Inspection Report

Inspection ID	UEAR1_A
Course provider	University of East Anglia
Validating body (if different)	N/A
Course inspected	PGCert Approved Mental Health Professional
Mode of study	Full time
Maximum student cohort	20
Date of inspection	26th – 27th May 2026
Inspection team	Joseph Hubbard (Education Quality Assurance Officer) Sophie Kane (Lay Inspector) David Williams (AMHP registrant Inspector)
Inspector recommendation	Approved
Regulator decision:	Approved
Date of Regulator decision:	19th August 2026

Contents

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 approval standards for Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) courses. We approve courses against these standards to ensure that students who successfully complete an AMHP course can meet the requirements set out in the Mental Health (Approved Mental Health Professionals) (Approval) (England) Regulations 2008.

2. During the approval process, we appoint partner inspectors. This will include a registered inspector who will be a qualified AMHP, and a lay inspector who is not AMHP qualified.

3. These inspectors, along with an officer from the education quality assurance team, undertake activity to review documentary information and evidence, and carry out an inspection. This activity could include observing and asking questions about teaching, placements, facilities and learning resources; asking questions based on the evidence submitted; and meeting with staff, people with lived experience and students. The inspectors then make recommendations to us about whether a course should be approved.

4. The process we undertake is described in our legislation: The Children and Social Work Act 2017, The Social Workers Regulations 2018 - Social Work England , and our Education and Training Rules 2019.

5. In this document we describe the University of East Anglia as 'the course provider' and we describe the PGCert Approved Mental Health Professional as 'the course'.

Summary of Inspection

5. The University of East Anglia's PGCert Approved Mental Health Professional course was inspected as part of Social Work England's reapproval cycle, whereby all course providers with AMHP courses will be inspected against the new education and training approval standards for AMHP courses.

6. A remote inspection took place from 26th – 27th May 2026.

7. As part of this process, the inspection team gathered feedback from key stakeholders through meetings on inspection. This included employer partners and students. Written feedback was also gathered from people with lived experience in advance of the inspection.

Inspection Findings

8. In this section we set out the inspectors' findings in relation to whether the course meets the education and training approval standards for AMHP courses. We describe the inspection team in this section as 'we'.

Standard 1. Admissions	**Met or not met.**
1.1 Confirm on entry to the course that applicants have: i. the potential to acquire and demonstrate the competences set out in the relevant legislation governing AMHP practice; ii. the capability to meet the academic requirements of the course; and iii. the capability to use information and communication technology (ICT) methods and techniques to achieve course outcomes	Met
1.2 Confirm that applicants are and remain fully registered with a relevant regulatory body in line with the relevant regulations	Met
1.3 Ensure that the admissions processes assess the suitability of applicants, including in relation to their conduct, health and character. This includes appropriate criminal conviction checks	Met
1.4 Ensure that applicants have suitable prior experience of the practical application of appropriate legislation and policy, specifically including but not limited to mental health, mental capacity and human rights legislation	Met
1.5 Ensure that applicants have a robust level of legal literacy in appropriate legislative and policy areas	Met
1.6 Ensure that employers, placement providers, people with lived experience of social work, and carers are involved in student admissions	Met
1.7 Ensure that there are equality, diversity and inclusion policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored	Met
1.8 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 award level and professional qualification, course content, teaching modes, location of study, assessment	Met

methods, duration, and observation requirements including the expectations around arranging or securing placements	
1.9 Ensure that the admissions process allows candidates from any eligible profession to demonstrate their suitability to join the course	Met

Key observations for standard 1

9. Details and documentation of the admissions process for the course were provided, including interview questions and a blank application form. In addition to shadowing requirements, a comprehensive application form, written task, and interview, a preparatory module was run by the university as a prerequisite to the AMHP course. The interview panel included representation from placement providers and people with lived experience (1.6). These processes were used to assess applicants' academic ability and potential to demonstrate the competencies. Ability to use applicable information and communication technology was established through engagement with the online aspects of the application process (1.1).

10. Applicants' professional registration was checked by the programme director before offering a place on the course, and the course handbook made clear students' obligation to maintain their registration status throughout the course (1.2). A written endorsement was required from each applicant's employer, which included confirmation that the applicant held a current DBS and was not subject to any fitness to practise concerns. Applicants also signed a declaration as part of the application form, and were invited to disclose any relevant disabilities or health conditions (1.3). Suitable experience of relevant legislation and policy was demonstrated through the requirement for a minimum of two years' post-qualifying practice in an appropriate role (1.4, 1.5).

11. University-wide equality, diversity, and inclusion processes were in place, and relevant data was gathered and analysed at each stage of the admissions process. The university discussed this data with employer partners to ensure awareness of and action in response to any concerns. Examples were provided of reasonable adjustments that had been put in place for applicants to the course (1.7).

12. The course website and information-day materials provided appropriate information to applicants regarding the details of the course, assessment methods, and placement arrangements (1.8). The application process had been designed to be accessible to applicants from any eligible profession, and at inspection a non-social work student confirmed that they found this to be the case (1.9).

Standard 2. Course governance, management and quality.	Met or not met
2.1 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	Met
2.2 Ensure that regular and effective monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems are in place, and that these involve employers, people with lived experience including carers, and students	Met
2.3 Ensure that the number of students admitted is aligned to a clear strategy, which includes consideration of: i. local and regional placement capacity; and 1. the availability of part-time or other flexible course arrangements to widen access wherever possible.	Met
2.4 Ensure that the person with overall professional responsibility for the course is a relevant qualified professional with appropriate experience	Met
2.5 Ensure that there is adequate provision of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise	Met
2.6 Ensure that educators are supported to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice	Met

Key observations for standard 2.

13. A clear governance structure was in place for the programme, with details provided of relevant roles and responsibilities. Internal and external quality assurance mechanisms ensured the ongoing monitoring and improvement of the course, and we confirmed that these processes featured stakeholder involvement. We established that the course lead was a qualified and practising AMHP, and was well supported by the university to maintain their practice currency. We

heard examples during the inspection of how student, employer, and people with lived experience (PWLE) input had been utilised to improve the course (2.1, 2.2, 2.4).

14. Evidence was provided of a clear partnership approach to planning student numbers, including consideration of regional placement capacity and workforce need. While there was no part-time version of the course available, the course provider outlined in detail the steps they had taken to widen access to the course. For example, they had begun ensuring that on campus sessions were timed to accommodate those with caring responsibilities and/or further to travel (2.3).

15. We reviewed evidence of the qualifications and experience of staff for the course, and confirmed that the number and expertise of staff was appropriate. The course provider used a workload planning system to ensure staffing requirements were assessed robustly. Beyond the core staff team, there were contributions to course delivery from practising AMHPs, PWLE, and professionals from outside of social work. At inspection, it was confirmed that there was an effective process in place for supporting staff members' continuing professional development, including in relation to professional practice. The course lead was supported with protected time to maintain their AMHP practice and undertake mandatory ongoing training (2.5, 2.6).

Standard 3. Curriculum	**Met or not met**
3.1 The views of employers, practitioners and people with lived experience of mental health services are incorporated into the design, ongoing development and review of the curriculum	Met
3.2 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, including around cross-national border issues in relation to practice in Wales, where this is appropriate	Met
3.3 The course is designed in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion principles, human rights and legislative frameworks	Met
3.4 Course content is routinely updated as a result of developments in legislation, research, government policy, and best practice	Met

3.5 The integration of theory and practice is central to the course	Met
3.6 Students understand how the standards of the student's own professional regulator(s), apply to their specialist practice	Met
3.7 The course is designed to enable students to demonstrate an evidence-informed approach to AMHP practice, underpinned by skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research and evaluation	Met

Key observations for standard 3.

16. We learned that a quality assurance panel was held annually to review the curriculum, and this included stakeholder input from employers, practitioners, and PWLE. Employer partners and PWLE confirmed at inspection that their input is listened to and actioned (3.1). The annual panel also worked to ensure legal and policy content of the programme remained up to date. The course was updated in response to new research, including the academic staff's own work. We heard examples at inspection of updates and amendments made to the course to ensure its currency (3.4).

17. Mapping was provided to confirm that the course content was aligned with relevant frameworks including the AMHP competencies. The curriculum content and learning outcomes were grounded in key values of AMHP practice, such as human rights and social justice. The course was subject to university-wide EDI policies, including an Inclusive Education Policy. Regular review and analysis of EDI data was undertaken in relation to both applicants and students on the programme. Insights from this data were routinely discussed with employer partners to ensure fairness and access. At inspection, we heard that the programme was designed to maximise accessibility, for example through providing a wide range of assessment types. Students confirmed that they found the course to be accessible, and knew how to request reasonable adjustments should they need them (3.2, 3.3).

18. The integration of theory and practice was evident within the legal teaching and placement activity for the course. Module learning outcomes specifically required students to apply theory to professional practice, through elements such as a case study assessment and reflective practice debriefs (3.5). The course aimed to provide students with a grounding in evidence-informed practice from the beginning, with early content relating to using evidence in practice. Students' portfolio work was required to be clearly evidence-based with references to relevant research, to demonstrate this approach in practice (3.7).

19. The course handbook specifically discussed and directed to the professional standards to each eligible profession, and the application of professional standards to AMHP practice was reflected

on within course content. This reflective work was then explicitly assessed through a case study assignment and referenced in course literature (3.6).

Standard 4. Practice Placements	**Met or not met**
4.1 Ensure practice placements are integral to the course	Met
4.2 Ensure that the number, duration and range of practice placements is appropriate to support the delivery of the course and the achievement of the learning outcomes	Met
4.3 Ensure that students, practice placement providers and educators are prepared for each placement, which will include information about: i. the learning outcomes to be met ii. the timing and duration of any placement experience iii. the records to be maintained iv. expectations of professional conduct v. assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure to progress vi. communication and lines of responsibility	Met
4.4 Maintain clear collaborative arrangements for planning and communication with placement providers including a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements, in order jointly to ensure: i. that practice placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment ii. that placement providers have equality, diversity and inclusion policies in place which will apply to students, and which they will implement and monitor	Met

iii. that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff, with relevant specialist subject knowledge and expertise, at the practice placement setting iv. that practice placement providers support their placement staff to maintain their knowledge and understanding in relation to professional practice, including appropriate practice placement educator training v. that a range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of people with lived experience of social work and colleagues must be in place throughout all practice placements	

Key observations for standard 4.

20. We received evidence which confirmed that placements were a central component of the programme, integrated into the course with reflective supervision and recall days. Students completed one 35-day placement during the course, with each student's learning needs noted and appropriate learning opportunities identified within their placement to meet those needs. There were mechanisms in place, such as the practice learning agreement and mid-point meeting, to ensure the range of placement activities were sufficient to achieve the learning outcomes. Students could not successfully finish the course without completing the required placement days and evidencing that they had met the AMHP competencies (4.1, 4.2).

21. Students, practice educators, and placement providers were prepared for placement through the provision of detailed information within lecture content, the programme handbook, and the placement handbook. The practice learning agreement meeting served as further preparation for the student and relevant staff, to ensure shared understanding of expectations and requirements. At inspection, students confirmed that they felt well prepared and informed ahead of their placement. We heard from employer partners that the practice learning agreements, mid-point review, and QAPL (Quality Assurance of Practice Learning) process ensured placements were approved and monitored. Examples were provided of how issues on placement had been addressed promptly and collaboratively between the university and course providers (4.3, 4.4).

Standard 5. Supporting students.	**Met or not met**
5.1 Ensure that students have access to resources to support their health and wellbeing including: i. confidential counselling services ii. occupational health services, where appropriate	Met

5.2 Ensure that students have access to a system of academic and pastoral student support for their progression, development, wellbeing and welfare	Met
5.3 Ensure that there is a thorough and effective process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of students' conduct, character and health	Met
5.4 Make reasonable adjustments for students with health conditions or impairments to enable them to progress through their course and meet the relevant standards, in accordance with relevant legislation	Met
5.5 Provide timely information to students about parts of the course where attendance is mandatory and have associated monitoring mechanisms in place	Met
5.6 Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students on their progression and performance in assessments	Met
5.7 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	Met

Key observations for standard 5.

22. Students had access to confidential counselling and occupational health services through both the university and their employer. These services were signposted to within the handbook and course induction session. We heard from students that they were aware of how to access these services should they need them (5.1).

23. In addition to an allocated academic advisor, students had access to other course staff for support with their development, and a wider university learning enhancement team. The formative assessment within the preparatory module aided in identifying any learning needs students may require additional support with. We confirmed that there was a clear institutional system in place for providing reasonable adjustments where appropriate, in both the academic and placement

setting. Course staff discussed how they used principles of universal design to make the course as accessible as possible, and we heard from students that some had not required reasonable adjustments due to the accessible course design (5.2, 5.4).

24. Students' suitability for the course was assessed through registration and fitness to practise checks at the admissions stage. Applicants were also required to complete a declaration confirming that they would declare any changes that may impact on their suitability. A university-wide fitness to practise policy was in place to respond to any emerging suitability concerns (5.3).

25. We confirmed that mandatory attendance requirements were communicated to students through the course and placement handbooks. Each students' attendance was monitored at the university by the programme lead, and on placement by the practice educator and on-site supervisor (5.5).

26. Feedback was provided to students within 20 working days of submitting their assignments. The evidence we reviewed indicated there were timely and meaningful feedback mechanisms in place to support student development. Assessment feedback was internally and externally moderated, and portfolios include feedback from people with lived experience the student has worked with (5.6).

27. Relevant policies were in place for students to report any concerns, including employer partner whistleblowing policies. At inspection, we heard that whistleblowing is discussed within the first session of the programme, as well as being covered within the course documentation (5.7).

Standard 6. Assessments	**Met or not met**
6.1 Ensure that the assessment strategy and design demonstrate that the assessments are robust, fair and consistent, and that those who successfully complete the course have developed the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the competencies set out in the relevant legislation and rules as set out in the guidance that accompanies these standards	Met
6.2 Ensure that professional aspects of practice are integral to assessments	Met
6.3 Use objective measures of student performance which ensure safe and effective practice as an AMHP	Met

6.4 Regularly monitor and evaluate assessment standards	Met
6.5 Clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the course	Met
6.6 Clearly specify that any aegrotat award which may be made will not lead to eligibility to be approved as an AMHP	Met
6.7 Clearly specify the procedure for the right of appeal for students	Met
6.8 Clearly specify a process for the appointment of at least 1 external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and from the relevant part of an appropriate professional register	Met

Key observations for standard 6.

28. The programme used a variety of assessment methods, including written assignments, case studies, oral and written legal assessments, and a practice portfolio. This strategy aimed both to reflect the complexity of the AMHP role, and to increase accessibility for students with a range of learning styles. All assessments were aligned to the module learning outcomes and the AMHP competencies to ensure that those who passed the course could meet the competencies as required (6.1, 6.3). Each of the assessments incorporated aspects of professional practice, with the placement portfolio being the most explicitly linked to specific practice skills and experiences, including through AMHP assessment debriefs (6.2).

29. Evidence demonstrated a robust assessment quality assurance system, including internal moderation, external examiner oversight, and student feedback. The assessment strategy and external examiner reports indicated that assessment was robust, fair, and consistent. We heard that assessments are continually improved in response to input from stakeholders, including people with lived experience (6.1, 6.4).

30. We saw that progression and completion requirements were clearly defined and communicated through course documentation, with oversight from the programme director and employer partners (6.5). No aegrotat or alternative award was available; the course operates on a ‘must pass’ basis (6.6). A clear appeals procedure was in place and signposted to within the course handbook (6.6).

31. The university's external examiner policy and job advert for the AMHP external examiner role demonstrated that there is a process in place for appointing an external examiner with appropriate professional registration and expertise (6.7).

Outcome

The inspection team recommend that the course be approved.

The regulator decision maker agreed with this recommendation.