

Major change visitors' report

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Section one: Programme details

Name of education provider	University of Cumbria
Programme title	BA (Hons) Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of submission to the HCPC	19 December 2014
Name and role of HCPC visitors	Richard Barker (Social worker) Paula Sobiechowska (Social worker)
HCPC executive	Mandy Hargood

Section two: Submission details

Summary of change

The Major Change Notification identifies changes in the following SETs:

SET 2 Programme admissions
 SET 3 Programme management and resources
 SET 4 Curriculum
 SET 5 Practice Placements
 SET 6 Assessment

The education provider intends to develop a new Flexible and Distributed Learning mode of study for employees working for Cumbria County Council.

The following documents were provided as part of the submission:

- Major change notification form (completed by the HCPC executive)
- Context pack
- Major change SETs mapping document (completed by education provider)
- Programme specification

- Summary Curriculum vitae
- Module Descriptors & Workbook for Case Study 1
- Programme Annual Evaluatory Report
- Programme Handbook
- Placement Handbook
- Admissions Document
- Streamlined Validation

Section three: Additional documentation

- The visitors agreed that no further documentation was required in order to make a recommendation.
- The visitors agreed that additional documentation was required in order to make a recommendation. The standards of education and training (SETs), for which additional documentation was requested, are listed below with reasons for the request.

Section four: Recommendation of the visitors

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme have demonstrated an ability to meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:

- There is sufficient evidence to show the programme continues to meet the standards of education and training and that those who complete the programme will continue to demonstrate an ability to meet the standards of proficiency.
- There is insufficient evidence to determine if or how the programme continues to meet the standards of education and training listed. Therefore, a visit is recommended to gather more evidence and if required place conditions on ongoing approval of the programme.

2.1 The admissions procedures 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.

Reason: From reading the documentation provided for the major change, the visitors were unable to determine how the admissions procedures work for the proposed new mode of study, which is termed by the education provider as Flexible Distributed Learning (FDL). The documentation was unclear in relation to admissions procedures for the FDL programme and at times referred to the currently approved full time route. Therefore, the visitors could not determine whether both applicants and the education provider could make an informed choice as to whether to offer or take up a place on the programme. Differences between the admissions procedures for the FDL and full time programme could impact on this standard, but also on other standards in SET 2. Therefore, the visitors considered that the most appropriate way to gather evidence to

ensure that this standard is met is via an approval visit so that the admissions procedures for the programme could be discussed to determine the differences between the full time programme and the FDL programme.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Reason: The visitors determined from the documentation that the programme has been validated by the education provider's own validating processes. However, the visitors were unsure about the sustainability of the programme, as it is expected that there will only be six to seven participants per year. The visitors also considered that if only employees of CCC are able to apply to the programme, the programme could be financially vulnerable. The visitors could also not see any memorandum of understanding or contractual agreement regarding the delivery in collaboration CCC. The collaborative arrangement between CCC and the education provider would need further explanation, and therefore, the visitors considered that an approval visit would be the best way to discuss the issues around programme security.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation provided that there is limited reference to the FDL programme in the programme specification and how it will work. From the visitors reading, it would seem that the FDL will be run in addition to the full time programme, but they could not see a clearly defined pathway through the programme. The visitors therefore could not determine how the programme would be managed. The visitors recognise that the existing full time programme is effectively managed but they considered that clarification regarding the FDL programme would need to be considered at an approval visit.

3.3 The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place

Reason: The visitors noted that the same quality assurance mechanisms would be in place for the FDL programme as for the existing full time programme. However as the students for this programme will not be campus based, the visitors were not clear how the programme team will ensure that feedback mechanisms for the students undertaking the FDL programme will work in practice. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

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

3.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

3.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors were unclear that there are sufficient staff in place to deliver the FDL programme as well as the existing full time programme. The visitors could not determine, for example, if there will be an increase in staff workload, and what the impact of this would be on the running of both programmes, and on the time that staff are able to dedicate to development and

research. The visitors considered that the impact of the possible staffing issue would be best discussed at an approval visit.

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

Reason: It is not clear whether the resources to support the FDL programme will be effectively used. There is an example in the workbook for module HSWG4002 as to what resources will be available for the FDL programme. However, the visitors were unclear as to how the resources to support student learning in all settings would be effectively used. The visitors were also unsure how, if a student selected for this programme requires reasonable adjustments, that the resources to support student learning adequately support the student. The visitors also noted that there could be learning implications for students on the FDL programme, for example they have fewer face to face hours in the dissertation module. Therefore the visitors could not determine whether resources to support student learning in all settings are effectively used. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

3.11 There must be adequate and accessible facilities to support the welfare and wellbeing of students in all settings.

Reason: The visitors could not see from their review of the documentation if there were adequate and accessible facilities to support the welfare and wellbeing of students on the FDL programme. The visitors could not determine how the support will be different to the human resources support provided by CCC. It was unclear from the visitor's reading of the documents that the education provider's welfare and wellbeing policies would be applicable to the students on the FDL mode of study. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

3.12 There must be a system of academic and pastoral student support in place.

Reason: The visitors could not determine the system of academic and pastoral support for students on the FDL programme. They noted that there is reference to students contacting the programme team by SKYPE and similar methods. However, the documentation was not sufficiently clear in demonstrating the academic and pastoral support to assure the visitors that this standard is met. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Reason: The visitors were unsure from the documentation as to how the students on the FDL knew which complaints process to follow. It was unclear whether students would need to go through the CCC process and then the education provider process, or would need to go to the education provider directly. The visitors noted that the SETs mapping documents says that students would have access to the education provider policy and the student union but they do not explain how this would work with students who are also subject to the policies and processes of the employer. The visitors were unclear as to the support that students would be given if they had a complaint that is linked to both the education provider and the employer. The visitors consider an

approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

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.

Reason: The visitors were unable to determine the process the students followed regarding mandatory attendance. They were unsure if students were subject to the CCC attendance policy, or whether they followed the education provider's processes. It was not clear to visitors how students' attendance would be monitored through campus-based mechanisms if they are not campus based. The education provider did not give any information in the SETs mapping documents, and so the visitors were unable to see if there was a mandatory attendance policy for the FDL programme. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Reason: The visitors were unclear as to how students' profession related conduct could interact with the CCC and education provider processes. It was unclear whether the human resources policies of CCC and / or the education provider policy would apply to the students. The SETs mapping document stated that the FDL programme would be subject to the approved full time fitness to practice process. However the visitors could not see how this linked to any process that the CCC might have in place. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register

Reason: The visitors were unclear how the curriculum has been reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate for the FDL programme to ensure students meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for social workers in England on completing the programme. The SETs mapping states that the curriculum embeds the PCF and the SOPs, but gives no indication as to how the curriculum will work for the FDL programme. The visitors stated that this needs to be clarified to determine if the curriculum is appropriate to ensure that the SOPs are delivered. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

4.3 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the curriculum.

Reason: The visitors were unclear how moving from concurrent module delivery to consecutive module delivery impacts on the integration of theory and practice in the curriculum. The programme specification (page 2) states that this is to allow the student to remain in employment and that the full use of the technology enhanced learning will be used. It is not clear as to how this will impact on the students on the FDL programme and how the programme team will ensure that theory and practice will be central to the curriculum. The visitors need to see further evidence to ensure this

standard is met. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was no information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was no information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the number, duration and range of placements are appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was no information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the practice placements settings provide a safe and supportive environment. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was no information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice

placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specifically to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider maintains an effective and thorough system for approving and monitoring for all placements. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specifically to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures that the placement providers had equality and diversity policies in place, together with an indication as to how these would be implemented and monitored. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear as to whether there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures that practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures practice placement educators undertake appropriate practice placement educator training. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures practice placement educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed with the HCPC. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures effective collaboration with the practice placement providers. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of:

- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures the students and practice placement providers are fully prepared for placement. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.12 Learning, teaching and supervision must encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures learning, teaching and supervision encourages safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

5.13 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of service users and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Reason: From their reading of the documentation, the visitors were unclear whether students would undertake practice placements at CCC or elsewhere. There was insufficient information provided detailing how practice placements would work for students on the FDL programme, and no formal memorandum of understanding or contractual arrangement included in the documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placements are managed to ensure they effectively support the delivery of the programme. Specific to this standard, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures the range of learning and teaching methods respects the rights and needs of service users and colleagues throughout the practice placement. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors were unclear how the assessment has been reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate for the FDL programme to ensure students meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for social workers in England on completing the programme. The SETs mapping states that the curriculum embeds the PCF and the SOPs, but gives no indication as to how the assessment will work for the FDL programme. The visitors stated that this needs to be clarified to determine if the assessment is appropriate to ensure that the SOPs are met on completion of the programme. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Reason: The visitors considered in their reading of the documentation that there are several points that need to be discussed further in relation to the assessment methods being employed to measure the learning outcomes for the FDL programme. For example, the visitors were unclear how the assessment tasks which are campus-led are appropriate for the FDL students at CCC. The visitors were unsure of the protocols that will be in place to ensure equity and rigour of student assessment across the FDL and full time programmes. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: The visitors were unsure from their reading of the documentation as to whether the FDL students understand the implications of failing to progress through the programme. Whilst the SETs mapping listed no change against this standard, the programme specification said it was a pass required from year to year. This is the same as the existing full time mode. However it is not clear what happens to a student if they fail, and whether there are consequences related to their employment with CCC. The visitors consider an approval visit as the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure this standard is met.