

## HCPC approval process report

Education provider	The University of Bolton
Name of programme(s)	BA (Hons) Social Work, Full time MA Social Work, Full time BA (Hons) Social Work (Degree Apprenticeship), Full time
Approval visit date	02 April 2019
Case reference	CAS-14170-H4R7C4

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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:

Diane Whitlock	Lay
Richard Barker	Social worker
Christine Stogdon	Social worker
Niall Gooch	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.

Ged Clarke	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Bolton
Marina Kirby	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Bolton
Meksha Burrun	Student member of internal panel	University of Bolton
Chris Grant	Internal panel member	University of Bolton

## Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
Proposed first intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02035

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.

Programme name	MA Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
Proposed first intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02036

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.

Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work (Degree Apprenticeship)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
Proposed first intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02037

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.

## 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	Reason(s) for non-submission
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	Not Required	As these programmes are new external examiner reports are not available

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As the programmes are new, we met with learners on existing health and social programmes, not regulated by the HCPC.
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 11 June 2019.

## **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 how they will ensure that applicants understand the admissions requirements of the degree apprenticeship, and the impact that participation in the degree apprenticeship might have on employment status.

**Reason:** In the documentation, the visitors viewed individual handbooks for the three programmes. They considered that the handbooks were broadly appropriate. However, they could not see where in the handbook it was communicated to learners that the degree apprenticeship programme had significant differences in structure and expectations than the other programmes. The visitors were aware from the visit documentation and from discussions at the visit that learners coming on to the degree apprenticeship would already be employed in social work departments, and that taking part in the programme would likely lead to changes in their employment contracts. Additionally, the programme team confirmed in discussions that failure to complete the degree apprenticeship might affect these individuals' employment status. The visitors considered that this was not clearly explained to applicants in the available documentation. As a result the visitors could not see how applicants were being enabled to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place.

The visitors were also not clear at what stage of the application process handbooks giving such information would be accessible to applicants, which meant they could not determine whether the information was provided in a timely enough manner to make an informed choice for applicants possible.

They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will communicate to applicants for the degree apprenticeship, in a timely manner, the possible implications of failure to complete the programme.

## **2.7 The education provider must ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify how data regarding equality and diversity in admissions will be collected, evaluated and used.

**Reason:** In the evidence for this standard, the education provider linked to university-wide equality and diversity policies. However, it was not clear to the visitors from this evidence how the proposed social work programmes will implement and monitor such policies specifically in relation to admissions. In discussions with the programme team

the visitors were informed that appropriate equality and diversity monitoring would take place during the admissions process, but the education provider did not provide detail about how this would be done and how the information would be used to take forward continuous improvement. The visitors were therefore unable to determine whether the standard was met, and require the education provider to submit further evidence showing how equality and diversity monitoring will work on the programme.

### **3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that they have effective and appropriate relationships in place with partner organisations who will be supporting the delivery of the programme.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard the education provider submitted links to the university's guidelines for quality assurance of programmes. Based on this evidence, the visitors could not see evidence that there was an ongoing relationship between the education provider and partner organisations who would be providing practice-based learning for the programme. In discussions with the senior team, the visitors were given verbal assurances that there had been high-level strategic discussions with local councils. However, it was not clear that there was regular and appropriate co-operation and planning in place at the operational level. They did not see evidence relating to such relationships, for example minutes of meetings. There appeared to be some disagreement among different members of staff as to whether it would be possible for the visitors to view such minutes. The visitors also noted that no senior representatives of providers of practice-based learning attended the senior team meeting, meaning that they could not have discussions around these working relationships with these representatives. They were therefore unable to determine whether partner organisations were committed to providing the resources required to support the delivery the programme, or whether the education provider had access to feedback from stakeholders about the programme's fitness for purpose. They require the education provider to submit further evidence showing that their relationships with partner organisations will enable the programme to be sustainable and fit for purpose.

### **3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence showing

- lines of responsibility within the programmes' management structures, and
- how they have oversight of management systems in partner organisations.

**Reason:** For this standard the education provided evidence relating to the staff available for the programme, including curriculum vitae. However, the visitors were not given evidence relating to the management structures on the programmes. In discussions with the programme and senior teams, they were given verbal assurances that the programme would be managed in line with normal university procedures, but they were not able to view evidence laying out lines of responsibility. They also were not provided with evidence showing that the education provider would have appropriate oversight over management systems in practice education partners. They were therefore unable to determine whether this standard was met, and require further evidence of how the education provider ensures effective management of the programme and provides clear lines of responsibility.

**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 must demonstrate that there is an effective policy in place to identify a suitable person to have overall professional responsibility, and if it becomes necessary, a suitable replacement.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard the education provider submitted a curriculum vitae for Martina Kirlew, whom the visitors understood would hold overall professional responsibility for all three programmes, although it was also communicated that each would have its own individual course leader. However, the visitors did not see evidence that the education provider have an appropriate means of ensuring that this individual in place is appropriate, and for replacing programme leaders if it becomes necessary. The visitors could not see evidence relating to how the education provider would do this. They were therefore unable to determine whether the standard was met, and require the education provider to submit further evidence demonstrating that a suitable person will be in place.

**3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that there is regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers.

**Reason:** The evidence submitted for this standard included the programme and practice handbooks and feedback about the proposed programme received from practice-based learning partners. The visitors considered that this information was not evidence for effective collaboration between the education provider and their practice education partners. This was because the handbooks gave a narrative of how relationships between education provider and partners would be managed, but did not show regular and effective collaboration with practice partners. Similarly the visitors did not consider that the feedback about the new programmes was evidence of regular and effective collaboration, as it appeared to be part of a one-off exercise. The programme team stated that there had been some communication and meetings with practice education partners, but the visitors were not able to view evidence relating to these meetings, for example minutes or records of outcomes. It was not clear from the evidence provided or from the discussions at the visit that input into the new programmes from practice education partners had been sought in a structured or systematic way. As noted in the condition under SET 3.1, there has been high-level contact between the education provider and practice education partners, but the visitors did not see evidence of ongoing and regular operational co-operation. In the practice educators' meeting, the visitors were only able to meet with two representatives. One of them was from an organisations that would probably not be able to provide practice-based learning to social work learners. It was therefore very difficult for the visitors to understand the nature and extent of the collaboration between the education provider and practice education partners, and they could not determine whether it was regular and effective. They require further evidence demonstrating that there is regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and their practice-based learning partners.

### **3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

**Reason:** The visitors were able to view some evidence of contact with organisations that might provide practice-based learning for the programmes. There were samples of feedback forms giving these organisations' thoughts on the proposed programmes, and a letter from the Greater Manchester Social Work Academy (GMSWA) thanking the education provider for expressing their interest in involvement. However, the visitors considered that these documents did not provide evidence that there was a process in place to ensure that all learners would have access to appropriate practice-based learning. The feedback forms were not evidence of such a process and the letter was evidence of the beginning of a relationship not a process. The visitors asked the programme team about this issue and were given verbal assurances that placements were being sought and that they had had discussions with prospective partners in the region. The visitors were not able to view evidence of the outcomes of these discussions, or evidence that there were continuing discussions at the operational level. They were not able to view planning documentation, or schedules, for the practice-based learning. As noted in the condition under SET 3.5 above, they were not able to speak to senior staff from practice education partners, and only two representatives of any practice-based learning partners attended the visit. The visitors were not clear from the programme team meeting that the education provider had considered how the local social work education landscape might affect their ability to find enough practice-based learning. There are a number of HEIs in the region with established social work programmes, which may make it harder for the education provider to secure placements. The visitors were therefore unable to determine whether the standard was met, and require further evidence showing that the education provider has an effective process for securing sufficient appropriate practice-based learning.

### **3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that there will be an adequate number of staff in place to deliver the programme.

**Reason:** For this standard, the education provider submitted staff CVs and referred to part of the programme handbook. From this evidence, the visitors were aware that the programme would be able to draw on a number of members of staff with various backgrounds. However, it was not clear from the evidence which parts of the programme would be taught by which staff members, so the visitors were not able to determine that there would be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place. The visitors were also not given information, either in the documentation or verbally, which would clarify how much time each of these staff would be able to commit to the programmes. They did not, for example, have access to a timetable or schedule which would show how the team would deliver the programme. They were therefore unable to determine that the standard was met, and require further evidence showing that an adequate number of staff are in place to deliver the programme.



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

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that subject areas will be delivered by staff who have appropriate knowledge and expertise.

**Reason:** For this standard the education provider submitted staff curriculum vitae. From this evidence, the visitors were aware that the programme would be able to draw on a number of members of staff with various backgrounds. However, it was not clear from the evidence which parts of the programme would be taught by which staff members, so the visitors were not able to determine that subject areas would be appropriately covered. The visitors were also not given information, either in the documentation or verbally, which would clarify how much time each of these staff would be able to commit to the programmes. They did not, for example, have access to a timetable or schedule which would show how the team would deliver the programme. They were not informed what use, if any, would be made of temporary staff. They were therefore unable to determine that the standard was met, and require further evidence showing that the expertise and knowledge available to the programme is sufficient.

### **3.11 An effective programme must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure the continuing professional development of non-permanent staff who deliver parts of the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors were able to view a university-wide policy on staff development, and question the senior team and programme team about the approach to professional and academic development of staff. They considered that there were appropriate opportunities for university staff to access development and progression opportunities and to improve their skills in programme delivery. However, they were unclear how the university policy would be applied to non-permanent staff. They were unable to determine that the standard was met, and require further evidence of how the education provider will ensure access to development opportunities for staff in practice-based learning.

### **3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify how they will ensure that learners have access to appropriate resources while in practice-based learning.

**Reason:** In their evidence the education provider directed the visitors to information relating to their virtual learning environment (VLE). The visitors were also given an introduction to this VLE as part of the visit. They considered that it was an appropriate means of allowing learners access to resources while away from the university. However, as the education provider had not yet finalised their practice-based learning settings, and could not provide information to the visitors concerning the kind of environments in which learners would be placed, the visitors could not be sure that all learners on the programme would have appropriate access to resources while in

practice-based learning, because they had only limited information about what these settings would be. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence relating to how the education provider will ensure that all learners have access to resources to support their learning in practice-based learning.

### **3.13 There must be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify how they will ensure that there will be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in practice-based learning.

**Reason:** In their evidence the education provider directed the visitors to information provided to learners about wellbeing and learning needs support that would be available, and to information relating to their virtual learning environment (VLE). The information for learners about services available at the education provider was appropriate, and the VLE was an appropriate means of allowing learners access to support for wellbeing and learning needs. The visitors understood that the education provider had not yet finalised their practice-based learning settings, and could not provide information to the visitors concerning the kind of environments in which learners would be placed. Therefore, the visitors were not clear how the education provider would ensure that learners in practice-based learning had access to effective support for their wellbeing and learning needs. They could not be sure that all learners on the programme would have appropriate access to wellbeing and learning needs support, because they had only limited information about what these settings would be. They require further evidence relating to how the education provider will ensure that all learners have access to resources to support their wellbeing and learning needs while in practice-based learning.

### **3.14 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to learners.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will monitor equality and diversity policies on the programmes.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred to university-wide equality and diversity policies. However, the visitors could not see from this evidence how equality and diversity monitoring would work in the context of this particular programme. It was not clear to them, for example, what data would be collected, how it would be analysed, and how the data generated would be used to drive continuous improvement. In discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that appropriate equality and diversity monitoring would take place on the programmes, but the education provider did not provide detail about how this would be done and how the information would be used to take forward continuous improvement. They were therefore unable to determine whether the standard was met, and require further evidence demonstrating how equality and diversity monitoring would work on the programme.

### **3.15 There must be a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify for learners on the degree apprenticeship programme which complaints process should be used if problems arise in practice-based learning.

**Reason:** For this standard, the mapping document referred the visitors to a university-wide complaints process and to information given to learners about how to raise complaints. These were appropriate for the BA (Hons) and MA programmes. The visitors were aware, however, that learners on the degree apprenticeships would be spending much more time in practice-based learning than learners on the other programmes, and would remain employed by their sponsoring organisations. They had not seen information relating to what complaint policy would be applicable in these situations. In discussions the programme team were unable to clarify this. The visitors were therefore unable to determine whether the standard was met for the degree apprenticeship, and require further evidence clarifying how learners on the degree apprenticeship will be expected to raise complaints while in practice-based learning.

### **4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

**Reason:** For this standard the visitors were referred to the staff curriculum vitae, and to a part of the programme handbook which outlined how inter-professional education (IPE) would work on the programme. However, there was no detail about how exactly IPE would work. It was not clear what kind of activities or events would be used to deliver appropriate IPE. It was also not clear how the education provider had designed IPE to make it as relevant as possible for learners, or how they had determined which were the most appropriate other professions to involve. The programme team informed the visitors that they did have plans for inter-professional learning that involved police officers, nurses and other professions that social workers would need to work with. However the visitors were not able to see evidence relating to this element of the programme and how it would be delivered. They were therefore unable to determine whether the standard was met, and require further evidence showing how learners will be enabled to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

### **4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that they have effective processes in place for obtaining appropriate consent from learners.

**Reason:** From the evidence provided, which included relevant sections of the programme handbook and a Statement of Confidentiality, the visitors were satisfied that there were processes in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users where necessary. However, they were not able to view evidence relating to how learners would give consent where necessary, for example, when they were taking part

in activities that involved roleplay or sharing personal information. In discussion the programme team were not able to clarify this, and the visitors were not clear that the education provider would be able to ensure that learners were giving appropriate consent. They therefore require further evidence demonstrating how they will ensure that learners give appropriate consent where necessary.

#### **4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that learners understand the attendance requirements of the programmes, including the necessity for full attendance of practice-based learning.

**Reason:** In the evidence for this standard the visitors viewed information supplied to learners which referred to a university-wide policy stating that 80% attendance was required. The visitors were not able to clarify from the evidence or from discussions with the programme team whether this would apply to the programmes. The visitors understood that full attendance of practice-based learning was required, and that absences or missed components of practice-based learning would have to be made up. This superseded generic university attendance policies. However, they considered that the requirement to attend all practice-based learning was not made clear to learners in the information supplied to them, for example, in the programme handbook. They were therefore unable to determine that the standard was met, and require further evidence showing that learners will be made fully aware of the attendance requirements for the programmes, including the necessity for full attendance of practice-based learning.

#### **5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning will support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred to a section in the programme handbook which laid out some of the expectations around practice-based learning and the framework in which it would take place. However, the visitors were not provided with evidence relating to what practice-based learning had been secured for the programme. As noted in the conditions above under SETs 3.1, 3.5 and 3.6, they had not seen information about the organisations which would be accepting learners, or to which areas of practice those learners would be exposed. Only two representatives of potential providers of practice-based learning had attended the practice educators' meeting, and one of these was a representative of an organisation that was unlikely to be able to take social work learners. The visitors were not clear that the attendees at the practice educators' meeting understood what would be involved in accepting learners from the programmes. In discussions with the programme team the visitors were told that they were in touch with other potential providers, and that they had good relationships with local authorities. However, the visitors were not able to see evidence showing what practice-based learning had been secured and agreed so far. They were therefore unable to determine that the standard was met and require further evidence showing that an appropriate structure, duration and range of practice-based learning is in place.

### **5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred to a section in the programme handbook giving a narrative of issues relating to practice-based learning, and the Quality Assurance of Practice Learning (QAPL) form. The visitors considered that the QAPL form could be an appropriate part of monitoring practice-based learning. However, they did not have enough information about the nature of the programme's practice-based learning to make a judgment about whether the education provider would be able to maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning. The visitors did not know who the practice-based learning partners would be, or what kind of placements they would be delivering, or where these placements would be located, as noted in the condition under SET 5.2 above. They were also not clear whether the education provider had ongoing relationships with practice-based learning partners, as noted under SET 3.5 above. They therefore require further evidence demonstrating that the education provider can maintain a thorough and effective system of quality monitoring in practice-based learning.

### **5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that practice-based learning takes place in an environment that is safe and secure for learners and service users.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred to their Social Work Placement Learning Agreement. This was a document agreed between learners, the education provider, and practice education partners, to complete before learners went into practice-based learning. The visitors considered that they did not have enough information about the nature of the programme's practice-based learning to make a judgment about whether the education provider would be able to ensure a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users during practice-based learning. They did not know who the practice-based learning partners would be, or what kind of placements they would be delivering, or where these placements would be located, as noted in the condition under SET 5.2 above. They were also not clear whether the education provider had ongoing relationships with practice-based learning partners, as noted under SET 3.5 above. In discussions with the programme team and the practice-based learning partners they were not able to clarify these matters. They therefore require further evidence demonstrating that the education partner can ensure a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

### **5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in practice-based learning.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred to their Social Work Placement Learning Agreement. This was a document agreed between learners, the education provider and practice partners, completed collaboratively by those parties before learners went into practice-based learning. The visitors considered that they did not have enough information about the nature of the programme's practice-based learning to make a judgment about whether the education provider would be able to ensure that there were adequate numbers of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. They did not know who the practice-based learning partners would be, or what kind of placements they would be delivering, or where these placements would be located, as noted in the condition under SET 5.2 above. They were also not clear that the education provider had ongoing relationships with practice-based learning partners, as noted under SET 3.5 above. The visitors therefore require further evidence demonstrating that the education partner can ensure an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in practice-based learning.

**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 will ensure that practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, are registered social workers in England.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred to their Social Work Placement Learning Agreement. This was a document agreed between learners, the education provider, and practice partners, completed collaboratively by those parties before learners went into practice-based learning. The visitors considered that they did not have enough information about the nature of the programme's practice-based learning to make a judgment about whether the education provider would be able to ensure that staff in practice-based learning had appropriate knowledge, skills and experience. They did not know who the practice-based learning partners would be, or what kind of placements they would be delivering, or where these placements would be located, as noted in the condition under SET 5.2 above. They were also not clear that the education provider had ongoing relationships with practice-based learning partners, as noted under SET 3.5 above. The document submitted in evidence did not explain how, and under what circumstances, the education provider would determine when it was acceptable for practice educators to not be registered social workers. The visitors therefore require further evidence demonstrating

- that the education partner can ensure an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in practice-based learning; and
- under what circumstances it will be deemed appropriate for practice educators to not be registered social workers.

**5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that practice educators undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, to learners' needs and the delivery of the programmes' learning outcomes.

**Reason:** In their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred to a paragraph in their practice learning handbook, which gave a narrative of expectations around training of staff involved with practice-based learning. The visitors were not clear from this narrative how the education provider would ensure that all practice-based learning staff undertook regular training, or how they would ensure that all staff did update training as appropriate. They could also not see how the education provider would ensure that the training content was appropriate. The visitors considered that they did not have enough information about the nature of the programme's practice-based learning to make a judgment about whether the education provider would be able to ensure that staff in practice-based learning had regular and appropriate training. They did not know who the practice-based learning partners would be, or what kind of placements they would be delivering, or where these placements would be located, as noted in the condition under SET 5.2 above. They were also not clear that the education provider had ongoing relationships with practice-based learning partners, as noted under SET 3.5 above. They were therefore unable to determine whether the standard was met, and require further evidence showing how the education provider will ensure that practice educators undertake regular training appropriate to their role, to learners' needs and the learning outcomes.

## Section 5: Outcome from second review

### **Second response to conditions required**

The education provider responded to the conditions set out in section 4. Following their consideration of this response, the visitors were satisfied that the conditions for several of the standards were met. However, they were not satisfied that the following conditions were met, for the reasons detailed below. Therefore, in order for the visitors to be satisfied that the following conditions are met, they require further evidence.

#### **3.11 An effective programme must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure the continuing professional development of non-permanent staff who deliver parts of the programme.

**Reason condition not met at this time:** In their response to this condition, the education provider supplied information relating to how they would ensure continuing professional and academic development for practice educators and supervisors. However, the visitors noted that the focus of the condition was on the non-permanent academic staff who would be teaching on the programme, rather than staff in practice-based learning. They did not see evidence relating to these persons, and were therefore unable to determine whether the condition was met.

**Suggested documentation:** Evidence specifically relating to how the education provider ensures appropriate continuing professional and academic development for non-permanent academic staff.

### **3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify how they will ensure that learners have access to appropriate resources while in practice-based learning.

**Reason condition not met at this time:** In their response to this condition the education provider submitted a list of practice-based learning settings. They also stated that supervisors and practice educators would have access to programme modules via the virtual learning environment (VLE), and that they would be able to have accounts with the education provider's library to enable access to appropriate resources. However, the visitors were not provided with evidence relating to how the education provider would ensure that learners would have appropriate access to learning resources while they were in practice-based learning. They were therefore unable to determine whether the condition had been met.

**Suggested documentation:** Evidence relating to how learners' access to learning resources in practice-based learning will be monitored and ensured, for example what mechanisms are in place for learners who find they cannot access resources while in practice-based learning.

### **3.13 There must be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify how they will ensure that there will be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in practice-based learning.

**Reason condition not met at this time:** In their response to this condition the education provider submitted a list of the placements that would be used for practice-based learning. However, the visitors considered that this did not address the specific issues highlighted in the condition. They were not provided with evidence relating to how the education provider would ensure that effective and accessible arrangements are in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in practice-based learning. They were therefore unable to determine whether the condition had been met.

**Suggested documentation:** Evidence showing how learners will be enabled to access wellbeing and learning support where necessary, while they are in practice-based learning, for example information about the processes in place and the individuals with responsibilities in the processes.

## **Section 6: Visitors' recommendation**

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, and the request for further evidence set out in section 5, 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 22 August 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).