

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Bedfordshire
Validating body / Awarding body	University of Bedfordshire
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Professional Social Work Practice (Trainee in Employment Route)
Mode of delivery	Work based learning
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	21 – 22 June 2016

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction.....	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence	4
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions.....	6

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 22 September 2016. At the Committee meeting on 22 September 2016, the programme was approved. 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 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 part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme. The education provider 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 the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Graeme Currie (Social worker in England) Anne Gribbens (Social worker in England) Joanne Watchman (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Rebecca Stent
HCPC observer	Jamie Hunt
Proposed student numbers	20 per cohort, 1 cohort every two years
Proposed start date of programme approval	February 2017
Chair	John Reynolds (University of Bedfordshire)
Secretary	Parveen Teji (University of Bedfordshire)
Members of the joint panel	Jane Carr (Internal panel member) Tim Gregory (Internal panel member) Daniela Diaconu (Internal panel member) Peter Bradley (External panel member) Liz Tanner (External panel member)

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC saw external examiners' reports from another BSc Social Work programme at the University of Bedfordshire. However, as the BSc (Hons) Professional Social Work Practice (Trainee in Employment Route) has not yet run, external examiners' reports were not available.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Social Work programme and one student from the former Trainee in Employment Route programme which closed in 2014, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

The HCPC did not see the facilities as

- the nature of the qualification does not require any specialist laboratories or 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 five 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

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that appropriately qualified and experienced staff will be in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors learnt that there will be mentors in place on the programme and, from meetings at the visit, the visitors understood that the mentors would be vital in ensuring the delivery of an effective programme. However, the visitors could not determine the qualifications and experience required for this role and therefore whether they would be appropriately qualified and experienced to support the delivery of the programme. Furthermore, at the visit, the programme team stated that there would be a mentor in place before the student starts the programme but the visitors could not find a documented process to ensure that this would be the case. Due to the crucial nature of this role highlighted by the education provider, the visitors require evidence that clearly outlines that the mentors will be appropriately qualified and experienced to support the delivery of an effective programme and that they will be assigned to the student at the beginning of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the system of academic and pastoral support ensures that students are supported throughout the programme.

Reason: From documentation provided and discussions at the visit, the visitors were unclear about the system of academic and pastoral student support in place throughout the programme. During discussions at the visit, the mentor role was flagged by the education provider as key to how the student would be supported throughout the programme, both prior to placement and at the practice placements. Specifically, the mentor role would be vital in ensuring that the student would be defined as a learner whilst on the first placement, which will likely take place at the student's work setting. However, the visitors were not clear about the mentor role's required qualifications and experience, the scope of responsibility, or how the mentor would interact with other support roles within the teaching team. The visitors noted from discussions at the visit that a clear support system would be vital in order for the student to be treated as a learner in the work setting before and during placement, and to ensure the student has the ability to fulfil the requirements of the programme. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to identify the roles and responsibilities of the staff team, the qualifications and experience required for the mentor role and when the mentors will be assigned to students on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the teaching team, including the mentor, supports students in the Foundations for Understanding Social Work Practice unit.

Reason: The visitors were unclear as to who would provide academic support to the student to set up observations as part of the Foundations for Understanding Social Work Practice unit whilst the student is still in their work place, prior to the first

placement. The programme team suggested that the mentor may be involved in supporting the student during this unit but the visitors could not determine what the role of the mentor would be and could not find a documented process to ensure that this would be the case. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to identify the roles and responsibilities of the staff team in this unit, including the mentor.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the staff team will provide a supportive environment for students during practice placements.

Reason: From documentation provided and discussions at the visit, the visitors were unclear as to how the practice placement settings would provide a supportive environment. The education provider informed the visitors at the visit that the role of the mentor would be crucial in ensuring a supportive environment for students at the practice placements. Specifically, the mentor role would be vital in ensuring that the student would be defined as a learner whilst on the first placement, which may take place at the student's work setting. However, the visitors were unclear about the roles of responsibility in placement and therefore how the mentor role would ensure a supportive environment at the two placements. Therefore, the visitors require evidence of the mentor's role and responsibilities, how the mentor will interact with the teaching support team, and how the staff team will ensure a supportive environment for the student at placement.

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 must provide evidence as to how all staff will be fully prepared for placement, particularly in relation to the role and responsibility of the mentor.

Reason: At the visit, the mentor role was flagged by the education provider as key to how the placements would work. In particular, the education provider indicated that the mentor would be vital in ensuring that the student would be supported as a learner in the work place during the first 70 day placement which will likely take place in the student's work setting. The visitors noted that staff would need to be prepared with regards to the role and responsibility of the mentor whilst the student is on placement so that all staff are fully prepared for placement and aware of their lines of responsibility. However, from documentation provided and discussions at the visit, the visitors were unclear about the roles of responsibility of the mentor in placement and therefore how all staff would be fully prepared for placement. Therefore, the visitors require evidence

of the mentor's role and responsibilities in order to establish how staff will be fully prepared for placement and clear about their lines of responsibilities during placement.

5.12 Learning, teaching and supervision must encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the staff team will enable students to undertake independent learning on placement, and how students are given the resources and skills to work independently.

Reason: During discussions at the visit, the education provider flagged that the student would be supported as a learner during the first 70 day placement which takes place in the student's work place. The mentor role was flagged by the education provider as key to how the student would be supported as a true learner during this first placement. However, the visitors were not clear about the mentor role's required qualifications and experience, the scope of responsibility, or how the mentor would interact with other support roles within the teaching team. The visitors noted from discussions at the visit that a clear support system would be crucial on the programme in order for the student to be treated as a learner in the work setting during placement and to ensure the student has the ability to fulfil the requirements of the programme as an independent learner. Therefore, the visitors require evidence of the staff team's roles and responsibilities whilst the student is on placement, including the mentor role. In addition, the visitors require evidence which outlines the qualifications and experience required for the mentor role, and how the mentor would interact with the teaching team, in order to ensure that independent learning is enabled whilst on placement.

Anne Gribbens
Graeme Currie
Joanne Watchman