

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Manchester Metropolitan University
Programme name	PG Dip Social Work (Employment based)
Mode of delivery	Work based learning
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	1 – 2 October 2013

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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 2013. 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

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 an HCPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their endorsement of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Michael Branicki (Social worker) Teri Rogers (Social worker)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Louise Devlin
Proposed student numbers	42
Proposed start date of programme approval	January 2013
Chair	Vivien Sheard (Manchester Metropolitan University)
Secretary	Emma Wingate (Manchester Metropolitan University)

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC met with students from the previous cohort of the Step-up programme, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it. The visitors did not view specialist teaching accommodation as students for this programme are not taught on site.

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 52 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 5 SETs.

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 did not make any recommendations 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

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 provided to ensure that requirements of the HCPC are correctly stated, and therefore give applicants the information they require to make an informed choice regarding whether to take up an offer of a place on a programme.

Reason: From a review of the admissions information, the visitors noted that the requirement for English and Maths at GCSE grade C for entry on to any social work course in England was listed as an HCPC requirement. This is incorrect and the HCPC does not set such a requirement. From discussion with the programme team, it was clarified that this was taken from the Department for Education (DfE) website. The HCPC have recently informed the DfE that this information is incorrect, and the visitors therefore require that this information is also updated within the admissions information for this programme, so as not to be misleading to applicants of the programme. Additionally, the visitors noted in the admissions information booklet that, students “will be able to register with HCPC as a social worker with this award” (page 43). Upon completion of the programme, students will be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC, as registration will be subject to HCPC requirements. The visitors therefore require that the admissions documentation is updated to reflect this. This will ensure that applicants are given all the information they require in order to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the requirements for the role of personal tutors on the programme, and how the education provider ensures that individuals recruited to these roles have the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Reason: From discussion with the programme team at the visit, the visitors were informed that personal tutors of the programme are recruited by the regional partnerships. From a review of the documentation, the visitors were unsure what the minimum requirements for individuals applying to these roles were, and how the education provider ensures that all individuals appointed have the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge in their role. The visitors therefore require evidence to demonstrate what the requirements for the role of personal tutors are, and the systems that are in place that allows the education provider to ensure that all individuals recruited have the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge for this role.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that all documentation relating to the programme is updated so that it is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation for social workers in England, and of the programme title.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted references to the 'Health care professions council' (programme specification, page 1 and programme handbook, page 2), the 'Health and care professional council' (Course development plan, page 7) and the 'codes of conduct performance and ethics' (programme handbook, page 2) rather than the 'Health and Care Professions Council' (HCPC) and the 'Standards of conduct, performance and ethics'. Additionally, the visitors noted that the admissions information booklet and the unit specifications booklet both refer to the 'MA Social Work (Employment Based)' programme, rather than this programme. The visitors therefore require that all information provided to students is reviewed to ensure that it reflects the current terminology in use relating to the HCPC, and of this programme, to ensure that the resources to support student learning in all settings are effectively used.

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.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how they ensure that students have access to a wide range of learning experiences whilst on placement, and that there are systems in place to ensure that students are getting the placement experiences that reflect the generic nature of the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and at the visit, the visitors were informed that the local authority regional partnerships are responsible for providing suitable placements for students. In discussion with the students, they referred to a limited experience of adult services within placements, but that this was managed by being given shadowing opportunities and being allocated to areas within child related placements that had access to adult services. This was supported in the meeting with the practice placement providers, where it was explained that a range of placement experiences was ensured by supplementing child related placements with a series of shadowing opportunities and discussions around adult services whilst students were on placement. The visitors felt that whilst there were clearly opportunities for students to gain some experience of adult services whilst on placement, further evidence is required to demonstrate how the education provider ensures that students have access to a wide range of learning experiences in a variety of practice environments, that reflect the generic nature of this programme, and therefore supports the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

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 provide evidence of where it is clearly articulated within the programme documentation that at least one of the external examiners appointed to the programme must be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register, unless alternative arrangements have previously been agreed with the HCPC.

Reason: From discussion with the programme team it was clarified that both external examiners for the programme are currently HCPC registered. However, from a review of the documentation the visitors could not see where the requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of the Register was stated within the

assessment regulations. The visitors therefore require further evidence of where this is stated to ensure that this will be a requirement of the programme going forward.

Michael Branicki
Teri Rogers