

Inspection Report

Course provider: University of Bradford

Course approval: Reapproval BA (Hons) Social Work & MA Social Work

Inspection dates: 22 – 25 October 2024

Report date:	20 December 2024
Inspector recommendation:	Approved without conditions
Regulator decision:	Approved without conditions
Date of Regulator decision:	30 January 2025

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Introduction

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

What we do

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

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

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

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

10. Once the inspectors and officer are satisfied that an inspection can take place, this is usually undertaken over a three 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 Bradford 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.

Inspection ID	UBRR1_CP162_CP163
Course provider	University of Bradford
Validating body (if different)	
Course inspected	BA (Hons) Social Work and MA Social Work
Mode of study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	25 students MA Social Work 25 students BA (Hons) Social Work
Date of inspection	22 – 25 October 2024
Inspection team	Sam Jameson (Education Quality Assurance Officer) Jo Benn (Lay Inspector) Surj Sall-Dullat (Registrant Inspector)

Language

16. In this document we describe the University of Bradford as ‘the education provider’ or ‘the university’ and we describe the BA (Hons) Social Work and MA Social Work as ‘the courses’ or ‘the programmes’.

Inspection

17. An onsite inspection took place from 22 to 25 October 2024 where the University of Bradford is based. 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 14 students, 8 students from the MA and 6 from the BA, at various levels of their study, including student reps. Discussions included their experiences of the application and admissions process, placements, skills days, social work theory and practice, people with lived experience of social work, teaching and learning, equality, diversity and inclusion, feedback, attendance, student and academic support and the Social Work England Professional Standards.

Meetings with course staff

21. Over the course of the inspection, the inspection team met with university staff members from the course teams, senior management team, staff involved in placement-based learning, staff involved in selection and admissions, and student support services, library, careers and academic 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 the courses and known as Experts by Experience. Discussions included what areas of the courses they were involved with, how much input and feedback they had and were able to provide to the university, the courses and what training they received in this role.

Meetings with external stakeholders

23. The inspection team met with practice educators, representatives from placement partners including Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Bradford Children and Families Trust, Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust and School of Rock and Media Limited.

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. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included both programmes' specifications, links to the university and course web pages and information regarding the admissions and selection process. During the inspection week the inspectors were able to meet with staff involved in selection and admissions, enabling them to triangulate information from the documentary evidence.

26. The inspectors were satisfied that entry to the course is assessed via a holistic and multi-dimensional assessment process. This is achieved via a written exercise, group discussion and interview panel, with mechanisms and support for international students. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.2

27. Documentary and narrative evidence within the education and training standards mapping forms outlined how applicants' prior relevant experience is considered as part of the admissions processes. Staff involved in selection and admissions provided insight into how an applicants' prior relevant experience is initially evaluated for both programmes, screening takes place by a senior admissions officer in partnership with the departmental lead where clarification is required.

28. The inspectors heard examples of how the interview panel and questions provide an opportunity to explore an applicant's prior experience. The interviewers seek to understand how it has helped applicants to develop relevant knowledge and skills, which will support them to work towards meeting the professional standards by completion of the course. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.3

29. Documentary evidence provided by the course provider satisfied the inspectors that there is a clear partnership approach to the admissions processes, involving employer partners, placement providers and experts by experience. During the inspection week the inspectors were provided with examples and verbal evidence of how these key stakeholders felt valued, listened to and active members of the admissions and selection processes for both courses.

30. The inspection team were able to triangulate documentary evidence within the meetings with key stakeholders, hearing how they have coproduced questions, planned the order of how these are asked and felt a sense of equity regarding their views on applicants' suitability for the courses. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.4

31. The course provider submitted documentary evidence which detailed the courses' processes for assessing applicants' conduct, character and health. During the inspection week the inspectors heard that applicants are subject to an enhanced disclosure and barring service check and occupational health screening. Where convictions are declared they are considered by a university panel to review suitability on an individual basis.

32. Members of the course teams involved in the admissions processes must undertake mandatory interview training each year, and provide guidance and support on the interview process to experts by experience and employer partners involved in admissions. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 1.5

33. Prior to the inspection the inspection team were able to review documentary evidence that included, but was not limited to, the university's Admissions Policy and the university's Access and Participation Plan 2024-2025. As a result of their meetings with student representatives and staff involved in selection and admissions the inspectors were able to learn that the courses' selection and admissions process adheres to the above policy and is in line with university equality, diversity and inclusion principles. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 1.6

34. Documentary evidence highlighted that the university offers a variety of information in differing formats to ensure candidates have sufficient information to make an informed choice. This includes a variety of written information offered via web links, experiential activities such as open days and taster days where applicants can access

sample sessions. There are numerous opportunities for candidates to raise questions and information is provided on relevant standards and placement opportunities. There is a Bradford life blog which includes insights from former students on the programme, and there is a virtual tour.

35. As a result of their meetings with student representatives the inspectors were provided with verbal evidence that students felt they had all the information they required to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the courses. The inspection team determined that this standard was met.

Standard two: Learning environment

Standard 2.1

36. Documentary evidence and information contained within the education and training standards mapping forms outlined that students will have placements in at least two practice settings providing contrasting experiences, including a minimum of one placement taking place within a statutory setting. The inspectors were assured, following their meetings with placement providers and staff involved in placement-based learning, that placements provide experience and sufficient numbers of statutory social work tasks involving high risk decision making and legal interventions.

37. Practice learning days were clearly articulated in the evidence base with placements of 70 days, 100 days and 30 skills days, of which 20 are linked to the readiness for direct practice module, coordinated throughout the two programmes.

38. There is a structured approach to ensuring all placement days, and skills days, are attended and this is monitored by the practice educator and the practice learning tutors in the university, with processes for making these days up as/when required. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.2

39. Information contained within the education and training standards mapping forms highlighted that practice learning opportunities are provided through placements organised by the practice learning team, the Bradford Social Work Teaching Partnership and the private, voluntary, independent sector.

40. The inspection team were able to triangulate documentary evidence, including but not limited to Placement Application Forms and Quality Assurance in Practice Learning documentation, that enables the practice learning team and partners to match individual students' learning needs to a placement setting. The inspectors were assured that this process ensures that placements provide suitable learning opportunities that allow students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and meet the professional standards.

41. The inspection team reviewed course documentation prior to the inspection that set out administrative and practical information about the placement and what the student should expect to do and learn during the placement. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 2.3

42. In the lead up to the inspection the inspectors were able to review an example of a placement induction and welcome pack. The guidance includes general information set out in the Placement Handbook, alongside a collection of appendices that contain more detailed information for students, that meet the requirements of this standard.

43. The inspectors were able to triangulate documentary evidence in their meetings with student representatives, practice educators and the placement learning team. Students identified that they felt that they had access to a comprehensive range of information regarding their placement induction, including guidance and procedures for supervision, support, resources and workload. All of this information is checked and signed off that it has been received and complete within the practice learning agreement meeting, regular supervisions and placement reviews. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.4

44. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the Placement Handbook, Placement Application Form, Practice Placement Appendices Handbook and the Quality Assurance in Practice Learning documentation.

45. The inspectors were able to hear directly from the practice learning team of how their quality assurance processes ensure that students are firstly matched correctly to a placement setting. This is achieved through the individual students' Placement Application Form and the Quality Assurance in Practice Learning documentation for a placement setting, ensuring that the learning outcomes and expectations for practice are appropriate to a students' stage of education and training.

46. The inspection team were informed of further mechanisms in place that check placement learning opportunities are appropriate for a students' level of development, these included the practice learning agreement meeting, supervisions and reviews. Students spoke of their awareness and understanding of these procedures in action and that they would speak to their practice educator, supervisor, practice learning tutor or personal tutor if they had any concerns. The inspection team advised that this standard was met.

Standard 2.5

47. Documentary evidence and information contained in the education and training standards mapping forms confirmed that both courses have a readiness for practice module, at appropriate stages of both programmes. The inspection team heard from the course team and staff involved in practice-based learning how this module ensures that students undergo assessed preparation for direct practice to make sure they are safe to carry out practice learning in a service delivery setting.

48. The inspection team were provided with insight into how this process is supported by the enhanced disclosure and barring service check and occupational health screening, as identified in standard 1.4 of this report, to ensure readiness for practice. There is further consolidation within a module before and during students' first placement. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 2.6

49. Information detailed within the education and training standards mapping forms identified that the university placement team keep a record of the practice educators used to support placements, as evidenced in the Practice Educator Register. This information feeds into the departmental practice evaluation panel, who monitor and evaluate the currency of practice educators through its monthly meeting.

50. Practice educators confirmed that they are asked for their details to meet the requirements of this standard, both by independent practice educators who liaise directly with the course provider and practice educators through their workforce development team. The inspection team were able to triangulate documentary evidence that highlighted the practice educator forums and annual conference that they have the opportunity to attend. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 2.7

51. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the university Whistleblowing Code of Practice, Practice Placement Appendices Handbook, Introduction to Social Work module descriptor and the teaching partnership procedures for responding to concerns raised about practice educators.

52. Students that the inspection team met with confirmed that they felt they received clear and transparent information regarding whistleblowing policies and procedures. The practice learning agreement meeting records and documents that students must explore local procedures whilst on placement, practice educators confirmed this is ingrained within inductions for all placements and course documentation.

53. During the inspection, the inspectors were provided with an example of the whistleblowing procedure in practice and the support and guidance that the student

received throughout this process. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard three: Course governance, management and quality

Standard 3.1

54. Prior to the inspection the inspectors reviewed documentary evidence submitted by the course provider, this included the University of Bradford Overview of the Faculty and Directorate Structure, University of Bradford Organisational Structure 2023-24 and School of Social Sciences and Departmental Structure. The narrative information submitted within the education and training standards mapping forms provided the inspectors with insight into the governance, roles and responsibilities of the two programmes.

55. During the inspection week the inspectors met with members of the senior leadership team. This enabled the inspection team to triangulate documentary evidence and gain a greater understanding of both courses' management governance and oversight.

56. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection included detailed information of the lead social workers for both courses. The evidence identified their role, confirming their registration with Social Work England, appropriate qualifications, and experience. The inspectors were able to check and verify this information within the inspection meetings with the course team and senior management team. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 3.2

57. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the Placement Handbook, Practice Evaluation Panel for BA and MA Social Work: Terms of Reference and the Service Level Agreement. Information outlined how the Placement Evaluation Panel is used to quality assure placements and ensure that learning opportunities meet the Social Work England Professional Standards, and the Professional Capabilities Framework.

58. During the inspection week the inspectors heard how the process highlighted within the Placement Handbook provides a framework when there are concerns within a placement. The inspectors were provided with examples of collaborative work between the course provider and placement providers regarding placements at risk of breakdown, including contingency planning and ensuring students are supported throughout this process. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.3

59. The documentary evidence submitted by the course provider outlined the support services in place for students during placements to uphold their health, safety and wellbeing. The staff involved in practice-based learning that the inspection team met with spoke through the procedure and checklists all placements must follow to ensure that they have appropriate policies and procedures to support students.

60. From their discussions with student representatives, placement providers and staff involved in placement-based learning, the inspectors were satisfied that pre-placement checks and the practice learning agreement meeting raises all necessary support, policies and procedures to be discussed and agreed upon. Practice educators identified these areas are covered again in supervision and reviews with the students.

61. During the meeting with practice educators, the inspectors were provided with an example of how succinct and timely support was put in place for a student by following the clear procedures to support their needs. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 3.4

62. Documentary evidence submitted alongside the information within the education and training standards mapping forms identified that employer partners and placement providers are directly involved in the allocation, organisation and management of practice learning opportunities. The inspection team were provided with narrative evidence from employer partners and placement providers that they have coproduced and been actively involved in course delivery; a mental health module was one example given.

63. Members of employer partners and placement providers told the inspection team that over recent years they have noted their increased communication and involvement in numerous areas of the course. Some examples given included admissions and selection, teaching and assessment, the programme management boards and practice evaluation board that support the management and monitoring of the course. The inspection team heard from employer partners and placement providers that their involvement is governed and structured very well, they feel listened to and respected in their role with the courses and university.

64. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 3.5

65. Student representatives that the inspection team met with, including student representatives voted for by their peers, identified their involvement and ability to feedback and see actions from this in end of module feedback and the student and staff committee, that feeds into the programme management board. Members of the

course team and student representatives spoke of resources that can support the live monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems that students can access, through student monthly base rooms, that are held online to be inclusive of students on placement, and discussion forums on Canvas.

66. As identified within standard 3.4 the inspectors were assured that employer partners and placement providers are clearly involved in the monitoring, evaluation and improvement of the course.

67. During their meeting with representatives from the senior management team the inspectors were able to triangulate information identified within the education and training standards mapping forms. Documentary and narrative evidence outlined the range of monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems in place for both programmes at strategic and operational levels.

68. The placement evaluation panel involves members of the expert by experience group that the inspectors met with. Those members spoke of their involvement and coproduction for both courses in admissions and selection, course delivery and assessment, including further curriculum development as identified within discussions with the university expert by experience officer and lecturer. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.6

69. As a result of their meetings with representatives from the course teams and senior leadership team the inspectors were assured that the number of students admitted to both programmes is identified from a clear strategy. The inspection team were satisfied that this included consideration of local and regional placement capacity and ensuring that students can complete quality placements in appropriate settings.

70. Employer partners and placement providers identified their involvement in discussions and planning through both formal and informal mechanisms. The inspectors were satisfied that students would have learning opportunities that will help them develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to meet the professional standards by the time they complete the courses.

71. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 3.7

72. Documentary evidence submitted prior to the inspection included detailed information of the lead social workers for both courses. The evidence identified their role, confirming their registration with Social Work England, appropriate qualifications, and experience. The inspectors were able to check and verify this information. The

inspection team concluded that the documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection was able to demonstrate that this standard was met.

Standard 3.8

73. The inspectors were assured from information submitted prior to the inspection and discussions with the course team and senior management team that there were an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, including those registered with Social Work England, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise to deliver an effective course.

74. During the inspection the inspectors discussed the course teams' wide range of expertise in relation to social work, covering many areas of active research and links to current social work practice and other community services in the Bradford locality. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.9

75. Information submitted by the course provider in support of this standard included, but was not limited to, MA and BA Social Work Programme Data Insight, Programme Monitoring reports from previous years and BA and MA Social Work – Gateway Scorecards 2022/3. The inspection team learnt that the assessment of student performance, progression and outcome at the university is governed by a two-tier system; Assessment Committees and Board of Examiners.

76. Information provided within documentary evidence and the education and training standards mapping forms outlined how the Academic Portfolio Lifecycle provides the mechanism for programme teams to review data in relation to outcomes at modular and programme level on an annual basis. The inspection team heard from representatives from the senior management team of how datasets available to the programme teams allow them to review data collected in relation to attainment, continuation rates and outcomes, as well as in relation to key protected characteristics of students. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 3.10

77. Documentary evidence and discussions with the course team identified that staff are supported in a range of activities to enhance their learning, development and teaching. Staff are supported through a comprehensive induction programme, on an annual basis those registered with Social Work England must submit evidence of continuous professional development. There is a staff appraisal system in place to support development. The inspection team were informed of formal supportive mechanisms for new staff to be mentored with developing their insight into marking and feedback processes for both courses.

78. Research activity is evident in the information contained within the staff CVs and the inspection team heard a wide range of active research within the course teams, including examples of this being brought into course delivery. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard four: Curriculum assessment

Standard 4.1

79. The inspectors were satisfied that the documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection was able to demonstrate that the content, structure, and delivery of both courses is in accordance with relevant standards, guidance and frameworks.

80. Meetings with placement providers, employer partners and practice educators identified that students were able to meet the expected level of knowledge and competency for their stage of learning and development. Following their meetings with the above key stakeholders and documentary evidence review the inspection team were assured that the course is designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the professional standards upon completion of either programme.

81. The inspection team advised that this standard was met.

Standard 4.2

82. The members of the expert by experience group that the inspectors met with spoke of their involvement and coproduction for both courses in course delivery and assessment, providing examples of teaching sessions in both courses and further curriculum development days planned for later this year. The development days will also include employer partners, placement providers and social work practitioners.

83. The inspection team were provided with narrative evidence from employer partners and placement providers that they have coproduced and been actively involved in course delivery; a mental health module was one example given. The inspection team heard from the expert by experience members, employer partners and placement providers that their involvement is governed and structured very well, they feel listened to and respected in their role within the courses and wider university.

84. Documentary evidence provided prior to the inspection outlined involvement from the above key stakeholders within teaching on the courses, skills days and the readiness for direct practice modules. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.3

85. During the inspection week the inspectors were provided with examples of reasonable adjustments that are in place for students on both courses, including whilst on placement, and the proactive and early recognition approach that is taken to support individual needs. This was reflected in the information provided prior to the inspection that provided insight to the Screening for Specific Learning Difficulties and weblinks to the university disability services, university of sanctuary and Athena Swan Charter Award.

86. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included The Bradford Curriculum, Programme Specifications and the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy 2020-2025. Within their meetings with the course teams and members of the senior leadership team the inspectors were able to triangulate this information and learn how these principles are incorporated and work at both programmes level.

87. The inspection team determined that this standard was met.

Standard 4.4

88. Information contained within the education and training standards mapping forms outlined that the majority of the course team members are registered with Social Work England and maintain their continuous professional development through a variety of roles, work and interests. These areas included, but were not limited to, research active members of the course teams, academic and peer reviewed social work literature and involvement in local, regional, national and international social work activities.

89. Within the inspection week the inspectors heard from members of the course teams that all of the above knowledge and expertise is brought into the delivery of the courses. There are planned curriculum development days, team meetings and consultation with social work practitioners and placement providers, employers and experts by experience to ensure that the course is continually updated.

90. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.5

91. Information submitted in support of this standard prior to the inspection included the Programme Specifications, Programme Handbooks and Module Descriptors. Documentary evidence and discussions with the course teams identified the links and integration of theory into practice within the courses, including both practice-based learning and practical learning within an academic setting.

92. The inspection team learnt of the work done academically through course modules, learning outcomes and reflective practice, which is reinforced through practice educators and supervision during placements. These were some of the methods that

the inspection team were informed of that ensure students have the opportunity to learn theory and understand why it is important, but also to reflect on and learn how to apply theoretical frameworks in practice.

93. Student representatives that the inspection team met with spoke of how these areas of teaching supported their learning and development in relation to learning and applying theory to practice.

94. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 4.6

95. Information submitted by the course provider identified that the courses offer a range of opportunities for students to learn from other professions. These include an interprofessional working day involving a range of peers from nursing, medical science and pharmacy, with members of the experts by experience group leading. The inspection team heard how skills days build on the learning from this part of the courses and the wider teaching within the curriculum, including sessions with lecturers from the university law course, solicitors and mock court for simulated mental health tribunals and child protection procedures.

96. The inspectors heard from the course teams, students, practice educators and placement providers of the wide range of placement-based learning and opportunities that students have to work with and learn from other relevant professions. Staff involved in placement-based learning and practice educators confirmed that if these opportunities are not available within a setting, then there are plans and agreements for shadowing and practice to be gained to ensure that students have access to work with, and learn from, other professions in order to support multidisciplinary working.

97. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.7

98. Documentary evidence submitted by the course provider prior to the inspection assured the inspectors that students, on both programmes, spend enough time in structured academic learning for them to meet the required learning outcomes and meet the professional standards by the time they complete their respective course.

99. The inspection team were able to triangulate this information within their discussions with student representatives, employer partners and placement providers and the course teams. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 4.8

100. Documentary evidence submitted by the course provider, including but not limited to Programme Specification and Module Handbooks, Assessment Regulations and

Module Learning Outcomes Mapped to Programme Learning Outcomes, identified the range of assessments utilised in both programmes. Discussions with the course teams confirmed that all assessments are mapped to the modules' learning outcomes and appropriate standards.

101. Prior to the inspection, the inspectors were able to review documentary evidence submitted by the course provider in relation to the assessment strategy and guidance in relation to assessment, marking, moderation and quality assurance processes for the programme. The inspection team were able to triangulate this information regarding the mechanisms in place, including internal marking and moderation processes and the external examiner, to ensure that assessments are robust, fair, reliable and valid. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.9

102. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the Module Specifications, Programme Handbooks, Assessment Mapping Documents and information contained within the education and training standards mapping forms.

103. The documentary evidence highlighted that assessments are mapped to the learning outcomes and scaffolded to increase incrementally throughout the programme. The inspectors were able to triangulate this information within their meetings with student representatives and the course teams. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.10

104. Documentary evidence, including Module Descriptors, Social Work Programme Handbooks, Practice Learning Handbooks and Practice Placement Appendices Handbooks, provided the inspectors with insight into how the courses provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments.

105. Information within the education and training standards mapping forms and discussions with students and the course teams identified that summative feedback and feedforward guidance is provided to all students, in response to all academic assessments.

106. Student representatives that the inspection team met with confirmed that they receive timely ongoing formative feedback throughout the courses, and this is supplemented with in-person and online verbal feedback where requested. Feedback to students from practice learning, including that from social work professionals and members of the expert by experience group, is included in the course delivery. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.11

107. Documentary evidence contained within the education and training standards mapping forms, discussions with the course teams and review of staff CVs assured the inspectors that all programme staff involved in the assessment of students across the programmes are appropriately qualified. Information received prior to the inspection confirmed the external examiners' registration with Social Work England, experience and qualifications.

108. The inspection team met with members of the course teams, including registered social workers and experienced academics with appropriate expertise in relation to the courses assessment methods and marking schemes to support fairness and consistency. There is clear support and guidance for new members of the team to support them to learn and develop their skills and knowledge regarding the teams' processes and procedures for marking, moderation and assessment.

109. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard 4.12

110. The inspection team learnt that the assessment of student performance, progression and outcome at the university is governed by a two-tier system; Assessment Committees and Board of Examiners. Information submitted by the course provider in support of this standard included, but was not limited to, MA and BA Social Work Programme Data Insight, University Assessment Regulations, Practice Learning Handbook, Programme Monitoring Reports and BA and MA Social Work – Gateway Scorecards 2022/3.

111. The inspection team were able to triangulate documentary evidence in their discussions with staff involved in practice-based learning, members of the senior management team and course teams. The university has governance mechanisms to oversee and inform decisions regarding students' progression and attainment. These mechanisms include direct observations, external examiner input, assessment and feedback from members of the experts by experience group. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 4.13

112. Documentary evidence confirmed that there is a dedicated research module at the appropriate academic level for both courses, for BA at level 6 and level 7 for the MA. During the inspection week, the inspectors heard from course teams, library academic support services and student representatives of how students are supported to develop an evidence informed approach to social work practice.

113. As identified under standard 3.10, research activity was evident in the information contained within the staff CVs and the inspection team heard a wide range of active research topics within the course team, including examples of this being brought in to inform course delivery. Within their discussions with the course teams the inspectors heard how research activity is drawn upon in their teaching and students' ability to gather, use, analyse and evaluate evidence to inform decision making and enable effective practice is thread within the programmes content. The inspection team concluded that this standard was met.

Standard five: Supporting students

Standard 5.1

114. The inspectors were able to meet with university student support services during the inspection week. This enabled them to triangulate the documentary evidence submitted by the course provider, that highlighted the comprehensive range of resources and services that students have access to, to support their health and wellbeing. This included, but was not limited to, occupational health services, careers advice and support and counselling services.

115. Student representatives that the inspection team met with provided examples of student support services they had accessed, explaining that these had been of a high standard and timely in response to their individual needs. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.2

116. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard provided insight into the structured academic support framework available to students on both courses, offering a range of support and services at course and university levels. Meetings with course teams and student representatives allowed the inspectors to triangulate that students are allocated a personal academic tutor. Module leaders offer support to address development at module level and there is a well-established peer support learning system that the students provided examples of how this works in practice.

117. The inspectors met with library and academic support services during the inspection week. Throughout these discussions the inspectors learnt of the robust and varied support services that students, including those with individual needs and requirements, on both courses can access to support their academic development. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.3

118. The inspection team concluded that the documentary evidence provided in advance of the inspection was able to demonstrate that there is a thorough and

effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character, and health. Therefore, this standard was met.

Standard 5.4

119. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard included the programme handbooks and specifications, Students Fitness to Practise Procedures, University-Related Work Placement and Support and Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures. The inspection week meetings with student representatives and staff from university student support services enabled the inspectors to triangulate information the university submitted in support of this standard, including examples from practice educators regarding the timely response and actions from the course teams to support individual student needs.

120. Student representatives spoke of their own experiences of accessing support and reasonable adjustments during their time on their respective courses. Students that the inspection team met with expressed that they had support and services available to them regarding any needs that arose once they were on the course, and during placements. The inspection team were satisfied that this standard was met.

Standard 5.5

121. Documentation reviewed prior to the inspection identified that information and guidance for students regarding Social Work England registration and continuous professional development requirements are addressed within specific modules within both courses. As a result of their discussions with the course teams and student representatives the inspection team were able to triangulate that students receive timely access to all required programme-level material, including detailed information on the curriculum, practice placements, and assessments.

122. The Programme Specifications and Module Handbooks are accessible via the virtual learning environment site, Canvas, from the beginning of each semester and contain all the information students need to meet the requirements of this standard. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.6

123. Documentary evidence submitted by the university in support for this standard included the programme handbooks and specifications. Information for students regarding parts of the courses where attendance is mandatory is clearly set out. Student representatives that the inspection team met with spoke of the supportive approach they had experienced regarding any non-attendance, and the support and contact they had received to ensure that they were safe and/or accessing any required support or services.

124. The inspection team were assured that there is a supportive mechanism in place for monitoring student attendance, with clear guidance for where this is mandatory and the process if any of this time and learning is missed. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.7

125. As identified under standard 4.10 of this report, the inspectors were assured that the programmes are structured to enable formative and summative feedback to students in a timely manner. Students receive feedback from several sources to provide a comprehensive approach to feedback that is timely and meaningful, and supports students' learning, practice, and academic development throughout the courses.

126. Student representatives that the inspection team met with confirmed that they receive timely ongoing formative feedback throughout the courses, and this is supplemented with in-person and online verbal feedback where requested. The inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Standard 5.8

127. Documentary evidence submitted in support of this standard by the course provider included the university academic appeals procedure, confirming that there is a formal appeals procedure for students. This information was triangulated within meetings with the course teams and student representatives from both courses.

128. The inspection team were satisfied that standard was met.

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

Standard 6.1

129. As the qualifying courses are BA (Hons) Social Work and MA Social Work, the inspection team agreed that this standard was met.

Proposed outcome

The inspection team recommend that the courses be approved without conditions.

Annex 1: Education and training standards summary

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

Standard	Met	Not Met – condition applied	Recommendation given
take up an offer of a place on a course. This will include information about the professional standards, research interests and placement opportunities.			
Learning environment			
2.1 Ensure that students spend at least 200 days (including up to 30 skills days) gaining different experiences and learning in practice settings. Each student will have: 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	☒	☐	☐

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

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

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

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

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

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

Regulator decision

Approved without conditions.