

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Bournemouth University
Programme name	PGDip Social Work (Children and Families)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	8-9 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 15 January 2016. At the Committee meeting, 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 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	David Childs (Social worker in England) Robert Goemans (Social worker in England) Ian Hughes (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Alex Urquhart
Proposed student numbers	21 per cohort, one cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 January 2016
Chair	Philip Sewell (Bournemouth University)
Secretary	Elizabeth Waters (Bournemouth University)
Members of the joint panel	Clive Allen (Internal panel member) Martyn Higgins (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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit as there are currently no external examiners appointed as the programme has not yet commenced.

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) and MA Social Work programme 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 51 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining seven 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 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 is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate how the information made available to potential applicants is clear that completion of the programme will allow eligibility to apply to the Register as a Social worker in England.

Reason: During the approval visit the visitors noted that the name of the programmes had changed from 'Post Graduate Diploma Step Up to Social Work' to 'PGDip Social Work (Children and Families)' and 'MA Social Work (Children and Families)', both full time. These programme titles are different to the titles proposed to the HCPC by Dorset County Council. During the visit it was confirmed that these are the finalised titles of the programmes. The visitors noted, that the inclusion of children and families in the title could potentially suggest that the programme was a social work programme that specialised in children and family social work. This was reflected in the meeting with students where the visitors met with a potential student who had a provisional offer for a place on the programme. The potential student stated that they believed that the programme was a specialist programme for children and family social work, and that if they wanted to pursue other areas of social work they would have to undertake further studies outside of this programme. The visitors noted that the current title could potentially be misleading to potential applicants without further clarification. Therefore the education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate how the information made available to potential applicants is clear that this is a programme that is not specific to children and family social work.

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

Condition: The education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate how the resources to support student learning in all settings are effectively used to ensure that any reference to the HCPC is accurate and reflects the current environment of statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted that throughout the programme documentation there were a number of incorrect statements about the role of the HCPC as a statutory regulator. For example in the programme handbook on page 35 it states "To meet the requirements of the Health and Care Professions Council for Social work...", this is an incorrect reference to the HCPC as the HCPC is a regulator of 16 health and care professions in the UK and is not specific to social work. Another example is page 77 of the same document makes reference to the HPC, this is an incorrect reference as the organisation is no longer the HPC and is the HCPC. These inaccuracies could potentially be misleading to any students. Therefore the education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate how the resources to support student learning in all settings are effectively used to ensure that any reference to the HCPC is accurate and reflects the current environment of statutory regulation.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate the protocols in place whereby the education provider obtains consent from students for role play throughout the programme.

Reason: For this standard the visitors reviewed the consent process in the programme handbook, where on page 12 it states that “all students are required to consent to role plays throughout the programme during the application process”. The visitors noted that this policy grants consent before the student is offered a place on the programme and enrolled. When meeting with the students the visitors asked how the consent policy worked in practice, the students recalled giving consent during the admissions process, however they were unsure whether this was consent for role play during the admissions process or role play throughout the programme. Furthermore the students were unsure as to what would happen if they decided they did not want to partake in role play for any reason. The visitors noted that there was potential for students to misunderstand the consent process. When meeting with the programme team it was explained that consent was gained during the admissions process and that this consent was for the entire programme. The visitors noted that the policy could be potentially misleading or unclear to students and were unclear as to how the policy ensures consistency when dealing with issues of consent throughout the programme. Therefore the education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate that the process for gaining student consent is clear that students are aware that this can be reviewed at any point in the programme. In this way the education programme can demonstrate how the programme may meet this standard.

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 education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate the attendance policies and monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure that students are aware of the expected attendance and associated monitoring mechanisms.

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the programme handbook, where on page 10, it states that attendance is mandatory and that any concern about repeated absences would be dealt with by the appropriate member of the team. The visitors noted that this policy did not clarify what the required attendance would be and what would constitute repeated absences in order for action to be undertaken by the programme team. When meeting with the students they were unclear what the expected attendance was and what would happen if they missed sessions. The visitors noted that this policy was potentially unclear to students and that there was potential for learning to be missed by students on the programme. Therefore the education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate the attendance policies and monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure that students are aware of the expected attendance and associated monitoring mechanisms.

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 clearly articulate how the curriculum and learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the following SOPs for the relevant part of the Register:

- 1.3 be able to undertake assessments of risk, need and capacity and respond appropriately**
- 1.4 be able to recognise and respond appropriately to unexpected situations and manage uncertainty**
- 1.5 be able to recognise signs of harm, abuse and neglect and know how to respond appropriately**
- 2.1 understand current legislation applicable to the work of their profession**
- 2.3 understand the need to protect, safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults**
- 2.4 understand the need to address practices which present a risk to or from service users and carers, or others**
- 2.6 be able to exercise authority as a social worker within the appropriate legal and ethical frameworks**
- 2.9 recognise the power dynamics in relationships with service users and carers and be able to manage those dynamics appropriately**
- 4.1 be able to assess a situation, determine its nature and severity and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with it**
- 4.4 be able to make informed judgements on complex issues using the information available**
- 5.1 be able to reflect on and take account of the impact of inequality, disadvantage and discrimination on those who use social work services and their communities**
- 5.2 understand the need to adapt practice to respond appropriately to different groups and individuals**
- 5.3 be aware of the impact of their own values on practice with different groups of service users and carers**
- 5.4 understand the impact of different cultures and communities and how this affects the role of the social worker in supporting service users and carers**
- 6.1 be able to work with others to promote social justice, equality and inclusion**
- 6.2 be able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination, disadvantage and oppression**

- 7.2 be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users and carers or others**
- 8.1 be able to use interpersonal skills and appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users, carers and others**
- 8.2 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating advice, instruction, information and professional opinion to colleagues, service users and carers**
- 8.3 understand the need to provide service users and carers with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions or to understand the decisions made**
- 8.4 understand how communication skills affect the assessment of and engagement with service users and carers**
- 8.5 understand how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of a range of factors including age, capacity, learning ability and physical ability.**
- 8.6 be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by a range of factors including age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status**
- 8.7 understand the need to draw upon available resources and services to support service users' and carers' communication, wherever possible**
- 9.1 understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships with service users, carers and colleagues as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively with others.**
- 9.2 be able to work with service users and carers to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources**
- 9.3 be able to work with service users and carers to promote individual growth, development and independence and to assist them to understand and exercise their rights**
- 9.4 be able to support service users' and carers' rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive**
- 9.10 be able to understand the emotional dynamics of interactions with service users and carers**
- 13.1 recognise the roles of other professions, practitioners and organisations**
- 13.2 be aware of the different social and organisational contexts and settings within which social work operates**

13.3 be aware of changes in demography and culture and their impact on social work

13.4 understand in relation to social work practice:

- social work theory;
- social work models and interventions;
- the development and application of relevant law and social policy;
- the development and application of social work and social work values;
- human growth and development across the lifespan and the impact of key developmental stages and transitions;
- the impact of injustice, social inequalities, policies and other issues which affect the demand for social work services;
- the relevance of psychological, environmental, sociological and physiological perspectives to understanding personal and social development and functioning;
- concepts of participation, advocacy and empowerment; and
- the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour

14.2 be able to select and use appropriate assessment tools

14.4 be able to use social work methods, theories and models to achieve change and development and improve life opportunities

14.8 be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts

Reason: For this standard the visitors reviewed the standards of proficiency (SOPs) mapping document for the programme, in this document the programme team had mapped the learning outcomes and modules against the SOPs. The visitors noted there were occurrences where the learning outcomes did not capture specific SOPs, detailed above, in relation to working with vulnerable adults. The visitors note that there was potential that someone who successfully completes the programme and meets the learning outcomes would not meet some of the SOPs for their part of the Register. Therefore further evidence is required to demonstrate how the curriculum and learning outcomes ensures each SOP, listed above, is delivered in order to ensure that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs for the part of the relevant part of the Register.

4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Condition: The education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate that the curriculum reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Reason: For this standard the visitors reviewed the programme specification, module descriptors and the staff curriculum vitae which gave an overview of the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base of the programme. The visitors noted that the programme had a particular focus on working with children and families and that in the service user and carer meeting they met with service users and carers who were all

from a children and family setting. The visitors also could not identify in the evidence presented where aspects of working with vulnerable adults was included. Any programme approved by the HCPC needs to be generic and allow a student to complete the programme and apply for registration as a social worker in England who can work in any social work setting. The visitors noted that there was potential that someone who completes this programme will not be fully prepared to work with vulnerable adults or other aspects of social work other than children and families. Therefore the education is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate that the curriculum reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

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.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate how the assessment strategy of the programme ensures that those who successfully complete the programme have met the following SOPs for the relevant part of the Register:

1.3 be able to undertake assessments of risk, need and capacity and respond appropriately

1.4 be able to recognise and respond appropriately to unexpected situations and manage uncertainty

1.5 be able to recognise signs of harm, abuse and neglect and know how to respond appropriately

2.1 understand current legislation applicable to the work of their profession

2.3 understand the need to protect, safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults

2.4 understand the need to address practices which present a risk to or from service users and carers, or others

2.6 be able to exercise authority as a social worker within the appropriate legal and ethical frameworks

2.9 recognise the power dynamics in relationships with service users and carers and be able to manage those dynamics appropriately

4.1 be able to assess a situation, determine its nature and severity and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with it

4.4 be able to make informed judgements on complex issues using the information available

5.1 be able to reflect on and take account of the impact of inequality, disadvantage and discrimination on those who use social work services and their communities

- 5.2 understand the need to adapt practice to respond appropriately to different groups and individuals**
- 5.3 be aware of the impact of their own values on practice with different groups of service users and carers**
- 5.4 understand the impact of different cultures and communities and how this affects the role of the social worker in supporting service users and carers**
- 6.1 be able to work with others to promote social justice, equality and inclusion**
- 6.2 be able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination, disadvantage and oppression**
- 7.2 be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users and carers or others**
- 8.1 be able to use interpersonal skills and appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users, carers and others**
- 8.2 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating advice, instruction, information and professional opinion to colleagues, service users and carers**
- 8.3 understand the need to provide service users and carers with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions or to understand the decisions made**
- 8.4 understand how communication skills affect the assessment of and engagement with service users and carers**
- 8.5 understand how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of a range of factors including age, capacity, learning ability and physical ability.**
- 8.6 be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by a range of factors including age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status**
- 8.7 understand the need to draw upon available resources and services to support service users' and carers' communication, wherever possible**
- 9.1 understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships with service users, carers and colleagues as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively with others.**
- 9.2 be able to work with service users and carers to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources**

9.3 be able to work with service users and carers to promote individual growth, development and independence and to assist them to understand and exercise their rights

9.4 be able to support service users' and carers' rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive

9.10 be able to understand the emotional dynamics of interactions with service users and carers

13.1 recognise the roles of other professions, practitioners and organisations

13.2 be aware of the different social and organisational contexts and settings within which social work operates

13.3 be aware of changes in demography and culture and their impact on social work

13.4 understand in relation to social work practice:

- social work theory;
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- human growth and development across the lifespan and the impact of key developmental stages and transitions;
- the impact of injustice, social inequalities, policies and other issues which affect the demand for social work services;
- the relevance of psychological, environmental, sociological and physiological perspectives to understanding personal and social development and functioning;
- concepts of participation, advocacy and empowerment; and
- the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour

14.2 be able to select and use appropriate assessment tools

14.4 be able to use social work methods, theories and models to achieve change and development and improve life opportunities

14.8 be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts

Reason: For this standard the visitors reviewed the standards of proficiency (SOPs) mapping document for the programme, in this document the programme team had mapped the learning outcomes and modules against the SOPs. The visitors noted there were occurrences where the learning outcomes did not capture the SOPs in relation to working with vulnerable adults. The visitors were concerned that this meant that the assessment strategy and design would not be able to ensure that someone who successfully completes the programme and meets the learning outcomes would meet the SOPs for their part of the programme. Therefore the education provider must clearly articulate how the assessment strategy of the programme ensures that those who successfully complete the programme have met the following SOPs for the relevant part of the Register.

Recommendations

2.7 The admissions procedures must ensure that the education provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider keep under review the mechanisms by which they implement and monitor the equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants.

Reason: As part of the evidence provided, the visitors reviewed the equality and diversity policies in place and were satisfied that equality and diversity data was collected adhering to the education provider's policies. Therefore the visitors were content that this standard has been met. However, in the meeting with the programme team the visitors asked how the data is collected, monitored and used. In the programme team's response the programme team were unable to present equality and diversity data, for example statistics on completion rates for different demographics. Therefore the visitors recommend that the education provider keeps under review the mechanisms by which they implement and monitor equality and diversity policies so that any statistics generated by the implementation of the policy are easily obtainable by the programme team.

David Childs
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