HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Lincoln
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Social Work, Work based learning
Approval visit date	11-12 June 2019
Case reference	CAS-14441-C0X8G4

health & care professions council

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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 <u>approved on an open-ended basis</u>, subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed <u>on our website</u>.

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 <u>partner visitors</u> 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 <u>on our website</u>.

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:

Graham Noyce	Social Worker
Sheila Skelton	Social Worker
Susanne Roff	Lay
Lawrence Martin	Education Officer
Tracey Samuel-Smith	Education Manager (Observer)

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.

John Slack	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Lincoln
Louise Thompson	Secretary Day 1 (supplied by the education provider)	University of Lincoln
Tanya Spratt	Secretary Day 2 (supplied University of Linco by the education provider)	

Martin Pinnick	Internal validation member	University of Lincoln
	(on day 2)	

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Social Work
Mode of study	WBL (Work based learning)
Profession	Social worker in England
Proposed first intake	01/09/2019
Maximum learner	Up to 25
cohort	
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02079

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
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based	Yes
learning	
Completed education standards	Yes
mapping document	
Completed proficiency standards	Yes
mapping document	
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the	Yes
last two years, if applicable	

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As the programme was new, we met with learners from the MSc Social Work programme
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 22 August 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 they give 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 standards mapping document stated that the website was currently in progress. The visitors noted the education provider referred to a programme specification and programme handbook. The visitors also noted the programme specification provided an outline of the admissions process, including the interview process and the desired skills applicants should have before applying. The programme handbook did not discuss the admissions process. The visitors were unclear whether the programme specification would be available to applicants prior to applying for the programme. During the senior and programme team meetings, the visitors learnt that information about the programme will be available on their website, and that information is currently given through employers as the programme is employer led. The programme team went on to clarify how they felt it was important to host information on the website due to the geographic range of the programme. This

way they could ensure potential applicants from the East Riding of Yorkshire to Rutland, could receive the same information prior to applying to the programme.

As no information about the website was available from the education provider, the visitors were unclear what information would be available to potential applicants to ensure they had all the information they required to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. Therefore, the visitors require evidence which demonstrates the information which potential applicants will be given to make an informed decision regarding the programme.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must clarify who the programme lead and deputy are, and what their roles and responsibilities will be within the programme.

Reason: The education provider made reference in the standards mapping to the Programme Management Structure and staff curriculum vitae's (CV's). In the CV's, the education provider named two individuals as the joint programme leader and one Deputy Head of School. The Programme Management Structure outlined to the visitors the roles and responsibilities of all staff, including the Deputy Head of School and programme leaders. However, from the documentation provided, the visitors were unclear on how the roles and responsibilities would be divided between the joint programme leaders or if, one individual held sole responsibility for the programme.

In the senior and programme team meetings, the visitors learnt the education provider had recently come to the decision to appoint one of the two individuals to the programme leader role and the second as the deputy programme leader. However, the visitors remained unclear about how the roles and responsibilities of the programme leader role would be shared between these individuals. The visitors were therefore unclear about how the programme was effectively managed and therefore, require clarification of the programme lead, the deputy and their roles and responsibilities within 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 clarify the process for ensuring 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 standards mapping document referred to a document entitled Application Guidance on Leadership Duties – Programme Leader. The document discussed the process for appointing a programme leader and provided information about the skills and attributes that would be beneficial for the role. As part of this, the guidance included an expression of interest form which potential applicants would use to apply for the role.

In the senior and programme team meetings, the visitors learnt the education provider had recently come to the decision to appoint an individual to the programme leader role

and a second as their deputy. From their review of the curriculum vitae for the appointed programme leader, the visitors noted they were currently not on the relevant part of the HCPC Register. Upon seeking further clarification regarding this, it was suggested that the programme leader could be adjusted if necessary.

In addition, from their review of the Application Guidance on Leadership Duties – Programme Leader document, the visitors identified that potential applicants would be required to have relevant qualifications and knowledge related to the programme content. However, they were unable to identify what this would mean in relation to this particular programme. For example, the visitors were unclear as to whether the programme leader would need to be on the HCPC Register. Alternatively, if the programme leader was not on the HCPC Register, how the education provider ensured they were appropriate for the role and had access to the necessary information and resources for social work.

From this information, the visitors were unclear about how the process for appointing a programme leader works, within the programme, to ensure the person holding overall professional responsibility is appropriately qualified and experienced and unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how service users and carers will be involved in the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider referred to The Together Group documents. These documents discussed how service users and carers are given a range of opportunities to participate on other programmes within the university but did not talk about the degree apprenticeship programme. A feedback document also provided, showed that service users and carers were able to express their views and concerns about these programmes. Upon their review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the module descriptors and information on the End Point Assessment (EPA) did not go into detail about how service users and carers would be involved. For example, module descriptors, such as for Professional Social Work Practice, stated there will be a focus on service users, carers and citizens' perspectives. However, it was unclear to the visitors how service users and carers would be involved within the module.

During the service user and carers meeting, the visitors learnt about the wide range of activities being undertaken in other programmes and the Human Library project being run across the university which allows learners the opportunity to meet service users and carers, listen to their stories and ask questions. However, when asked, the service users and carers confirmed they currently had no information about how or if they will be involved with the degree apprenticeship programme.

During the programme team meeting, the visitors learnt that service user and carer involvement will be negotiated with employers as many employers have their own groups. The programme team recognised that service users and carers could be involved in the programme in areas such as assessment and broader strategic thinking.

From this information, the visitors are unclear on the broader strategy to involve service users and carers throughout the degree apprenticeship programme. Therefore, the visitors will need to see further evidence of how service users and carers will be included within the programme to ensure this standard is met.

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 demonstrate that the resources to support learning in all settings are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

Reason: Upon a review of the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors noted instances of incomplete and out-of-date information. In the module descriptors, the visitors noted that the range of legislation cited in Social Work with Adults was not always contemporary, consistent or correct. Furthermore, within the module descriptors, the visitors noted assessment methods such as 'Practice learning 0% (pass/fail) LO1' (Professional Development Review One) and 'Reflective analysis LO1 – LO4' (Using Knowledge in Practice). The programme team explained their overall approach to assessment and acknowledged that detail within the module descriptors could be expanded upon to include further details about the assessment method to ensure learners are fully aware of what is expected of them. The visitors were therefore unclear how learners would be provided with effective and appropriate information about relevant legislation and assessments throughout the programme.

In addition, from the programme team, the visitor's learnt that the universities internal structure made it difficult for the modules and assessments to be amended once they were 'locked' into the system. The programme team confirmed that more detailed information will be in the student handbook which will be available after the programme receives internal validation. From this information, the visitors were unclear about how the education provider ensures that learners have the complete and up-to date information they require in order to support their learning. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that the resources to support learning are complete and up to date to demonstrate how they are effective and appropriate to the delivery of 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 demonstrate the process / processes for receiving and responding to learner complaints, including:

- Who is responsible for these; and
- How they work together to ensure they are thorough and effective.

Reason: From the standards of education and training mapping document, the education provider referred to the programme handbook. The document discussed the university Student Complaint Procedure in place for learners. In the learners meeting, which consisted of individuals from the MSc programme, the visitors were told how they had been informed of the complaints procedure and that they had some experience of using it. Due to the different model of delivery, the visitors were unclear whether the degree apprenticeship programme would follow the same university process as the MSc programme and how the process would work in conjunction with the employers.

During the practice educators meeting, the visitors were informed that learners can raise complaints through both the education provider and their employer and how learners are provided with documentation surrounding this before starting the programme. The practice educators also confirmed that, as every learner is allocated a personal tutor, they could speak to their tutor rather than raise a concern through their employer's process.

The visitors established that both the university and employers have processes and procedures in place for responding to learner complaints. However, it was unclear who an apprenticeship learner should complain to and in what circumstances. The visitors therefore require further evidence about the process / processes for receiving and responding to apprentice learner complaints, who is responsible for these, and how they work together to ensure they are thorough and effective.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate the process / processes in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users, including:

- Who is responsible for these; and
- How they work together to ensure they are effective.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider referred to the module descriptors, the programme handbook and the memorandum of understanding. The documents discussed the university 'whistle blowing' process in place for raising concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users and carers. In the learners meeting, which consisted of individuals from the MSc programme, the visitors were told how they had been informed of the whistleblowing process and that they had some experience of using this and had found the process to be efficient. Due to the different model of delivery, the visitors were unclear whether the degree apprenticeship programme would follow the same university process as the MSc programme and how the process would work in conjunction with the employers.

During the practice educators meeting, the visitors were informed that learners can raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users through both the education provider and their employer. The practice educators also confirmed that, as every learner is allocated a personal tutor, the learner could speak to their tutor rather than raise a concern through their employer's process.

The visitors established that both the university and employers have processes and procedures for reporting concerns surrounding the safety and wellbeing of service users. However, it was unclear who an apprenticeship learner should raise any concerns with and in what circumstances. The visitors therefore require further evidence about the process / processes in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users, who is responsible for these, and how they work together to ensure they are effective.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the curriculum remains relevant to current practice on an ongoing basis.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider discussed that considerable research takes place within the School which helps to inform teaching and learning. They also submitted staff curriculum vitae for this standard, to demonstrate those who are engaged in continuing professional development in a number of ways. The visitors recognised the research and CPD activities being undertaken. However, upon a review of the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors noted instances of out-of-date information. In the module descriptors, the visitors noted that the range of legislation cited in Social Work with Adults was not always contemporary, consistent or correct. The visitors were therefore unclear about how the research and CPD activities ensured the curriculum remained relevant and updated in line with developments in the profession.

During the programme team meeting, the visitor's learnt that the university's internal structure made it difficult for the modules and assessments to be amended once they were 'locked' into the system. The programme team confirmed the updated information will be in the student handbook which will be available after they receives internal validation. However, this information was not available at the visit and therefore the visitors were unsure about how the research and CPD activities ensures the module content reflects current practice. As such, the visitors require further evidence of the revised modules to ensure the curriculum is relevant to current practice, in addition to any plans to ensure the curriculum remains relevant to current practice.

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 learners learn with, and from, learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider referred to the programme specification document and the programme handbook. These documents outlined that learners will have one day a week of protected learning time which will include interprofessional learning events. It also outlined that other learning days will be untimetabled and the learner is expected to proactively identify and agree learning needs through activities such as insight days (e.g. the opportunity to explore the work of other professionals). The documentation did not provide further details about which other professional groups might be involved in the interprofessional events.

In the senior team meeting, the visitors heard that learners are increasingly exposed to learning as part of a multi-disciplinary team within practice-based learning and that each learner will have an individual training plan which may including shadowing an individual from another profession. In addition, the senior and programme teams outlined that visiting speakers regularly deliver lecturers and that these speakers are from a wide variety of professions. The visitors were therefore satisfied learners would be able to learn with, and from, other relevant professions.

The senior team also confirmed that workshops are being developed for the degree apprenticeship learners to learn with learners from other professions. However, due to

the limited time spent within the university, there were timetabling difficulties in arranging these. The senior team recognised they would have to be very mindful about how to involve degree apprenticeship learners in interprofessional learning. From this information, the visitors were unclear how learners will learn with, and from, learners from other relevant professions. Therefore, the visitors require further clarification on how this will occur within the programme, to demonstrate this standard is met.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the assessment strategy and design ensures an individual is able to meet the standards of proficiency upon successful completion of the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider referred to the programme specification. The programme specification outlines the assessment and feedback strategy and explains how the module handbooks should include all learning outcomes, details about the assessment task, specific and general assessment criteria and detailed marking criteria. Upon a review of the module descriptors, the visitors noted assessment methods such as 'Practice learning 0% (pass/fail) LO1' (Professional Development Review One), 'Reflective analysis LO1 – LO4' (Using Knowledge in Practice) and 'Written Critical Case Study (Being a Social Worker/End Point Assessment). The visitors were unable to identify from the module descriptors detailed information about the assessment task, assessment criteria, marking criteria and in some cases, the particular learning outcomes being assessed.

The programme team explained their overall approach to assessment and acknowledged that detail within the module descriptors could be expanded upon to include further information about assessments. They also confirmed that the university's internal structure made it difficult for the modules and assessments, to be amended once they were 'locked' into the system. In addition, the visitors received confirmation the updated information will be in the student handbook which will be available after they receive internal validation. However, this information was not available at the visit.

From this information, the visitors were unclear about the assessment task, assessment criteria, marking criteria and in some cases, the particular learning outcomes being assessed. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence which demonstrates how the assessment design and strategy ensures an individual is able to meet the standards of proficiency upon successful completion of the programme.

6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how assessments, throughout the programme, ensure learners are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider referred to the programme specification document. The programme specification outlines the assessment and feedback strategy and explains how the module handbooks will include all learning

outcomes, details about the assessment task, specific and general assessment criteria and detailed marking criteria. Upon a review of the module descriptors, the visitors noted assessment methods such as 'Practice learning 0% (pass/fail) LO1' (Professional Development Review One), 'Reflective analysis LO1 – LO4' (Using Knowledge in Practice) and 'Written Critical Case Study (Being a Social Worker/End Point Assessment). The visitors were unable to identify from the module descriptors detailed information about the assessment task, assessment criteria, marking criteria and in some case, the particular learning outcomes being assessed. The visitors were therefore unclear about which assessments ensured that learners demonstrated they would be able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

The programme team explained their overall approach to assessment and acknowledged that detail within the module descriptors could be expanded upon to include further information about assessments. They also confirmed that the universities internal structure made it difficult for the modules and assessments, to be amended once they were 'locked' into the system. The programme team confirmed the updated information will be in the student handbook which will be available after they received internal validation. However, this information was not available at the visit,

In addition, the education provider referred to their Fitness to Practise Regulations, which outlined the universities general regulation policies and what is expected of learners. The visitors could not determine from this document, how learners would demonstrate how they meet the expectations of professional behaviour through the assessments on the programme.

From this information, the visitors were unclear about the detailed assessment criteria throughout the programme which ensured that learners would be able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate this standard is met.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how assessments provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Reason: In the mapping document, the education provider discussed the processes by which modules are assessed, both internally and externally. To evidence this, they referred to a Module Guidance 2018-2019 document. This document provides guidance about the requirements for developing and assessment of modules. In addition, it outlines the information which assessment briefs should include, such as, any specific constraints or requirements (e.g. word limits), submission procedures and deadlines. Upon a review of the module descriptors, the visitors noted assessment methods such as 'Practice learning 0% (pass/fail) LO1' (Professional Development Review One), 'Reflective analysis LO1 – LO4' (Using Knowledge in Practice) and 'Written Critical Case Study' (Being a Social Worker/End Point Assessment). The visitors noted that the module descriptors did not contain detailed information such as was outlined in the Module Guidance 2018-19. From the detail provided the visitors were unclear about how the assessments demonstrated an objective, fair and reliable measures of progression and achievement. The programme team explained their overall approach to

assessment and acknowledged that detail within the module descriptors could be expanded upon to include further information.

In addition, the programme team confirmed they are currently working on the necessary detail surrounding the End Point Assessment (EPA) to ensure that it offers an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement. They also confirmed there was sufficient time to develop this as the EPA was in year 3 of the programme. No further information was provided about the discussions to date or provisional plans which demonstrated how the education provider intended to structure the EPA, including who will be making the independent decisions and how this is managed to ensure the assessments are objective, fair and reliable.

The visitors noted that the standards of education and training (SETs) do not require an education provider to ensure independence through the EPA. Rather the SETs require all assessments within a programme to be an objective, fair and reliable measure of progression and achievement. They also noted the approval process requires programmes to be able to meet all the SETs before a programme can gain approval and there are many different ways in which to meet them.

During the programme team meeting, the visitor's learnt that the universities internal structure made it difficult for the modules and assessments to be amended once they were 'locked' into the system. The programme team confirmed the updated information will be in the student handbook which will be available after they receive internal validation. However, this information was not available at the visit. Therefore, the visitors require evidence which demonstrates how the education provider ensures assessments, including the EPA, are an objective, fair and reliable measure of a learners' progression and achievement.

6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the assessment methods are appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Reason: In the mapping document, the education provider states that assessment events reflect a range of assessment methods and that learning outcomes from each module are made clear to learners. The education provider referred to the Assessment section of the programme handbook which, in turn, referred the visitors and learners to the module handbook. It also stated that a full assessment briefing will be provided in the module teaching.

The education provider also submitted a Module Guidance 2018-2019 document. This provided information about the requirements for developing the assessment of modules. This document outlines the information which assessment briefs should include, such as, any specific constraints or requirements (e.g. word limits) and submission procedures and deadlines. Upon a review of the module descriptors, the visitors noted assessment methods such as 'In class law test: multiple choice and scenarios (50%)' (Social Work with Children and Families), 'A group presentation examining a relevant social issue (30%)' (Knowledge, Theories and Skills for Social Work) and 'Written Critical Case Study' and 'An Executive Summary' (Being a Social Worker/End Point Assessment). Some of the module descriptors did not contain details about which learning outcomes the assessment method was measuring. The programme team

explained their overall approach to assessment and acknowledged that detail within the module descriptors could be expanded upon to include further information.

During the programme team meeting, the visitor's learnt that the universities internal structure made it difficult for the modules and assessments to be amended once they were 'locked' into the system. The programme team confirmed the updated information will be in the student handbook which will be available after they receive internal validation. However, this information was not available at the visit

From this information, the visitors were unable to determine whether the assessment methods being used, are appropriate to and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes of the respective modules. Therefore, the visitors require further information on the assessment methods and how they effectively and appropriately measure the learning outcomes.

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 26 September 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available <u>on our website</u>.