

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Middlesex University
Programme name	MA Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time accelerated
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	22 – 23 June 2017

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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 21 September 2017. At the Committee meeting on 23 November 2017, 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 an HCPC only visit. The education provider and validating body did not validate or review the programmes at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programmes. The education provider supplied an independent chair for the visit. The visit also considered a Post Graduate Diploma Social Work programme. A separate visitor report exists for that programme.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Kate Johnson (Social worker in England) Graham Noyce (Social worker in England) Nicholas Drey (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ben Potter
Proposed student numbers	50 per cohort, 1 cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2018
First approved intake	September 2018
Chair	Kay Caldwell (Middlesex University)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

Documentation	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:

Meetings	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 current full time MA Social Work programme and recent graduates, as the programme seeking approval 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 45 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 13 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 review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The visitors noted that the documentation submitted by the education provider contained some errors and incorrect terminology. Appendix 4 'Preparation and Guidance information for interview applicants' (page 1) states that applicants must "Demonstrate a level of literacy and numeracy commensurate with the Health and Care Professions Council and Middlesex University's entry requirements for postgraduate study." Appendix 7 (page 2) 'Declaration of Suitability for Social Work' includes the statement that "The Health and Care Professions Council requires that students who are being admitted to the social work programme have undertaken: ...b) a health check, usually by means of self-declaration, but with additional statement from a GP or consultant where deemed necessary." Also in appendix 5 'Declaration Guidance' (page 1) the third paragraph has elements missing which remove context from the information being provided. The HCPC does not proscribe a level of literacy that an applicant must meet prior to being accepted onto a postgraduate programme. Nor does it require applicants to provide education providers a self-declaration of health with additional statements from a GP to gain entry to a programme. Instead these are criteria that the HCPC expects the education provider to set and provide a rationale as to why they are suitable for this programme. The inclusion of incorrect and inconsistent statements can create confusion and have the potential to mislead potential applicants. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure that the terminology used is accurate, reflects the language associated with statutory regulation and avoids any potential confusion for applicants.

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 needs to provide further evidence as to the cost of the programme for students and how these costs will be communicated to applicants.

Reason: From the information provided prior to the approval visit the visitors could not determine what the programme will cost applicants should they be accepted onto the programme. At the visit it was clarified that due to the accelerated nature of the programme and the pattern of study, which includes longer terms and reduced holiday periods, the level of fees that students will be charged had yet to be determined. As such the visitors were unclear as to what information regarding fees will be produced as well as how and when this will be provided to applicants. Therefore the visitors were unclear as to how applicants will have all of the information they require in order to make an informed decision about taking up a place on this programme. Because of this the visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence as to the information they will produce and provide to applicants in regards to the fees that will be charged for this programme.

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 will need to provide further evidence as to how they will communicate the time and workload demands of the programme to applicants.

Reason: From the information provided by the education provider the visitors are clear that this programme will be delivered along an accelerated timeline when compared with other masters programmes. To do this students will experience more intensive teaching and learning at the start of the programme and then have longer terms and shorter holiday periods. Because of this the visitors were made aware that this programme will operate along a different timetable to the usual academic calendar and that there would be significantly smaller holiday periods between 'blocks' of learning and practical experience. However, in reviewing the advertising materials for this programme the visitors were unclear as to how the education provider was going to make sure that applicants to this programme were aware of the demands of this accelerated programme. In particular the visitors were unclear as to how applicants would be made aware that there would be an intensive workload throughout the course of the programme and that holiday periods would be shorter than on other postgraduate courses. As such the visitors were unclear as to how applicants would be able to make an informed choice about taking up a place on this programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the education provider will ensure that applicants to the programme are made aware of the pattern of delivery for this programme. This evidence should also include what information the education provider will give applicants about the workload demands and reduced holiday periods that students will have.

2.5 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and / or professional entry standards.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about what experience the education provider will expect applicants to have and how this experience will be evaluated in order to offer applicants a place on the programme.

Reason: From the information that was provided prior to the visit the visitors were clear that as part of the admissions criteria applicants would need to have six months of "...full-time direct work experience within a social care setting at the time of applying." The visitors were also aware that as part of the criteria voluntary experience and/or relevant life experiences may be accepted as contributing to this experiential criteria. The process to determine if the experiential experience is sufficient was clarified through discussions at the visit, as the programme team highlighted that on applying an individual's experience would be assessed. This would be done on a case by case basis, with relevant members of staff evaluating the relevant experience of the individuals and then a decision would be made to invite those individual applicants to interview, or not. However while the visitors were clear about the process that would be applied, and were clear that the process would be the same for all relevant applicants, they were unclear as to the criteria that members of staff would use to evaluate relevant experience. Therefore they were unclear as to how staff members will make consistent decisions about applicants' experience, given the breadth of experience that candidates could have. As such the visitors require further evidence which details what criteria members of the programme team use to evaluate the experience of applicants, and to determine which applicants would be invited for interview or offered a place on this programme.

3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about how they are ensuring that they are maintaining up-to-date reading lists and that up-to-date texts are available to students.

Reason: From their reading of the information provided prior to the approval visit the visitors noted that there were a number of texts on the reading lists outlined on the module narratives that were from 2010 and earlier. This was particularly the case in modules SWK 4505 'Understanding the Life Course', SWK4500 'Social Work Theory and Readiness for Direct Practice and SWK4501 'Law and Advanced Social Work Practice'. At the visit, the visitors were made aware of the process for agreeing which essential texts there should be for each module and how the most recent version of a text could be sourced and made available for students. They were also made aware that while there is a budget for books there are also options to provide key parts of texts or to provide students with e-books, which students found very beneficial. However, given this process, the visitors could not determine why there were such a number of texts included in both the essential and recommended reading lists that were over seven years old. The visitors were also unclear as to how some of the older texts were effectively supporting the teaching and learning activities of the programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the education provider ensures that the reading lists for this programme, as outlined in the module narratives, are maintained and kept up to date. In particular this evidence should detail how the available texts will support the teaching and learning on this programme.

3.12 There must be a system of academic and pastoral student support in place.

Condition: The education provider will need to provide further information about how the tutorial system will work while students are on placement outside of 'academic term-time'.

Reason: In their review of the evidence provided prior to the visit the visitors understood that fortnightly tutorial sessions for students will happen throughout the 14 month duration of the programme. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that these tutorial sessions will continue to happen for students, even during the usual holiday periods for the education provider. In further discussion the visitors were informed that there would be a process put in place to ensure that there would be sufficient members of staff at the education provider at any point to ensure that all students could attend their tutorials once every two weeks. However, from the evidence provided the visitors could not determine how this would be managed and could not determine how periods of particular staff absence, such as during usual academic holiday periods, would be managed. The visitors were also unclear as to how, if any academic and pastoral support was due to come from one member of staff, how this would be managed by another member of staff covering absence. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the education provider will ensure that there will always be staff members available to undertake the fortnightly tutorial sessions that each student on this programme will receive. This evidence should also clarify how the team will be supported to deliver the required content of these tutorials when absence is being covered.

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 needs to provide further information about which parts of the course are mandatory, what the attendance requirements are for this programme and how these requirements are communicated to students.

Reason: In their reading of the evidence provided prior to the visit the visitors were clear that students were required to attend all scheduled learning activities on the programme and that one hundred per cent attendance at practice placements was expected. This was confirmed at the visit as all parts of the programme contained teaching and learning activities linked to meeting the learning outcomes and must be passed to successfully graduate. However, in further reading the visitors noted that action would only be taken if a student missed 25 per cent of any teaching or learning activity and that this action would be determined by module tutors or the programme director. In discussion with the students there was some disagreement about the attendance requirements for the programme and there was also a lack of clarity about the implications associated with poor attendance. As such the visitors were unclear as to what the exact attendance requirements were for this programme, particularly if there are mandatory aspects of the programme, and what the implications are for not meeting these requirements. This evidence should also detail how these requirements are communicated to students on the programme to ensure that they are aware of the requirements and also the implications poor attendance may have on their ability to progress through the programme.

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 needs to provide further information as to how the contact/teaching hours will be delivered during the programme.

Reason: In their review of the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were unclear as to how many hours of learning activity were being provided to students on this accelerated programme. In particular they could not discern, from the evidence provided, how many hours teaching and learning activities were associated with each module and how many hours in total were delivered as part of this programme. At the visit it was clarified that the number of hours teaching and learning activity in total, and for each module, would be broadly similar to the equivalent full-time programme at the education provider (which is delivered over a longer time period). It was further clarified that the way the programme team will deliver the teaching and learning activities will ensure that the number of hours will be broadly similar. The programme team clarified that this will be done by ensuring that while students have fewer days at the education provider they are there for longer periods of time, sometimes full days, during which the teaching and learning activities will be delivered. This is a more intensive method of delivery than on the full-time programme where students would experience more days at the education provider, but each day may only include a few hours of teaching and learning activity. However, the visitors were made aware that the timetable that they had been provided with was indicative and that the type and nature of teaching and learning activities that would be occurring on each of the days when students would be at the education provider had yet to be confirmed. Therefore the visitors could not determine what teaching and learning activities would be occurring on the days when students would be at the education provider and as such what aspects of the modules students would be covering during these days. Because of this the visitors were unclear as to how the learning and teaching activities of the programme will meet the learning outcomes, and subsequently ensure that students can meet the SOPs for social workers. As such the visitors require further evidence of the timetable for the programme. In

particular the visitors will require this evidence to provide an indication of how the days when students attend the education provider will progress and what teaching and learning activities will be delivered. This evidence should also detail how the method of delivery will be communicated to students so that they are aware of what learning outcomes they will be covering at certain points in the programme.

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 standard of proficiency (SOPs):

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, co-production, involvement and empowerment; and
- the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour

Reason: In their review of the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were unclear as to how the teaching and learning activities of the programme are going to be delivered. In particular they could not discern, from the evidence provided, how many hours teaching and learning activities were associated with each module and how many hours in total will be delivered as part of this programme. At the visit it was clarified that the number of hours teaching and learning activity in total, and for each module, would be broadly similar to the equivalent full-time programme at the education provider (which is delivered over a longer time period). It was further clarified that the way the programme team will deliver the teaching and learning activities will ensure that the number of hours will be broadly similar. The programme team clarified that this will be done by ensuring that while students have fewer days at the education provider they are there for longer periods of time, sometimes full days, during which the teaching and learning activities will be delivered. However, as the timetable provided was indicative the visitors could not discern how this method of delivery for the teaching and learning activities will ensure that all of the learning outcomes, and as such the SOPs, will be delivered effectively. In particular, from the evidence provided, the visitors were unclear how the breadth and depth of the information that may need to be delivered to ensure students can meet SOP 13.4 will be delivered in this programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the learning outcomes associated with SOP 13.4 will be delivered as part of this programme. In particular this evidence should highlight how and when the breadth and depth of information that may need to be covered to meet SOP 13.4 will be delivered and in what timeframe it will be covered and assessed.

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 must provide further information about how the knowledge and skills statements may be included in the curriculum and if so how the students are made aware that they are meeting the requirements of these statements.

Reason: In discussions at the visit the visitors were clear that the education provider was successful in becoming a member of a teaching partnership. As part of becoming a member of a teaching partnership the visitors are aware that partner organisations are responsible for embedding the chief social workers' knowledge and skills statements into the teaching and learning activities of aspiring social workers. In their reading of the documentation provided the visitors could not determine if the requirements of the skills statements had been embedded into the curriculum of the programme. They were also unclear as to how, if the skills statements were embedded into the programme, students were being made aware that they were demonstrating the skills and capabilities to meet the statements at different points in the programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the membership of a teaching partnership has influenced the curriculum and if the skills statements have been integrated into the teaching and learning activities of the programme. If they have this evidence they should also provide further information as to how students on this programme are being informed that, by successfully completing elements of this programme they are meeting the requirements of the skills statements.

4.8 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence as to the teaching and learning approaches that will be used on the teaching days at the start of the curriculum to ensure that the entire curriculum can be delivered in the time available.

Reason: At the visit it was clarified for the visitors that the number of hours teaching and learning activity in total, and for each module, would be broadly similar to the equivalent full-time programme at the education provider (which is delivered over a longer time period). It was further clarified that the way the programme team will deliver the teaching and learning activities will ensure that the number of hours will be broadly similar. The programme team clarified that this will be done by ensuring that while students have fewer days at the education provider they are there for longer periods of time, sometimes full days, during which the teaching and learning activities will be delivered. This is a more intensive method of delivery than that of the full-time programme where students would experience more days at the education provider, but each day may only include a few hours of teaching and learning activity. This will then be complemented by the regular, fortnightly tutorials that students will receive. These tutorials will provide a key component of the programme, facilitating students' integration of their theoretical knowledge and the practical skills they will gain at their placements. However, as the timetable provided was indicative, the visitors could not determine how the range of teaching and learning approaches on this programme will effectively deliver the curriculum. In particular the visitors were unable to discern how much of the curriculum content will be delivered in the first seven weeks of the programme when the majority of the teaching activity will occur, and how much will be delivered as part of tutorials throughout the programme. The visitors were also unable, from the evidence provided, to discern how the teaching activities in the first seven weeks of the programme will be delivered, what these days may look like and how the tutorials will be delivered to

help embed the theoretical learning. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of how the programme team will ensure that the teaching and learning activities of the programme will ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum in the time available. This evidence should provide an indicative overview as to how the initial teaching days at the education provider will be organised and how the subsequent tutorial sessions will operate. It should also highlight what elements of the curriculum will be delivered at the study days early in the programme and what elements of the programme will be delivered through the tutorials later in the programme.

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.

Condition: The education provider needs to provide further evidence as to how they'll ensure that practice placement educators and providers understand what supervisors will be required to do to support students throughout the programme.

Reason: Through their review of the evidence the visitors were aware that regular training is offered to practice placement educators to prepare them to supervise students. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that practice placement educators would be broadly responsible for the same aspects of students' learning as on other programmes delivered by the education provider. The visitors noted that while this was the case students on this programme would be starting placement sooner than those from other programmes and there would be an expectation that students would continue to learn while they were also gaining practical experience. As such the visitors understood that there would be a slightly different role that practice placement educators would have to play to ensure that students could integrate their theoretical and practical experience in appropriate placement situations. However, in discussion with the practice placement educators and providers the visitors noted that those present had not yet been involved in any detailed discussion about what supervision students on this programme would require. As a result the visitors could not determine how the education provider had ensured that practice placement educators were aware of their role in supervising and supporting students from this programme. In particular the visitors could not determine how the training offered by the education provider had been changed to ensure that staff at practice placement providers will be fully prepared to supervise students from this programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the education provider prepares practice placement educators to supervise students from this programme. In particular this evidence should demonstrate how practice placement educators are aware of the different requirements students from this programme will have of them, compared to students from other programmes at the education provider.

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 standard of proficiency (SOPs):

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, co-production, involvement and empowerment; and
- the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour

Reason: In their review of the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were unclear as to how the assessment strategy of the programme will ensure that all of the learning outcomes will be assessed. In particular they could not discern, from the evidence provided, how many hours teaching and learning activities were associated with each module and how many hours in total will be delivered as part of this programme. At the visit it was clarified that the assessments that students would undertake would be almost identical to the assessments that are undertaken by students on the equivalent full-time programme at the education provider. However, as the timetable provided was indicative the visitors could not discern how the proposed model of delivery for the teaching and learning will work in tandem with the assessment strategy. For example the visitors noted that the bulk of the direct teaching and learning activities for the programme will happen in the first seven weeks of the programme. However, the summative assessments for the modules will happen throughout the 14 months of the programme. Therefore they were unclear as to how the assessment strategy of the programme was working alongside the teaching and learning activities of the programme to ensure that students were being assessed at the appropriate time. In particular, from the evidence provided, the visitors were unclear how the breadth and depth of the information that may need to be delivered to ensure students can meet SOP 13.4 will be delivered, and then assessed in this programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the learning outcomes associated with SOP 13.4 will be delivered and then assessed. In particular this evidence should highlight how the breadth and depth of information that may need to be covered to meet SOP 13.4 will be delivered and when students will be assessed on their knowledge of it.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the assessments in module SWK 4505 'Understanding the life course' to ensure that students' knowledge of all aspects of the life course are assessed appropriately.

Reason: From their reading of the programme documentation the visitors noted that the learning outcomes for the SWK 4505 module 'Understanding the Life Course' include;

- 'Identify and critically analyse a range of theoretical perspectives on key normative models of human growth and development across the life course.
- Demonstrate an awareness of diversity and critically evaluate the significance of social divisions and inequalities and their potential impact on human growth and development across the life course.'

The visitors also noted that for the summative assessment for the module students will be expected to write a 2,000 word assignment linking a child observation to key life course perspectives. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that the student could ask to focus this assessment on development in adults, but that it was expected that they would focus on the child observation they will have done previously in the module. As such the visitors were unclear as to how the assessment will ensure that students have an understanding of human development and growth across the life course. They therefore require further evidence to demonstrate how the assessment method for this module will measure how students have been able to meet the stated learning outcomes and the SOPs associated with those outcomes. In particular this evidence should detail how the assessment methods used will ensure that students have an appreciation of human growth and development across the life course, and not just in children.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence as to how they will inform students about the opportunities to re-take or make-up any teaching that may be missed by students.

Reason: The visitors were provided with an indicative timetable for the programme which detailed when and where the teaching, learning and assessment activities for the programme will take place. They were also provided with information about the indicative practice placement timetable for the programme. As a result the visitors were aware of the intensive nature of this programme which means the bulk of face-to-face teaching and learning will happen in the first seven weeks of the programme with other sessions happening at specific times throughout the rest of the programme. In discussion with the programme team the visitors clarified that the programme team expected all sessions should be attended by students in order for the curriculum to be delivered effectively. To ensure that students who, for good reason, may miss some of these sessions the programme team clarified that there may be an opportunity for students to re-take or make-up any sessions they miss through other activities such as independent learning or additional assignments. However, from the evidence provided the visitors could not identify where students were informed of the consequences of missing a teaching or learning session or how students were informed about the ways they would have to re-take or make-up that learning. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the education provider will ensure that students are aware of the likely implications of any failure to attend a teaching or learning session at the education provider. This evidence should also detail how students are made aware of how they will be expected to re-take or make up any sessions that they may miss.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence as to how they inform students about when and where they need to submit their dissertation.

Reason: In their reading of the documentation provided prior to the approval visit the visitors understood that the dissertation for this programme should be submitted by students in the last week of the programme. This would necessitate students completing their dissertation in the final three weeks of the programme, or complete elements of it while they are still on practice placement. In discussion with the programme team the visitors understood that there would be opportunity for students to delay the submission of their dissertation, given the constraints of the work that is expected of them on this programme. But, this would then delay the receipt of a final mark for this module and delay the ability of a student to graduate as each module needs to be successfully completed in order to receive the final award. However the visitors could not determine, from the evidence provided, how the opportunity to defer submission of their dissertation or the implications for doing so is communicated to students. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the education provider ensures that students are aware of when they need to submit their dissertation and what the implications may be if they defer their submission.

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 equality and diversity training for interviewers on this programme is kept under review, and that when service users and carers are involved in interviewing that they undertake appropriate training.

Reason: In their reading of the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors were made aware of the equality and diversity policy that the education provider has in place. As such the visitors were content that the programme meets this standard. In discussions at the visit the visitors were made aware that the education provider includes service users and carers on interview panels as part of the admissions process for this programme. They were also made aware that it isn't a routine policy for service users and carers' training to cover the education provider's equality and diversity policy. As such the visitors recommend that the education provider keeps under review the training offered to service users and carers and considers including equality and diversity training in their training. In this way the education provider may enhance the implementation of the equality and diversity policy and may mitigate any risk associated with the policy not being implemented through the interview process.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider continues to engage with the HCPC and inform them if there is a significant change in the cohort size due to any teaching partnership initiatives.

Reason: From the evidence provided throughout the approval process the visitors were made aware that there is a maximum cohort of 50, each year, for this programme. This figure ensures that the number of students undertaking this programme fits within the social work portfolio of programmes at the education provider and has been planned for within the education providers' business plan. Therefore the visitors are content that the programme meets this standard. However in discussions with the senior team it was highlighted that, with the recent success of the education provider in becoming a member of a teaching partnership that the size of the cohort for this programme may change. Any change would be dependent on negotiations with their partner organisations and the requirements of the teaching partnership. As such the visitors recommend that the education provider continues to actively engage with the HCPC and if there are significant changes to the size of the cohort that they contact the HCPC via its major change process. Through this continued engagement the education provider can be sure that the programme has fulfilled its requirements for ongoing approval and that it can work with the HCPC to ensure that it will continue to meet the standards of education and training.

3.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider keeps the workload for the programme team under review given the increased importance of the tutorial sessions throughout the time students are on placement.

Reason: In discussions at the visit, the visitors were made aware that there is a workload planning process that the education provider goes through to ensure that there are adequate numbers of staff in place to deliver the programme effectively. As such the visitors were content that this standard is met. However, in further discussions at the visit the visitors were made aware that the tutorial sessions for this programme will play a key part in helping embed theory and practice while students are on placement. Given that the bulk of theoretical teaching will happen in the first seven weeks of the programme, the visitors were clear that the tutorials were a key part of the teaching and learning approach of this programme as they occur throughout the whole of the programme. Therefore the tutorials will also be a key way that students will keep in contact with academic staff, and will also be a key point when they may access academic or pastoral support. Given the multifaceted role that these tutorial sessions may take, the visitors recommend that the education provider keeps under review the workload that is associated with them. In this way the visitors feel that the education provider may be better able to understand how much work staff will need to dedicate to these sessions and therefore better able to ensure they have adequate numbers of staff available to deliver this programme effectively.

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider keeps under review how practice placement providers and educators are continually made aware of developments in the programme

Reason: In their discussions at the visit the visitors were made aware of the numerous channels that are available to the education provider to communicate with practice placement providers and educators. They were also made aware of the additional funding that was available, through the teaching partnership initiative, which would be channelled into developing this regular and effective communication. As such the visitors were content that this standard is met. However, in discussions with the practice placement providers and educators, the visitors noted that the members of the meeting didn't recall being consulted about the development of this programme and how they may contribute to it. Therefore the visitors recommend that the education provider monitors how they regularly communicate with practice placement providers and educators to ensure that it is effective. In particular the visitors feel that this may enhance the way that any developments affecting the programme are communicated and disseminated to the people who are supervising students when in practice.

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