

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Kingston University
Name of programme(s)	BA (Hons) Social Work (Gibraltar), Full time BA (Hons) Social Work (Gibraltar), Part time
Approval visit date	03 - 04 October 2018
Case reference	CAS-13336-B4B8F5

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Graeme Currie	Social worker
David Ward	Social worker
Prisha Shah	Lay
Eloise O'Connell	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Neil Williams	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Kingston University
Blanca Sainz-Garcia	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Kingston University
Martyn Higgins	External panel member	London South Bank University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work (Gibraltar)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
Proposed First intake	01 January 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15 across both part time and full time routes
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01961

Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work (Gibraltar)
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Profession	Social worker in England
Proposed First intake	01 January 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15 across both part time and full time routes
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01962

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Our legislation allows us to consider and approve programmes delivered overseas if they are run by a UK based institution. The education provider intends to deliver their social work programme in Gibraltar. They intend to operate a 'flying faculty' where programme staff from the education provider will at various times travel to Gibraltar to deliver the programme.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes

Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	We met with learners on the Nursing programme that is currently delivered by the education provider in Gibraltar.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 15 November 2018.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the admissions process gives the applicant the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided the Admissions Handbook. The document contains information about the admission policies, and details of the application and selection process. The visitors note they could not find any information specific to the proposed programme in Gibraltar on the education provider's website. From the information provided, the visitors could not see detailed information

about the programme that would provide applicants with the information they need to make a fully informed decision about taking up a place on the programme. For example, the visitors have not seen information for applicants about the costs of the programme, including accommodation and other associated costs where relevant, and any options for funding. The programme team informed the visitors that all advertising and recruitment for the programme was undertaken in Gibraltar through various social media channels. The programme team said that information relating to costs and other useful information about the programme was included in this advertising. At the visit, the programme team briefly showed the visitors what the web pages looked like, however the visitors were not able to review this in sufficient detail in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met. As such, the visitors require further information about the information applicants receive in order to determine whether the applicant has the information they require to make an informed choice about the programme.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they will ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided the name and curriculum vitae of the current programme leader. The visitors raised with the senior team that this standard requires the education provider to ensure they are able to identify a suitable person for this role, and, if it becomes necessary, a suitable replacement. The senior team explained that the programme leader would be selected internally from the programme team, who are all registered social workers. The education provider ensures the programme team are appropriately qualified, experienced and on the relevant part of the Register as it is part of their job description. The visitors agree this process seems reasonable to appoint this person; however, they were unclear how it would be consistently applied. Therefore they cannot determine that this intention will be formal and ongoing, in order to meet this standard. As such, the visitors require further evidence to determine that to the education provider will ensure the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the Gibraltar based staff contributing to teaching on the programme, to demonstrate that subject areas are delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided the curriculum vitae's for a number of educators in the Department of Social Work at the education provider, who will be travelling to Gibraltar at various times to teach on the programme. The programme team talked about the 'flying faculty' that will involve the whole department, of about 18 educators who will at some point over the three years of the

programme travel to Gibraltar to deliver parts of the programme. The programme team explained that educators from the education provider will be delivering the main content of the programme, and there will be sessions where colleagues from the Care Agency in Gibraltar will share their expertise and experience, to allow learners to engage their learning on the programme with local context in Gibraltar. The visitors found that the arrangement would be suitable, and agree that the educators from the education provider have the relevant specialist knowledge and expertise. However, as the visitors have not seen any information about the educators who are based in Gibraltar, the visitors could not determine whether they had the relevant knowledge and expertise for their input to the programme. As such, the visitors require further information about the educators in Gibraltar who will be contributing to teaching on the programme, in order to determine whether all subject areas are delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and expertise to support safe and effective learning, and unless other arrangements are appropriate, are on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider referred to the Resources Document, which refers to a 'Gibraltar Care Agency Practice Educator' who will be supported by the education provider. The documentation did not include information about who the practice educators are or how the education provider ensures they are appropriate for the role. At the visit, it was clarified that there would be one practice educator for the programme in Gibraltar. The visitors considered that one practice educator for the programme is reasonable, however note that if the programme were to grow or if this person left, the education provider would need to recruit another or more practice educators in Gibraltar. The visitors considered that the current practice educator is appropriately qualified and experienced to undertake the role, and note that social workers in Gibraltar do not have any requirements for registration. However, if the current arrangements were to change, the visitors were not clear what process the education provider has in place to ensure a practice educator appointed in Gibraltar will be appropriately qualified and experienced, or how they would determine whether or not it is appropriate for them to be on the relevant part of the Register or not. As such, the visitors require further information to demonstrate that the education provider can ensure that practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

3.7 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider strengthening the involvement of service users and carers on the programme, and should consider how they can increase the range of service users and carers that are involved in the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation, and through discussions at the visit, the visitors were satisfied this standard was met. At the visit, the visitors met two carers who would be involved in the programme. The visitors heard they had attended some meetings in Gibraltar to talk about the programme, and were involved with interviews for potential applicants. In terms of future planning, the carers discussed ways in which they would like to be involved in the programme going forward, such as talking to learners of their experiences, and to share what they would like to see in future social workers in Gibraltar. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors were told the education provider is developing a plan for involving service users and carers more in the academic setting in Gibraltar. The programme team did not have any plans at this stage to broaden the group of service users and carers that are involved on the programme in Gibraltar. The visitors note with the involvement currently, there is a limited range of service users and carers involved. As the involvement of service users and carers on the programme in Gibraltar is currently under further development, and there are no plans to broaden the range of service users and carers, there may be a risk of meeting this standard in future, due to the limited nature of involvement currently.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 05 December 2018 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).