hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Middlesex University
Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	24 – 25 June 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. 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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 26 August 2014. At the Committee meeting, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the conditions 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 Worker in England profession came onto the register in 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 an HCPC only visit. The education provider and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit. The visit also considered an MA in Social Work. A separate visitor report exists for this programme.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Graham Noyce (Social worker) Gary Dicken (Social worker)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
Proposed student numbers	50 per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2014
Chair	Kay Caldwell (Middlesex University)
Secretary	Daniela Pantica (Middlesex 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	☒	☐	☐
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 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 53 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining four 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 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 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

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 will ensure that upon successful completion of the programme all students will meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

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

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussion at the visit, the visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum, the above SOPs would be addressed within the learning outcomes. Within the SOPs mapping document, the programme team indicated the above SOPs would be delivered within modules SWK3332 and SKW3334. However the visitors noted these are elective modules in the final year, students' choose to complete either child and family social work (SWK3334) or social work with adults (SWK3332). The SOPs are generic in nature and so the visitors could not see how either module could cover both 'child and family' and 'adult care' if a student is choosing one area instead of the other. In discussion the programme team highlighted that other modules would cover these SOPs generically before the students entered the specialist modules. From the documentation however, the visitors could not see where in the other modules the learning outcomes ensured these SOPs are delivered and so require further evidence.

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 to demonstrate how students will get the required range of practice experience.

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussion at the visit, the visitors were unable to determine how students will have an adequate range of practice experience across their two placements. During meetings with the programme team and placement providers it was highlighted placements in Level 3 will be allocated in line with students' choices of specialism in either child and family social work (SWK3334) or social work with adults (SWK3332) which is chosen after their placement in Level 2. The visitors also learnt the programme team will try to alternate placements between child and family or adult care across their two placements. The visitors were concerned that whilst allocating the placements, students might miss out on experiencing both child and family social work or social work with adults if their final placement was the same specialism as their first placement. The visitors would like to see further evidence to demonstrate how the education provider will ensure students get the required range of practice experience.

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 provide further evidence to demonstrate how the assessment strategy will ensure that upon successful completion of the programme all students will meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

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

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussion at the visit, the visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum, the above SOPs would be assessed within the learning outcomes. Within the SOPs mapping document, the programme team indicated the above SOPs would be delivered within modules SWK3332 and SKW3334. However the visitors noted these are elective modules in the final year, students' choose to complete either child and family social work (SWK3334) or social work with adults (SWK3332). The SOPs are generic in nature and so the visitors could not see how either module could cover both 'child and family' and 'adult care' if a student is choosing one area instead of the other. In discussion the programme team highlighted that other modules would cover these SOPs generically before the students entered the specialist modules. From the documentation however, the visitors could not see where these SOPs are assessed in the other modules learning outcomes and so require further evidence.

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, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of the Register. In discussion with the programme team it was indicated the programme team would take account of this standard and update programme documents. In order to determine this standard is met, the visitors need to see evidence of the HCPC requirements regarding external examiners within the programme documentation.

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Graham Noyce
Gary Dicken

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