look at what placements were offering, check if a Practice Educator (PE) was available onsite and explore the services offered. This was checked again at the Placement Learning Agreement (PLA) meeting once a student commenced their placement.

46. The inspection team queried how audit activity was captured and agreements with providers formed which detailed expectations for placement, as well as the necessary policies and procedures that would be in place. The inspection team were informed that this was captured in the overarching placement agreement document. The inspection team requested a copy of this document, and upon receipt of an example partnership agreement form, the inspection team noted that this agreement was requested by the provider and review of the documentation indicated that the document itself was held by the requesting organisation. The documentation appeared to have been produced by the placement provider and as a result, focused upon their expectations of the university, rather than the expectations of the university upon the provider.

47. Upon reviewing evidence received in the original submission, alongside that received during inspection, the inspection team agreed that there was a lack of clarity about what the university's expectations in relation to sourcing appropriate social work placements. Whilst there had been an investment in resource to undertake site visits, there was not evidence of a clear and consistent approach to sourcing learning opportunities or

documentation to evidence formalised agreements across the range of providers used by the university. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 2.3

48. The course provider outlined how all students received a structured induction to placement which included information about the organisation in which they were placed, support needs and workload expectations. The PE and Placement tutor (PT) were involved in induction to ensure a consistent approach and oversight. During meetings held as part of the inspection, the inspection team heard that there appeared to be a consistent understanding of induction expectations from all stakeholders. Students commented that ongoing support during placement was positive and where issues were raised, these were quickly addressed by university staff.

49. When exploring caseload expectations, the inspection team heard that providers understood what was deemed an appropriate caseload and communicated this to their respective teams. One student representative offered an example of a significantly high caseload on one placement, however those involved in offering support worked swiftly to ensure this was addressed. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

50. As referenced in standard 2.3, there was a consistent understanding of student caseloads. Where issues had arisen regarding the volume of work or the nature of tasks being assigned to students, the inspection team heard that this was resolved through support from the course team. Documentary evidence also highlighted that students received input prior to placement about workload expectations, and regular supervision between students and PEs ensured this was regularly revisited. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

51. To ensure that students were prepared to safely undertake practice learning within a service delivery setting, the course provider explained that a further check on students' DBS status was completed. Students were also required to undertake preparatory learning which focused upon the foundations of social work practice, professionalism, resilience and skills sessions. Within the modules, students were assessed via formative and summative assessment methods which included portfolios, essays and group presentations.

52. The inspection team observed, via review of documentary evidence, that the course provider had received feedback from the External Examiner (EE) regarding Readiness for Direct Practice (RfDP) elements of the course and how these might be better addressed as a standalone module to allow readiness to be assessed more explicitly. At the point of

inspection, there was a lack of evidence available to demonstrate how the course provider planned to respond to this.

53. During a meeting with employer representatives, the inspection team queried whether students appeared to be prepared for practice. Feedback from partners was mixed with some stating that their experience of individual students from the course was varied. Where students did not appear to be well prepared, employer representatives stated that this was linked to a lack of understanding about the role and issues relating to the professionalism of students. Employer partners also linked issues with student attendance and engagement and the impact this had upon their readiness for practice. Representatives outlined that judgements would have to be made on the level of input required at induction to placement, with some students requiring a lot of input to ensure they were ready to engage with cases and undertake visits to service users. Further to this, the inspection team heard that there did not appear to be sufficient consideration of the needs of students who were repeating placements and the level of support that might be required.

54. The inspection team queried whether employer partners had been given the opportunity to feedback about their concerns in relation to RfDP and heard that employers had discussed this with the course team. The inspection team heard that some employers had raised concerns about how students were prepared and assessed for placement but not all were clear about if, or how, the issues were being addressed. Though for one employer, this had resulted in them delivering some teaching on the course in relation to professionalism. The inspection team also discussed this issue with course team who outlined that they recognised there was a need to improve RfDP at level 4, however changes to the course had been limited due to the parameters of the university's processes regarding course changes, which was limited to 25% of the overall course.

55. Whilst the inspection team acknowledged there was an awareness of the need to review RfDP at level 4, there was a lack of evidence regarding how plans had been moved forward. Evidence demonstrated that issues were first identified in July 2023, and these had been reviewed at specific intervals, including with the addition of some employer contributions to teaching, however the wider scale changes required had not been prioritised. The inspection team considered this within the requirements and guidance against the standard, including the importance of ensuring that people with lived experience of social work are not adversely affected by the performance or conduct of student social workers. Upon balancing the evidence available alongside the views held during inspection, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 2.6

56. The course provider outlined their process for ensuring that all PEs involved in the delivery of the course were suitably qualified and on the register. This was overseen by the practice learning lead for the course who received CVs and evidence of completion of

Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS) training for checking. Whilst completing checks, the practice learning lead ensured all PEs were registered with Social Work England, had at least 2 years post qualifying experience and had completed PEPS training successfully. The course provider outlined that, should a placement not have a suitably qualified PE, they would be offered a free place in the university PEPS training in exchange for their agreement of a future placement learning opportunity. Where PEs were undertaking PEPS training whilst allocated a student, there were appropriate supervisory arrangements in place. The inspection team heard that PE details were reviewed on an annual basis and refresher training was also provided by the university within the same timeframe. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

57. Documentary evidence received in advance of the inspection outlined the provision of the college's 'student raising concerns' policy which provided details to students about processes which should be followed in relation to concerns. This included concerns in relation to the observation of, or identification of, a situation or event that had the potential to cause harm and concerns about personal experiences which could include bullying or harassment.

58. During a meeting with staff involved in placement based learning, the inspection team requested further detail on the management of the whistleblowing policy. Examples were given where concerns had been raised and dealt with, however there was a lack of clarity through the descriptions provided by staff about the formal process and which policies should be followed, with a suggestion that it was not as relevant to social work as it was to other disciplines within the college. It was also unclear how students were supported to understand how the university and provider policies worked together.

59. Whilst the inspection team agreed that there was evidence of processes in place, they were not assured that the process was clearly understood by all staff involved in placement based learning and there was a concern that this would not be effectively communicated to students. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

60. Documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection outlined the governance structures in place within the university which included oversight from the board of governors, academic board and details of the committees which fed into this. The inspection team were also able to review details of the college level boards which social work reported to, alongside the social work partnership board which included representation from colleagues in practice.

61. At the time of the evidence submission, the inspection team learnt that operational oversight of the course and line management for the team sat with the associate dean. During the inspection event, it was shared that there had been a restructure within the college following the departure of the previous dean and as a result, social work was led by the new dean with members of the course team reporting directly to them. Within the social work course team, there was a course lead and a lead social worker who were both registered social workers. The inspection team were informed that both roles formed part of the course level leadership team alongside the dean, offering some assurance that social work had a voice within the structure. The practice learning lead for the course had different management and reporting arrangements in place as their role sat within the Practice Education Support Unit (PESU) and, as a result, reported directly to the head of practice education within the college.

62. During their review of documentary evidence, the inspection team noted that there was some uncertainty about who would be undertaking the course lead role into the next academic year. The inspection team were informed that the role was rotational and could be held by all members of the course team as registered social workers and senior lecturers and that this would be confirmed at the reapproval event. During a meeting with the senior leadership team, the inspection team heard that, whilst there had been expressions of interest from the current team, the post had not yet been filled. A handover plan had been discussed, however, which would include shadowing opportunities and learning.

63. The inspection team were keen to understand how the senior leadership team for the course had sought to address issues in relation to management and organisation of the course raised via the National Student Survey (NSS) data. The course provider outlined that they felt these scores were due to issues in relation to communication, allocation of dissertation supervisors, assessment guidance, change of award title and covid legacy issues. The senior leadership team advised that action plans were in place at a school and course level to address issues and that specific actions had been taken in response.

64. During a meeting with the course team, the inspection team heard that there was a desire to make changes to the course, however it was indicated that these had not been implemented. This was because of perceived restrictions within university governance and quality management processes that did not allow this to be done. (see detail within standard 2.5). During a meeting with the senior leadership team, the inspection team heard that the university had moved away from a time bound revalidation cycle and instead promoted changes being made at a time that was appropriate for the course and as determined by the course team. This was in contrast to the challenges outlined by the course team, which caused the inspection team to question the barriers that were in place to maintaining effective delivery of the course.

65. In reviewing the evidence received in conjunction with that heard during the inspection, the inspection team concluded that the course governance and management processes

currently in place were not effective. Whilst there was an acknowledgement of issues and changes required to the course, there did not appear to be a clear management and governance plan in place to implement these changes and the course team perceived there to be barriers within current governance arrangements. As a result, the inspection team concluded that this standard was not met.

Standard 3.2

66. As outlined within standard 2.2, the inspection team heard conflicting information during the inspection event regarding how placement agreements were formalised. The example placement learning agreement provided by the university appeared to have been created and therefore held by the placement organisation and did not include reference to all aspects of the standard. The inspection team agreed that there appeared to be a lack of ownership and oversight from the university in relation to formalising placement agreements and as a result, the inspection team concluded that this standard was not met.

Standard 3.3

67. The course provider outlined that policies and procedures in relation to students health and wellbeing were checked via placement audits. Prior to placement commencing, the course team also offered guidance on how students could support their own health and wellbeing during placement activity. PEs, practice supervisors and placement tutors were all identified as key sources of support for students on placement and, during a meeting with student representatives, the inspection team heard that where issues had occurred, key staff were responsive to their needs.

68. Whilst the inspection team were assured by the feedback from students in relation to support offered, they were not able to see evidence of consistent documentation or agreements between the university and placement providers, which set out expectations in relation to policies and procedures to support in relation to health, wellbeing and risk. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 3.4

69. Documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection outlined that employers were involved in the course through a range of mechanisms, including the Social Work Partnership Board. Whilst narrative provided by the course team outlined that employers were actively engaged in reviewing aspects of the course, minutes of meetings provided and feedback from employers during the inspection suggested that there was an employer presence, but this did not include robust engagement or planned opportunities to challenge and influence. Some representatives commented that the partnership board had not been as active over recent academic years, however there was a hope that this would be improved in the coming months.

70. The inspection team did hear examples of opportunities for employers to support with the delivery of some teaching, specifically in relation to professionalism and readiness for practice following the identification of some concerns. This was supported by PE representatives who explained that they had been involved in some placement matching processes and offered feedback about curriculum content, which they understood would be progressed. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

71. During the inspection, the course team outlined their commitment to developing effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems to support with course delivery. At the time of the inspection, there had been engagement with an academic developer to review aspects of the course, such as the presentation of materials within the blackboard environment, responses to feedback from the EE and there was a commitment to increasing staff visits to placement opportunities. Whilst these actions were positive developments, the inspection team raised concerns that the team did not appear to be actively addressing some of the more fundamental issues within the course such as the professionalism of students, poor attendance and attrition between year groups.

72. As outlined in relation to standard 3.4, the inspection team observed some efforts to involve employers in course delivery, however there was a lack of evidence to demonstrate that there were processes which included employer partners in meaningful monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems. The feedback received during inspection suggested that the course provider was reactive to issues when raised but did not have proactive arrangements for involving employers to address potential issues before they arose.

73. In relation to the engagement of people with lived experience and students in monitoring and improvement systems, the inspection team observed an approach which mirrored that of employer partners. There were examples of the involvement of stakeholders (particularly students) in offering feedback on the course but there was a lack of evidence to demonstrate a coherent strategy to ensure that the engagement of all stakeholders was regularly planned and effective. Instead, the evidence received throughout the inspection suggested that this was based upon positive relationships and individual conversations which could be susceptible to failure. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 3.6

74. Documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection outlined that the university maintained an annual recruitment target of 50 students for the course. During a meeting with the placements team, the inspection team heard that there was ample provision of placements available for the course and not all available placements were being used due to lower student numbers.

75. The senior leadership team explained that student recruitment was reviewed on an annual basis, though the original approved number had not been altered. The inspection team received data during the inspection which outlined that the course was not currently recruiting at target numbers and there had been attrition from other cohorts. As a result, the inspection team queried whether the course provider had identified any clear rationale for this and whether recruitment targets might alter as a result. The course provider explained that lower recruitment figures were in line with the national picture for social work education and training but there was a hope that numbers would improve through their widening participation agenda. In relation to attrition, the inspection team were informed that this was perceived to be a result of the cost of living crisis, fitness to practice issues or placements not being what was expected, causing students to pursue a career outside of social work.

76. Whilst the inspection team acknowledged some trends in recruitment for social work courses nationally, the reduction presented by the course provider was significant. The rates of attrition across year groups also raised a concern about how students' suitability for the course was assessed during the admissions process and whether the desire to maintain cohort numbers was potentially leading to inappropriate admissions to the course. Based upon the evidence available, there did not appear to be a clear and full understanding of the cause of the rates of attrition or the decline in numbers, and the inspection team could not be assured that there was a strategy in place to address this. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 3.7

77. The inspection team reviewed the registration and CV for the professional lead for the course which confirmed that they were appropriately experienced and on the register. Whilst the arrangements in place were appropriate at the time of the inspection, the inspection team heard that the professional lead and course lead roles would not continue with the same staff beyond the end of the academic year. At the time of the inspection, it was unclear who would undertake the roles moving forward which posed a risk to the stability of current arrangements. As a result, the inspection team concluded that this standard was not met.

Standard 3.8

78. Documentary evidence provided in support of this standard included CVs for members of the course team, which demonstrated that there was a range of experienced staff with varied research interests. The inspection team heard that there was a desire to continue recruiting colleagues from practice to support course delivery, specifically in relation to contextual safeguarding issues. Evidence was also provided of the ways in which staff from other areas of the university, such as admissions, practice learning and student support, engaged with course delivery.

79. During the inspection event, the inspection team heard that the knowledge and skills of some members of the course team were utilised to support the delivery of other courses within the college. The inspection team agreed this standard was met, though acknowledged staff capacity and deployment should be kept under regular review, particularly when considering issues relating to reduced course numbers.

Standard 3.9

80. The course provider submitted information about the arrangements in place to monitor student progress, along with examples of data in relation to the attainment of cohorts. During their review of data, the inspection team observed some attainment gaps at a course level which they explored with the course team. During these discussions, the inspection team heard details about institutional level initiatives, particularly in relation to students from specific backgrounds, however they were not assured that there was a course level plan to address these gaps.

81. During a meeting in relation to admissions to the course, the inspection team heard that information in relation to EDI was gathered by university, however this was not accessed by the course team. The inspection team agreed that this would have been a helpful tool in understanding student demographics and supporting with issues in relation to student numbers being admitted to the course and potential attrition issues.

82. The inspection team agreed that an enhanced understanding and analysis of data was required to address issues identified in relation to student attendance, attrition and engagement on the course. At the point of the inspection, however, there was not a clear plan in place to do so and, as a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 3.10

83. Documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection offered examples of the various ways in which course team staff were involved in practice. This included involvement in fostering panels, fitness to practice, mental health interventions and the African families network. Evidence was also provided of a high level of doctorate level study amongst the course team with direct links to practice. During the inspection event, the inspection team heard from both employer partners and the course team, that there were renewed efforts to forge links between academics and practice colleagues. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

84. The inspection team reviewed course and module specifications which demonstrated that the course curriculum and assessment design was underpinned by frameworks set out

by the Office for Students (OfS) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code for Higher Education. Further to this, the course provider outlined that the curriculum was underpinned by the QAA subject benchmark for Social Work and that the course learning outcomes were mapped to the Social Work England professional standards and the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF).

85. Within documentary evidence provided, the inspection team reviewed details of the course teams approach to adopting a spiral curriculum for the course and were keen to understand this further within meetings held as part of the inspection. The inspection team heard some examples of how learning around specific themes was developed year on year so that links were made between modules and also how the course team had reviewed specific elements of module content to remove repetition. However, the inspection team did not gain a full sense of how the course team had devised a spiral curriculum to develop and integrate students' learning across the course to prepare them for their future professional practice.

86. The inspection team also reviewed feedback from the EE which outlined some concerns about the content of level 4 modules. The EE suggested that there should be further review of level 4 modules to ensure less overlap, and identify more explicitly the main areas of foundational knowledge and skills required for the course in relation to readiness for practice. These themes were echoed by other stakeholders with whom the inspection team met with. As outlined in previous standard areas, the inspection team noted that the course team had acknowledged the changes required at level 4 to support professionalism, engagement and readiness, however, plans to address these had not yet been progressed, despite being acknowledged for some time.

87. During a meeting with student representatives, the inspection team were eager to understand whether they were able to reflect upon their learning journey and how it prepared them for professional practice. Feedback from some student representatives outlined that the majority of concerns received from other students were about the readiness for practice aspects of the course. There was also a lack of clear evidence of final year students being able to articulate how they had been effectively prepared to meet the professional standards as they moved into their professional roles. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 4.2

88. The course provider submitted a narrative and supporting documentary evidence to outline their approach to engaging people with lived experience of social work in the development, delivery and review of the curriculum. The approach was informed by the college strategy for 2022-2025 which had been developed to meet the requirement of all Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) approved courses. The course provider

outlined that employers were involved in the Social Work Partnership Board, through quality assurance of placement and via team reflective events.

89. During the inspection event, people with lived experience who had been involved in supporting the course outlined their involvement in adapting interview questions for the course. Representatives also explained that they had been invited to contribute to the delivery of the course, however this was not necessarily driven by their views or feedback. Whilst representatives were eager to be involved in the course and felt able to approach the course team with any issues, the inspection team noted that there was no evidence of a defined network of people with lived experience who contributed specifically to social work. Instead, the involvement of this group appeared to be more responsive to course needs as they arose, rather than being a planned approach.

90. As outlined in relation to standard 3.5, the inspection team observed that there were some efforts to include employers in the course, however there was an absence of a clear strategy for doing so. Some employers had shared views which resulted in changes, however there wasn't a consistent opportunity to do so. The inspection team also observed that there was an appetite for this to be developed amongst employer partners.

91. When considering the evidence provided against the standard the inspection team agreed that the course provider was not able to demonstrate how they ensured that the views of key stakeholders were incorporated into the course. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 4.3

92. The course provider outlined their approach to EDI through their institutional statement and commitment to widening participation, which was evidenced and monitored through their access and participation plan. The course provider was also able to outline where issues relating to EDI were addressed within social work modules and teaching. During meetings with the course team, the inspection team heard further details about how the aspects of EDI and relevant legislation were reflected within the curriculum. There were mechanisms in place for members of the course team to share best practice in this area and there had been a team approach to decolonising the curriculum.

93. The inspection team heard that the university was proactive in their approach to encouraging students to declare any needs or disabilities which might impact their access to the curriculum. Throughout the inspection, there were clear examples of where adjustments had been made to accommodate a range of needs. There was also evidence of the course team seeking to make aspects of the curriculum inclusive by design which was evidenced through changes to assessment strategies. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

94. The course provider outlined their approach for ensuring that the course reflected the most up to date evidence base, legislation and government policy. This was managed through the organisation's academic standards and quality handbook. The mechanisms by which updates occurred were outlined as follows: via student feedback, course monitoring, the research and scholarly activity of the course team and partnership working with professionals. During a meeting with the course team, the inspection team heard some specific examples of how individual research interests had been used to inform course delivery. Examples were also provided by some PE representatives about the ways in which they were contributing to contextual safeguarding issues on the course.

95. Whilst the inspection team were able to hear some examples of feedback and learning being shared, they were not assured that this was having an impact on course delivery. The ongoing concerns in relation to how the course appropriately prepared students for practice suggested that any changes that had been made did not have the desired outcome. Further to this, the concerns outlined in previous standards regarding the absence of a planned approach to engaging with stakeholders to continually review the course, were also relevant in relation to this standard. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 4.5

96. Documentary evidence provided by the course team outlined that the integration of theory into practice was achieved via the design of the curriculum and through interspersing academic learning and practice learning during years 2 and 3 of the course. This provided opportunities for students to apply learning within the practice environment on an ongoing basis. When the inspection team explored this with the course team, however, feedback suggested that the design of placement days alongside academic input was in response to requests from employer partners. Despite this, the inspection team were able to see that there were mechanisms in place which supported students to integrate theory into practice, though it was agreed that these could be further enhanced to support student development through further review of the curriculum. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

97. The inspection team reviewed details of the opportunities available for students to learn with and from other professions which included input from fields such as learning disabilities, mental health and nursing. During a meeting with students, the inspection team also heard that students benefited from input from a lecturer who was a lawyer, who was able to incorporate teaching around specific legislation into lectures.

98. During a meeting with the course team, the inspection team heard that there was a desire to further embed interprofessional learning into course delivery and provide

additional opportunities for students to learn with other professions. The inspection team agreed that this could be further enhanced through necessary curriculum development and by ensuring a college and wider university approach. Whilst further development in this area would improve practice and ensure a strategic approach, the inspection team agreed that the standard was met.

Standard 4.7

99. Documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection outlined the structure of the course, including its credit rating requirements and the number of learning hours attached to credits. This was supported by module specifications for the course which included indicative contact hours and guided and independent study. The course provider also outlined their approach to monitoring attendance to ensure that there was appropriate time spent in structured academic learning.

100. Whilst the narrative and documentary evidence provided appeared appropriate, during the course of the inspection, the inspection team heard that there were issues in relation to student attendance on the course. The course team explained that, whilst documentation made attendance expectations clear, there were ongoing issues where students expected to be able to join learning online. The inspection team also heard that discussions were ongoing with students across all years where attendance was not in line with university expectations and that student attendance had been as low as 33%. It was not clear to the inspection team that the course team understood the root causes of the attendance issues, or had a strategic plan to address them

101. As a result of the persistent issues in relation to the attendance and engagement of students, the inspection team agreed that, at the time of the inspection, the university was not ensuring that students were attending the required number of hours for them to meet the required level of competence and, as a result, the standard was not met.

Standard 4.8

102. The course provider outlined that they had developed a diverse assessment strategy to reflect the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the professional standards. Evidence was provided to demonstrate how the course team had responded to feedback from the EE report and completed an audit of their assessment strategy to ensure there was a focus on being inclusive by design and avoidance of over assessment.

103. Whilst the inspection team recognised that there had been some review of the assessment strategy and attempts to address specific issues, they were not assured that changes made resulted in assessments which were fully appropriate to social work practice and enabled students to meet the professional standards. There was also a lack of evidence of the course provider consulting with key stakeholders on their approach. This was further compounded by the issues raised in relation to level 4, specifically regarding professionalism

and readiness to practice. The inspection team agreed that a review of level 4 learning would also require revision of the assessment strategy not just at this level, but across the course. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 4.9

104. Within documentary evidence, the inspection team were able to see details of how assessments had been mapped to the curriculum and sequenced to demonstrate student progression throughout the course. The EE report also commented on changes required to the volume of assessments to support student workload and that the course team had been responsive to this. During a meeting with student representatives, the inspection team heard some feedback that suggested managing assessment deadlines whilst on placement was challenging, however PE representatives were clear that they supported students with the demands of this alongside placement.

105. Whilst the inspection team were able to see evidence of assessment mapping and a progressive approach to assessing students' knowledge and skills, they agreed that this standard was impacted by the concerns raised in relation to level 4 and the necessary review of the curriculum. The inspection team agreed that the standard was met but considered that any changes to the curriculum and assessment strategy for the course would require a review of how assessments were mapped and sequenced to match student progression.

Standard 4.10

106. The narrative explanation provided by the course team outlined an approach to feedback, which included students being offered formative feedback to inform their approach to summative assessments. Students received input via group and individual tutorials and there was an emphasis on a feedforward approach to identify strengths in student work which could be enhanced to support future submissions.

107. Through documentary evidence, the inspection team noted some concerns had been reported in relation to the consistency of student feedback and the timeliness in which students received feedback. The inspection team heard that issues in relation to consistency had been addressed via the introduction of marking rubrics and timeliness had improved as a result of a more stable staff team. Whilst improvements were noted, the inspection team heard that student experience could still be variable with some student representatives feeling that there was an emphasis on what was wrong with assessments, rather than feedback being constructive and developmental. Student representatives also outlined that there had been occasions where they needed to chase feedback or receipt fell outside of agreed timescales.

108. Whilst considering the evidence against this standard, the inspection team also considered the concerns raised by stakeholders in relation to student professionalism and

engagement. The inspection team queried whether students had received specific and constructive feedback in this area to enable students to understand where conduct and engagement needed to improve. The inspection team agreed that this would be a necessary consideration during any review of the curriculum and assessment design.

109. Upon a review of the evidence available at the point of inspection, the inspection team agreed that, despite the specific concerns outlined within the standard, on the whole students were being provided with feedback throughout the course. As a result, the inspection team agreed that the standard was met, but in line with previous standards relating to assessment strategy and design, this would be impacted by any review or amendment to the curriculum.

Standard 4.11

110. The inspection team were able to review the qualifications and experience of the social work course team which demonstrated that they had the appropriate expertise to carry out assessments. The course provider also outlined the arrangements that were in place to assess students' performance on placements, which the inspection team deemed were carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced individuals. The inspection team heard that there had been some challenges for the course team in relation to the previously appointed EE, however this was now resolved and there was an appropriately qualified and registered professional in place. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

111. Documentary evidence and information provided throughout the inspection provided the inspection team with an overview of the processes that were in place to manage student progression throughout the course, with a focus on progression across years. There was also reference to the observations of students in practice learning and arrangements in place to discuss student development within the placement environment.

112. Whilst there was evidence of formalised processes in place to manage student progression, the inspection team did not see evidence of this system being effective, particularly in relation to assessment of readiness for placement. As a result, employers had observed that students had started placement without the necessary knowledge and skills. The inspection team also expressed concerns about whether and how the course provider had addressed issues with students that were disengaged from the course but still enrolled. There remained a lack of clarity about how these students were able to continue to progress throughout the course where there were issues about their engagement and attendance. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 4.13

113. Documentary evidence received in advance of the inspection outlined that evidence based practice was integral to the course design but was a key focus within two modules that had a research focus. Within these modules students were offered the opportunity to gather, explore and analyse evidence related to social work practice. Through placement activity, students were expected to link their learning to practice situations.

114. Despite there being a focus on evidence based practice within the curriculum, the inspection team reviewed information which suggested that students struggled to engage with research related modules. There was also a suggestion from the course team that attendance at these modules could be improved. This was supported by information shared during meetings held as part of the inspection, though it was not clear what actions had been taken to address this.

115. The inspection team considered this standard alongside wider concerns in relation to attendance and engagement across the course and agreed that the themes were strongly connected. In order for the standard to be met, there would need to be a thorough curriculum review which considered the cause of poor attendance and engagement and an action plan to address this. As this was not evident at the time of the inspection, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

116. The course provider submitted a range of documentary evidence which outlined the provision of resources available to support students' health and wellbeing needs. The services available to students included mental health support, counselling services, careers advice and occupational health. During the inspection, the inspection team heard from representatives who were able to provide specific examples of how they provided support to students on the course. This included financial advice in relation to social work bursaries and support around fitness to practice or study issues.

117. During a meeting with student representatives, the inspection team heard that there had generally been a positive experience of accessing support services when required. This included during times when they were on placement. Student support services acknowledged that their services were well accessed by the college and, for social work students specifically, there was positive engagement with counselling appointments to support with the sometimes challenging nature of subject matter on the course. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

118. Resources to support students' academic development included the provision of library services, study skills interventions and information literacy services. The inspection team also heard details of how services worked closely with the course team and personal tutors, who were also assigned as placement tutors, to offer targeted support and to address issues in relation to disengagement. There was evidence of flexibility in the approach to accommodate the needs of social work students at different points in the academic year.

119. The inspection team agreed that there was evidence of a range of academic support available and efforts to work across teams to address issues in relation to disengagement. They questioned, however whether a more cohesive approach to addressing issues in relation to engagement and professionalism would be beneficial, to enable early intervention and avoid a reactive approach. Despite this, the inspection team agreed that on the balance of information available, the standard was met.

Standard 5.3

120. Documentary evidence outlined that student suitability was assured via the provision of the DBS update service and declarations of suitability. During a meeting with the course team, the inspection team were able to hear an example of the process in action where a student had failed to declare a change in circumstances but that this was picked up via routine annual checks. The course provider also highlighted that there were robust fitness to practice and fitness to study processes which had been used on the course.

121. As referenced in relation to standard 5.2, the inspection team heard that there were efforts from the course team and student support services to address issues in relation to disengagement. However, attendance and attrition figures presented throughout the inspection suggested that there had not been the required impact. The inspection team was also unclear how far attrition rates had been impacted by the enactment of fitness to practice/study processes and where students had chosen to leave. As referenced in relation to standard 3.9, the inspection team agreed that the course provider required a clearer understanding of data in relation to attrition and engagement. This understanding would support the course provider to identify whether student suitability was impacting course attrition rates and the specific actions required to address this. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 5.4

122. The inspection team heard and reviewed evidence which outlined the processes in place to make reasonable adjustments for students on the course, and examples of the types of adjustments that might be applied. The inspection team agreed that there had been significant efforts to accommodate student needs, however questioned if these were always effective or reasonable to the nature of the course. Data provided during the inspection suggested that students with additional needs and those requiring adjustments

made up a proportion of those who were not continuing on the course. Further to this, there was evidence to suggest that the performance of this group was lower.

123. At the time of the inspection, the inspection team could not be assured that there is a targeted plan in place to address the issues outlined above, nor a consideration or review of the nature of the adjustments being provided. Therefore, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 5.5

124. Documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection included the course handbook, practice handbook, details of the student portal, assessment schedule and information about a targeted event focused upon transition to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). The course provider explained that students were directed to information within course level documentation to support their understanding of different aspects of the course, however, during the inspection, students expressed a lack of understanding in some areas. A specific challenge for students had been their understanding of attendance and placement requirements for the course and whilst there was evidence of this being contained within documentation, students did not appear to have been supported to engaged with this fully.

125. The inspection team considered whether students lack of understanding in relation to key issues had impacted upon figures in relation to attrition rates for the course. They also considered the responsibility of the course provider to ensure that students' received clear information on all aspects of the course, including any changes, and to support students' understanding and engagement with what was expected of them. At the time of the inspection, the inspection team could not be assured that the course team had explored issues to do with how they supplied course information to students, including to address the wider issues relating to student engagement, attendance and attrition. As a result, the inspection team concluded that this standard was not met.

Standard 5.6

126. As referenced in relation to other standard areas, the inspection team identified significant concerns in relation to the attendance of students on the course. At the time of the inspection, the efforts to address these were reactionary and there wasn't assurance available that a strategic approach to addressing attendance had been developed. The inspection team also considered how attendance issues on the course may be impacting upon the issues raised in relation to professionalism and readiness for practice. Whilst the course provider explained that attendance expectations were articulated via course documentation, there remained a lack of understanding from students with some commenting that attendance was not routinely discussed. As a result, the inspection team agreed that this standard was not met.

Standard 5.7

127. As referenced in relation to standard area 4.10, the inspection team heard that there had been some inconsistency in relation to the feedback provided to students. Student representatives commented that some feedback fell outside of timeframes, though this did not appear to be a persistent challenge. The inspection team agreed that there had been efforts to improve feedback through the development of marking rubrics and as a result, the standard was met, though further review of the curriculum and assessment strategy would enhance practice in this area.

Standard 5.8

128. Documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection outlined a clear process in place to allow students to make academic appeals. During meetings with students during the inspection, the inspection team did not hear evidence to suggest that the process in place was not effective and therefore agreed that this standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

129. As the qualifying course is a Bachelor of Social Work (BSocial Work), the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

Following review of the documentary evidence received throughout the inspection process and verbal evidence received through meetings held as part of the inspection 'visit', the inspection team recommend withdrawal of course approval.

There were 25 standards which were considered not met but, more significantly, the inspection team observed overarching themes of concern which impacted all areas of the education and training standards.

The inspection team identified significant concerns about the curriculum at level 4, the professionalism of students, student readiness for practice, poor attendance and engagement and high attrition rates on the course. The inspection team explored these themes with the course provider and relevant stakeholders and, whilst an acknowledgement of issues was observed, they were not provided with sufficient evidence of action planning to address issues.

In conclusion, the substantive and interconnected nature of many of the standards deemed not met suggested that the current course governance, management and quality assurance arrangements in place were not effective. As a result of this, the inspection team agreed a recommendation of withdrawal of course approval.

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

Standard	Met	Not Met
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 information about the professional standards, research interests and placement opportunities.	☐	☒
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.	☒	☐

Standard	Met	Not Met
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.	☒	☐
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.	☐	☒
3.1 Ensure courses are supported by a management and governance plan that includes the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability of individuals and governing groups in the delivery, resourcing and quality management of the course.	☐	☒
3.2 Ensure that they have agreements with placement providers to provide education and training that meets the professional standards and the education and training qualifying standards. This should include necessary consents and ensure placement providers have contingencies in place to deal with practice placement breakdown.	☐	☒
3.3 Ensure that placement providers have the necessary policies and procedures in relation to students' health, wellbeing and risk, and the support systems in place to underpin these.	☐	☒
3.4 Ensure that employers are involved in elements of the course, including but not limited to the management and monitoring of courses and the allocation of practice education.	☒	☐

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

Standard	Met	Not Met
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.	☒	☐
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.	☐	☒
5.1 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their health and wellbeing including: i. confidential counselling services; ii. careers advice and support; and iii. occupational health services	☒	☐

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

Regulator decision

Not approved.