hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Goldsmiths College University of London
Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	8 - 9 April 2014

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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. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 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 5 June 2014. 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 the Social work profession (in England) came onto the register on 1 August 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 education provider did not review the programme, but the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the MA in Social Work. 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. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Michael Branicki (Social worker)
	Deborah Kouzarides (Social worker)
HCPC executive officers (in attendance)	Nicola Baker
Proposed student numbers	35 per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2014
Chair	John Ginman (Goldsmiths College University of London)
Secretary	Rachel Davies (Goldsmiths College University of London)
Members of the joint panel	Vijay Patel (The College of Social Work)
	Anne Kelly (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	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their 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 56 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining one SET.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. 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 recommendation for the programme.

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

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation to ensure the terminology in use is reflective of the HCPC and its guidance and standards for the statutory regulation for social workers.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation provided prior to the visit, and found instances of inaccurate references to the HCPC and its documentation to support students and registrants. For instance, the documentation regularly refers to 'accreditation' from the HCPC, including within the programme specification. The HCPC, as the statutory regulator for social workers in England, 'approves' education and training programmes to lead to eligibility to register as social workers, rather than operating a system of endorsement or accreditation. The programme handbook also refers to a 'HCPC Code of Conduct and Ethics' for students (for example, page 217), and Appendix 5 is a 'HCPC Professional Conduct and Ethics agreement', based on the HCPC's 'Guidance on conduct and ethics for students', which students are asked to sign. The use of terminology such as standards, agreement or code of conduct, in relation to this guidance, could mislead students as to the HCPC's remit and guidance regarding social work students. The HCPC's 'Standards of conduct, performance and ethics' and 'Standards of Proficiency - Social workers in England' that will apply to students who successfully complete the programme and register with the HCPC, should be referenced correctly throughout the documentation. The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be reviewed to ensure that all references to the HCPC, including references to its guidance and standards and how they are applicable to students or registrants, are clearly and accurately laid out.

Recommendations

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an 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.**

Recommendation: The programme team are advised to monitor supervision in the practice setting going forward, to ensure that appropriate supervision is taking place as outlined in the practice learning agreement, and is recorded appropriately.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the practice placement documentation, and discussed preparation for placements and expectations of supervision with students and placement educators at the visit. The visitors were confident that the new documents to support practice educators in supervising students, along with workshops, would meet this standard going forward. However, in discussion with students, the visitors heard that some placement educators have not always ensured that supervision takes place in the correct environment, at the specified frequency, and is recorded appropriately. The programme team and placement educators highlighted that the new documentation to support placement learning clearly specifies the requirements for supervision, and details how the frequency and content of these sessions is monitored throughout the placement. The placement educators demonstrated that they fully understood the requirements of supervision in practice, as outlined in the practice documentation. The visitors were therefore content that this standard will be met going forward, but advise the programme team to keep placement supervision under review to ensure that it takes place as specified in the practice placement documentation.

Michael Branicki
Deborah Kouzarides