hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Keele University
Programme name	MA Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	6 – 7 May 2015

Contents

Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'social worker' in England must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 2 July 2015 to provide observations on this report. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 30 June 2015. At this meeting, the Committee will accept, reject or vary the visitors' recommended outcome.

Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as the social work profession came onto the register in 2012 and a decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing programmes from this profession. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered a different programme, BA (Hons) Social Work, full time. The professional body and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on this programme only. A separate report exists for the other programme. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Beverley Blythe (Social worker in England) Alan Murphy (Social worker in England) Louise Whittle (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Hollie Latham
Proposed student numbers	30 per cohort, 1 cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2015
Chair	Cath Bücher (Keele University)
Secretary	Jo Hewitt (Keele University)
Members of the joint panel	David Ward (The College of Social Work) Ann Johnson (The College of Social Work)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

During the visit the HCPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators / mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Service users and carers	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval the visitors must be satisfied that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for the relevant part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that the programme is approved.

The visitors did not set any conditions for the programme.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have made a number of recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Recommendations

3.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the current resources available to support student learning.

Reason: From a tour of the facilities and conversations with the programme team, the visitors could see that there were adequate facilities to support student learning in all settings and are therefore satisfied that this standard is met at threshold level. However, from speaking with students there were some concerns raised regarding facilities available to support their learning. In particular there was mention of the currency of ebooks and limited access to core texts. Further to this, in a meeting with service users and carers, it was identified that there was currently no system in place, such as a loop system, to support students with limited or no hearing. Whilst the visitors were satisfied that the current facilities are adequate, they note that there is a risk that the above mentioned facilities could not be adequate in the future. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team revisits and reviews the above mentioned provisions to ensure that the programme resources will continue to support students learning in all settings for the duration of the programme.

3.15 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider reviewing the information made available to students around attendance requirements.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and speaking with students and the programme team, the visitors were satisfied that this standard is met at threshold level. However the visitors note that some information around attendance was not easy to locate in the programme documentation. The visitors were able to gain a better understanding of attendance through speaking with students and the programme team where it was clear that students were fully aware of attendance requirements. The visitors note that whilst the current regulations are clear to both students and the programme team, there is a risk that some attendance requirements could be misinterpreted or overlooked by students. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team revisits programme documentation around attendance requirements to increase the clarity to ensure that the programme will continue to meet this standard.

Beverley Blythe
Alan Murphy
Louise Whittle

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