hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Teesside 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	17 – 18 April 2013

Contents

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. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 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 22 August 2013. At the Committee meeting, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. 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 (in England) came onto the register on 1 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 validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes - Postgraduate Diploma Social Work and MA Social Work (Pre-Qualifying). 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 programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Richard Barker (Social worker)
	Michael Branicki (Social worker)
	Angela Duxbury (Therapeutic radiographer)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
Proposed student numbers	90 to be shared between the BA (Hons) Social Work and the MA Social Work (Pre-Qualifying) / Postgraduate Diploma Social Work programmes
Proposed start date of programme approval	October 2013
Chair	Judith Porch (Teesside University)
Secretary	Joanne Almond (Teesside University)
Members of the joint panel	Andrew Hill (External Panel Member)
	Simon Wall (External Panel Member)
	Linda Dickinson (Internal Panel Member)
	Jane Johnstone (Internal Panel Member)
	Dave Mudd (Internal Panel Member)
	Brianne Nichols (Internal Panel Member)
	Fiona Terry (Internal Panel Member)
	Allan Winthrop (Internal Panel Member)
	Carolyn Spray (The College of Social Work)
	David Ward (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	☒	☐	☐
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 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 a condition should be set on the remaining 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 have also made a recommendation 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

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate the programme team are doing all they can to ensure their students' right to confidentiality.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included the Students Essential Guide (student's handbook) which provided information for students about consent protocols for practical activities (page 22). Discussion with the students indicated the academic sessions often included service user input and students' often made disclosures of a personal nature. It was described that students could use recording devices for the sessions which may not be obvious to the other students. This could lead to the recording of personal information without knowledge or consent. This concern was raised with the programme team and it was highlighted that students were informed through discussions the expectation that academic sessions are treated as a confidential space and how to manage themselves if they have any concerns of a personal nature. The visitors are aware some students may require a recording device to assist with their learning, they are also aware that students have a right to confidentiality which may be put at risk when recording devices are used. The visitors considered the programme team must ensure students are aware of recording devices present and can request them to be turned off if necessary. The visitors require further evidence that demonstrates the programme team are doing all they can to ensure their students' right to confidentiality.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors suggest the programme team ensure language is consistent when referencing HCPC registration within the programme documentation.

Reason: The visitors noted that references to the HCPC were made throughout the documentation. The visitors noted within the documentation and information provided that there were different ways of stating that the students would have eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC upon successful completion of the programme, "enter the social work profession by registration with the HCPC at the point of qualification" (BA (Hons) Social Work Programme Handbook, p4). The visitors felt this could lead to confusion over whether they would automatically be processed for registration or not. The visitors suggest the programme team ensure language is consistent when referencing HCPC registration to ensure there are no confusions.

Richard Barker
Michael Branicki
Angela Duxbury