

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Southampton Solent University
Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work
Mode of delivery	Worked based learning
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social Worker in England
Date of visit	16 – 17 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. 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 condition 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 part of a joint event. The education provider and awarding body reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BA (Hons) Social Work – Work based learning. The education provider, 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. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. 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	Christine Stogdon (Social worker) Beverley Blythe (Social worker)
HCPC executive officer	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	10 Full time once per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2014
Chair	Alan Robinson (Southampton Solent University)
Secretary	Liz Hall (Southampton Solent University)
Members of the joint panel	Lesley Strachan (Internal Panel Member) Stewart Bruce-Low (Internal Panel Member) Andrea Collins (External Panel Member) Glynis Marsh (External Panel Member) Bob Cecil (The College of Social Work) June Sadd (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	<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"/>
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 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 condition is set on the programme, 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 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

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

Condition: The education provider must revise programme documentation to ensure it accurately reflects the current landscape of regulation for social workers, in England.

Reason: The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider included several instances of incorrect terminology associated with the Health and Care Professions Council. For example, the website states 'Accredited by the professional body that approves social work qualifications', the word "accreditation" and 'professional body' is associated with the HCPC in much of the documentation. HCPC does not accredit any programmes but approves health and care education and training programmes. These references do not accurately reflect the HCPC as the regulatory body, and could lead to misinterpretation as to its requirements and guidance for students. The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be reviewed to ensure that all references are clear and accurate.

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

Condition: The programme team must revise the documentation to ensure the relationship between re-sits and progression on the programme is accurately and clearly articulated in the documentation.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors found inconsistent information regarding re-sit and students' progression on the programme. For example, course handbook page 16 states 'there is no automatic right to resit' but page 32 of the student handbook states 'you will automatically have one resit'. The visitors heard from discussions with the programme team that students are given the opportunity to re-sit modules and the team explained how students progress on the programme clearly. As such, the visitors were satisfied by this discussion that the progression requirements of the programme were appropriate as set out by the assessment regulations. However, visitors considered it to be important for students to fully understand how many re-sit opportunity they have and how they progress on the programme. The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the documentation in place to support students and ensure correct information is given to students throughout the programme.

Beverley Blythe
Christine Stogdon