

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Northumbria University at Newcastle
Programme name	MA Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	4 – 5 March 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 4 June 2015. 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 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 validating body did not validate or review the programme at the visit 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 a different programme BSc (Hons) Social Work. A separate visitor report exists for this programme.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Graeme Currie (Social worker in England) Garry Hickman (Social worker in England) Christine Morgan (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
Proposed student numbers	25 per cohort, one cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2015
Chair	Alison Machin (Northumbria University, at Newcastle)
Secretary	Julie Blackwell (Northumbria University, at Newcastle)

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 / 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"/>

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 condition is set on the programme, which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 57 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 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.

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

6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HCPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

Condition: The programme team must clearly articulate that the approved programme provides eligibility to register for the HCPC protected title of social worker in England.

Reason: The visitors noted that the programme and admissions documents did provide enough clarity for students about the exit awards in place for the programme. However, the visitors were concerned that the programme and admission documents did not provide enough clarity for students around the final award which will lead to eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC as a social worker in England, which is a protected title. During the programme team meeting, it was discussed that the programme team will update the programme documents to make a more explicit statement that the final award will lead to eligibility to apply for registration with HCPC as a social worker in England. In order to be satisfied this standard is met the visitors require evidence that the programme documents are produced in line with these HCPC requirements.

Recommendations

4.9 When there is interprofessional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend the education provider to update their programme documentation to incorporate details of interprofessional on this programme.

Reason: From discussion with the programme team, the visitors were informed that there is currently interprofessional learning in place on the programme. The visitors were content that this standard is met. However, the visitors felt that the details of how interprofessional learnings take place on the programme could be incorporated in the programme documentation more explicitly. This will ensure students understand fully the nature and details of interprofessional on this programme. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme documentation should reflect the full details of how interprofessional learnings take place.

Graeme Currie
Garry Hickman
Christine Morgan