

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Anglia Ruskin University
Programme name	Step Up to Social Work PgDip
Mode of delivery	Full time accelerated
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	9 – 10 September 2015

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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. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 3 December 2015. At the Committee meeting on 3 December 2015, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC approval for the first time. 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 education provider body validated the programme. The education provider 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 the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. 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 education provider outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Anne Mackay (Social worker in England) Dorothy Smith (Social worker in England) Louise Whittle (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	30 per cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	January 2015
Chair	Penny English (Anglia Ruskin University)
Secretary	Joanne Wood (Anglia Ruskin University)
Members of the joint panel	Sue Collier (Internal Panel Member) Ian Cummins (External Panel Member)

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators / mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service users and carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC met with students from the BA (Hons) Social Work at Anglia Ruskin University and the previously run Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work (Step Up to Social Work) at the University of Bedfordshire, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

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 a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 39 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 16 SETs.

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 also 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.

Conditions

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.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the admissions information to clarify the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) policy for the programme.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team, the visitors were satisfied that due to the nature of the programme applicants will not be able to apply for AP(E)L on any of the content of the programme. However, whilst the standards of education and training (SETs) mapping document mentions AP(E)L, the visitors could not see how applicants to the programme would be informed about the process, or whether any amount of credit could be considered through AP(E)L, and whether practice learning could be transferred or not. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the education provider informs students of the AP(E)L policy and process for the programme. This will ensure that applicants are given the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on this programme.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the management of the programme and how the partnership arrangements in place help to ensure that this programme is managed effectively.

Reason: From the documentation provided before the visit the visitors were aware of how the academic elements of this programme are managed at a university level. From the evidence prior to the visit, the visitors understood that there are regional management groups which manage the “development” and “implementation” of this programme while the university was responsible for the “educational delivery” of the programme. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors had a better understanding of how the programme will be managed from the university perspective. However, from the evidence the visitors could not determine how the partnership arrangements in place help to ensure that this programme is managed effectively. Furthermore, the visitors were unable to determine how the ongoing partnership arrangements with practice placement providers are managed including links to the management of the programme and how they are monitored regularly. The visitors therefore require further evidence as to how this programme is managed, what structures in are in place to facilitate this management and how they ensure that this management is undertaken effectively. In this way the visitors can determine how the programme may meet this standard.

3.4 There must be a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme who must be appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence of a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme, and ensure that they are consistently referenced throughout the programme documentation.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation provided that it was not clear who the person was that has overall professional responsibility for the programme. The visitors also felt that it was not made clear in discussion with the programme team who has overall professional responsibility for the programme. The visitors therefore need a clear statement of who this person will be and require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to reflect this. In this way the visitors can determine that this person is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, is on the relevant part of the HCPC Register.

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

Condition: The education provider will need to ensure that the resources in place to support student learning must be effectively used.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, in particular the student handbook the visitors noted that key policies such as, the attendance policy, appeals process and the student complaint policy were not included in the document. Furthermore, the visitors noted that the student handbook contain minimal information to support students learning. The visitors were able to determine how students will be able to access key information about the programme such as the complaint process, the appeal process and the attendance policy if this information is not contained in the student handbook or in another key documents for student. The visitors therefore, require further evidence of how the resources in place such as, the student handbook will be effectively used to support student learning in all settings.

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.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence that a robust monitoring system for students attendance is in place; to include information as to what would trigger procedures for poor attendance.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation provided that there was no explicit reference to where and when attendance is mandatory for students on the programme. Within the documentation, the visitors noted that for in house lectures 'electronic swipe system to monitor attendance' and that poor attendance would be followed up. However, in discussions at the visit, students highlighted several instances where the system has not reported correctly. The visitors also discussed the attendance policy with the programme team who highlighted the expectation of students on the programmes, however, the visitors were not provided with the attendance policy. As such the visitors were unsure how students starting the programme would be informed of this attendance policy, how it would be enforced and what, if any, repercussions there may be for students who fail to attend. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the attendance policy, what parts of the programme are mandatory and how this is communicated to students. They also require further evidence to demonstrate how students are made aware of what effect contravening this policy may have on their ability to progress through the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence regarding the plans for continued service user and carer involvement within the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that service users and carers are involved in the programme. Discussion at the visit indicated there were dedicated service users who had long standing relationships with the programme and who contributed to the programme in a number of ways. Discussion with the students indicated the contribution of these individuals was valuable to their learning. However, from the discussions with the programme team it was clear that formal future plans have yet to be made to involve service users in the programme. As such, the visitors were unable to determine from the discussion and the documentation provided that a plan is in place on how service users will continue to be involved in the programme. In order to determine that this standard is met the visitors require further evidence demonstrating the plans for further service user and carer involvement.

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.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how the programme ensures that those who successfully complete the programme will be able to meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for social workers, in England.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors, together with a mapping document giving information about how students who successfully complete the programme meet the SOPs. However, the visitors noted that a number of standard of proficiencies were not addressed in the mapping document. For example, “2 be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession” and “3 be able to maintain fitness to practise”. From the discussions with the programme team the visitors heard that this was error and that the mapping document will be revised. Without assessing a complete mapping document, the visitors are not satisfied this standard was met. Further documentation will be required to clearly evidence how each learning outcomes ensures that each student meets the SOPs on successful completion of the programme. The visitors have suggested that the education provider submits a revised and complete mapping document in order to meet this condition.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how they maintain a thorough and effective system of approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: The visitors noted a number of different documents submitted by the education provider to demonstrate how the programme meets this standard. However, in considering the initial documentation submitted and discussions held at the visit, the visitors could not find any evidence of overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements used by the programme. From discussions with the programme team, it was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not determine the criteria used by the programme team to assess a

placement and the overall process undertaken to approve it, as well as how activities such as feedback from practice educators and students will feed into this. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements, and how they are put into practice, to ensure this standard is met. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used to approve placement providers and settings, the overall process for the approval and ongoing monitoring of placements, and how information gathered from placement providers at approval, or during a placement experience is considered and acted upon. Any such evidence should articulate what the process in place is and how this supports the review of the quality of a placement.

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.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure equality and diversity policies are in place within practice placements.

Reason: The visitors noted a number of different documents submitted by the education provider to demonstrate how the programme meets this standard. From a review of the initial documentation and discussions with the placement provider, the visitors noted that the East Regional Partnership secure practice placements for students. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the equality and diversity policies are in place. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure that practice placements have equality and diversity policies in place. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence that demonstrates how the programme ensures equality and diversity policies are in place within practice placements.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced and, where required, registered staff.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. For this standard, the education provider referenced the “this will be arranged by the East Regional Partnership, and agreed that student social worker are to be supernumerary to staffing levels” in their SETs mapping document, but the visitors were unclear how this statement ensured this standard was met. From discussions with the programme team and the practice placement provider, the visitors learnt that the East Regional Partnership hold a database of staff. Also, the visitors were told that local and regional work is currently on going to ensure that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff at practice placement setting via the East Regional Partnership Group meetings. However, it was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for ensuring all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced

and, where required, registered staff. The education provider tabled documentation on the second day of the visit with information about practice placement educators, but the visitors were unable to review this documentation due to time constraints. The visitors were therefore unable to make a judgment about whether this standard is met, and require information which demonstrates how the education provider ensures practice placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure all practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. For this standard, the education provider referenced “This is responsibility of the East Regional Partnership. They will appoint Practice Educators with PEPS2 qualifications and On-site supervisors who have attended an in-house preparation course” in their SETs mapping document, but the visitors were unclear how this statement ensured this standard was met. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that the education provider is involved in the process of ensuring practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience. However, from the discussions and initial documentation, it was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for ensuring practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. The education provider tabled documentation on the second day of the visit with information about practice placement educators, but the visitors were unable to review this documentation due to time constraints. The visitors were therefore unable to make a judgment about whether this standard is met, and require further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure all practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

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

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures practice placement educators undertake appropriate practice placement educator training. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt the education provider offers online modules ‘practice learning supervision’ and ‘assessment’ as well as established workshops. The visitors acknowledged that there are training opportunities and workshops provided by the education provider for practice placement educators but were unable to see how each individual placement educator’s training is monitored, or how the requirements for training feeds into partnership agreements with the providers. The visitors were also unclear about the steps taken by the education provider to ensure that suitably trained placement educators were in place for students. The education provider tabled documentation on the second day of the visit with information about practice placement

educators, but the visitors were unable to review this documentation due to time constraints. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to clearly articulate the training requirements for placement educators and the processes in place for ensuring these requirements are met and monitored in practice placement setting.

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

Condition: The programme team must further evidence of how they will ensure and monitor that the practice educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures practice placement educators are appropriately registered, or agree other arrangements. For this standard, the education provider referenced "The East regional partnership will confirm that practice educators meets the PEPs 2 requirements". From this, the visitors were unclear of the process in place in ensuring placement educators are appropriately registered. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that the databased with registration of practice educators will be held by the regional partnership group, but that also the education provider will have their own database. However, the visitor were not provided with any evidence of the database or the process in place. As such, the visitors were unclear how the education provider would be involved in maintaining responsibility for ensuring placement educators are appropriately registered if the registration of practice educators are held by the regional partnership group. The education provider tabled documentation on the second day of the visit with information about practice placement educators, but the visitors were unable to review this documentation due to time constraints. To ensure that this standard is met, the visitors require further evidence of the process in place in ensuring placement educators are appropriately registered, or agree other arrangements.

6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HCPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate what awards confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register and those exit awards which do not.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team the visitors were satisfied that anyone successfully completing this programme would be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC. It was also clear that anyone who received an exit award would not be eligible to apply to the HCPC Register. However, in the documentation submitted by the education provider the visitors could not determine how students were informed about what impact exiting the programme and being awarded "PG Dip Professional Social Work Practice" would have on their ability to apply to the Register. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students understand which awards confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register and which do not.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate that any aegrotat award conferred on a graduate of this programme will not lead to eligibility to apply for HCPC registration.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation provided prior to the visit and noted the statement under SET 6.9 'there is no option for this course' in the mapping document. However, in reviewing the programme documentation, the visitors were unable to locate information that clearly articulates an aegrotat award will not lead to eligibility to apply for HCPC registration. As this was the only information provided the visitors could not determine any clear statement regarding aegrotat awards. As such the visitors could not determine how the programme team ensured that students understood that aegrotat awards conferred by the education provider would not enable those students to be eligible to apply to the Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the assessment regulation around this standard and that there is a clear statement included in the programme documentation regarding aegrotat awards and that this is accessible to students.

6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the Register, or agree other arrangements.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the mapping document provided prior to the visit and noted a web link to the education provider's regulation and procedures under SET 6.11. Upon reviewing the web link, the visitors found it hard to navigate through the site and locate the appropriate information that clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner being appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register. The visitors were provided with additional information around this standard on the second day of the visit, but did not have sufficient time to review the evidence. As such, the visitors did not see documentation which defined the programme's assessment regulations for this standard. This standard requires that the assessment regulations of the programme state that at least one of the external examiners appointed to the programme needs to be appropriately registered or that suitable alternative arrangements should be agreed. Therefore the visitors require evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the appointment of external examiners to the programme have been included in the relevant documentation to ensure that this standard is met.

Recommendations

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider how best to communicate the complaints process to students.

Reason: Documentation submitted and discussion at the visit confirmed that the programme has a formal student complaints process in place. Discussions with the students indicated a varied awareness of the complaints process and how to engage in this process. However, the programme team spoke clearly about the complaint process and provided details of they deal with students' concerns about the programme and related service. The visitors were satisfied that the programme therefore meets this standard. However, they recommend that the education provider consider how best to communicate the complaints process to students.

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