

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Cumbria
Programme name	BA (Hons) Social Work
Mode of delivery	Work based learning
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	18 – 19 June 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 19 November 2015. At the Committee meeting on 19 November 2015, 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

This visit was the result of the education provider amending their current provision for social work. The education provider will continue to run the BA (Hons) Social Work programme, which is approved by the HCPC. They will also offer a new training route. Given the similarity between the approved programme and the new programme, it was agreed the approval of this programme would incorporate those who enrolled for the July 2014 cohort. Those students will be eligible to apply for registration upon successful completion of the programme with the caveat that the education provider will have to meet all conditions in this report including any conditions the visitors set specifically for the first cohort of students who commenced the programme in July 2014.

This visit was an HCPC only visit. The education provider and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Patricia Higham (Social worker in England) Deirdre Keane (Lay visitor) Christine Stogdon (Social worker in England)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
Proposed student numbers	7per cohort, one cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	July 2014
Chair	Jackie Moss (University of Cumbria)
Secretary	Suzanne Parkes (University of Cumbria)

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 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 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

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 ensure potential applicants of the programme are given a complete range of information in order to make an informed choice about the programme.

Reason: In the documents provided prior to the visit, the visitors could not determine how students and potential applicants will be provided with the necessary information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme or otherwise. The visitors were unable to see clearly articulated information on the following:

- number of face to face hours at the education provider;
- information on the range of placements;
- self-study time as part of the programme;
- attendance requirements on the programme;
- access to a computer as per programme's requirement; and
- the details of how the programme will be delivered.

As such, the visitors were unable to determine how key information is communicated to potential applicants, to ensure that they are able to make an informed decision regarding whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme. During the programme team meeting the visitors learnt that the programme team will revisit and produce detailed programme documentation and advertising materials clearly articulating the information students and potential applicants need to make an informed choice. To assess whether this standard is met the visitors need to see the revised programme documentation and the advertising materials.

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 revise the admissions guidance to clearly identify which policies and procedures are applied to students on the programme.

Reason: From the review of the documentation, the visitors noted that this programme will only be recruiting students who are employed by Cumbria County Council (CCC). In the documentation, the visitors learnt that the education provider has a range of policies and procedures that are applied to students. These policies included, criminal convictions checks, health requirements, student complaints process and a process for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct. However, similar policies were in place at CCC as well. The visitors were unclear how potential applicants when considering applying for the programme will know which policies apply to them. To ensure the standard is met, the visitors will want to see clearly articulated information about which policies and procedures are applied to students so that potential applicants are clear and can make an informed choice about whether to apply for admission to the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the partnership arrangement between the education provider and partner organisation as well as further evidence of when it will be finalised.

Reason: The visitors noted, in the documentation provided, the partnership arrangements between the education provider and the partner organisation Cumbria County Council (CCC) which articulated the responsibilities each partner has in the effective delivery of the programme for the full time route. The visitors were able to identify how the proposed partnership arrangements between the education provider and CCC could ensure that the programme has a secure position in the education provider's business plan for the distance learning route. However, in the senior team meeting, it was agreed, that the partnership arrangements need to reflect the new route of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the detail and indicative content of the partnership agreement including confirmation of when it will be finalised and agreed. In this way the visitors will be able to consider how the programme can meet this standard.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence about the delivery of the distance learning route for this programme to ensure the programme is effectively managed.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation submitted prior to the visit and noted that this programme will only be recruiting students who are employed by Cumbria County Council (CCC). The visitors also noted that the programme will be delivered through distance learning with some face to face teachings and guided independent study. During the programme team meeting the visitors heard that the programme team will determine the appropriate face to face contact hours for each module and it may differ for each cohort. However, the visitors could not determine the breakdown of teaching methods, including the number of face to face hours students need to be at the education provider and thus consequently the appropriate resources to ensure all students have consistent experience on the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence about the delivery of the distance learning route for this programme and how the education provider is planning to put appropriate resources in place to ensure the programme is effectively managed.

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

Condition: The programme team must revisit programme documentation to ensure the terminology in use is reflective of the current terminology used in relation to statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the relevant guidance issued by HCPC. For example, the programme specification on page 3 states "The number of placement days is determined by the HCPC". The visitors also noted on page 23 of the programme specification "The entry requirements for students applying to the programme are as

stated by the HCPC". With reference to these two examples respectively; the HCPC does not determine placements days, instead HCPC requires the education providers to ensure the number, range and duration of practice placements is appropriate to the programme. Similarly, HCPC does not have entry requirements for students, instead HCPC requires education providers to have appropriate admissions procedures in place to give enough information to students and potential applicants to make an informed choice. The visitors therefore require the documentation to revise all instances of incorrect terminology. In this way the visitors can be sure that the documentary resources available to support students' learning are being effectively used and that this standard can be met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide clarity about the personal tutoring system and how it is communicated to students on this programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation submitted prior to the visit and noted that this programme will only be recruiting students who are employed by Cumbria County Council (CCC). The visitors also noted that the programme will be delivered through distance learning with some face to face teachings and guided independent study. The documentation included information about the academic and pastoral support systems in place on the programme. Discussions with students revealed the programme team was considered to be very supportive, but students rarely contacted their personal tutors. Given the demanding nature of this route and the lack of clarity personal tutor system for the students, visitors were concerned about the support needed for students on the programme. The visitors therefore require further information about personal tutoring system and how students are made aware of this system. In this way, the visitors can be assured that this standard is met.

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 must identify where on the programme students' attendance is mandatory and how the attendance mechanisms are effectively communicated and monitored.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation submitted prior to the visit and noted that this programme will only be recruiting students who are employed by Cumbria County Council (CCC). The visitors also noted that the programme will be delivered through distance learning with some face to face teachings and guided independent study. The documentation did not clearly specify the minimum attendance requirements for this programme with little indication of how time lost through absence will be covered. During discussions with the programme team, it was highlighted that the programme team will identify where students' attendance is mandatory and put procedures and mechanisms in place to monitor it effectively. Therefore, visitors require the programme documentation to be revised to clearly identify where on the programme students' attendance is mandatory with an indication of how time lost through absence will be covered and how the attendance mechanisms are effectively communicated and monitored.

3.17 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence regarding the plans for continued service user and carer involvement within the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine the exact nature of the service users and carers' involvement in the programme for this route. The programme documentation suggested service users and carers will be involved in many aspects of the programme. Also, during discussions at the visit, it was indicated service users and carers may be involved in the interview process. However, from the discussions with the programme team it was clear that formal future plans have yet to be finalised to involve service users in the programme throughout. It was indicated by the service users and carers that there are plans for their further involvement in the programme, but the programme team provided limited details about how this will work. The visitors were unable to determine from the discussion and the documentation provided that a plan is in place for how service users and carers will continue to be involved in the programme. In order to determine that this standard is met the visitors require further evidence demonstrating the plans for future service user and carer involvement.

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 programme team must provide evidence to demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the programme allow students to meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

- 6.2 be able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination, disadvantage and oppression; and
- 3.3 understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career-long learning; and
- 9.8 recognise the contribution that service users' and carers' own resources and strengths can bring to social work

Reason: The education provider submitted a SOPs mapping document as part of the documentation for this visit. In the mapping document, the above SOPs were left blank. The visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the above SOPs. Through discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that the programme team may have missed mapping the curriculum's learning outcomes against these SOPs. The programme team gave examples of the curriculum delivering the above SOPs. As such, the visitors will need to see documentary evidence to be satisfied that these SOPs are delivered in the curriculum. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to demonstrate how in the programme, students will be taught about, and students who successfully complete the programme are able to meet the above SOPs.

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 programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the programme allow students to meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

- 2.9 recognise the power dynamics in relationships with service users and carers and be able to manage those dynamics appropriately; and
- 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 and empowerment; and
 - the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour

Reason: The education provider submitted a SOPs mapping document as part of the documentation for this visit. In the mapping document, the programme team indicated the above SOPs would be delivered within modules HSWG 4001, 4003, 4004, 5002, 5003, 5004, 6001, 6003 and HSWG 6004. The visitors looked at the learning outcomes of these modules and noted that learning outcomes were implicit and therefore visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum, the above SOPs would be addressed. In discussion the programme team highlighted that other modules would cover these SOPs generically. However, the programme team will update the learning outcomes to ensure the above SOPs are covered explicitly. From the documentation however, the visitors could not see where in the modules the learning outcomes ensured these SOPs are delivered and so require further evidence.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they will ensure students gain sufficient breadth of social work experience on placement to support students meeting the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their profession.

Reason: From reviewing the documentation, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures students undertake a sufficient range of practice placement settings. During discussions with the programme team and the placement providers, the visitors noted students will have their two placements in both adult and child and family settings. The visitors agreed that child and family focused social work competencies are covered in the final placement; however they were unclear how the competencies not linked to child and family settings are achieved in the adult settings placement. The

visitors were unclear how the programme will ensure all the standards of proficiency for social workers in England and associated learning outcomes that students are expected to meet when completing placements are achieved. Therefore, the visitors require further information that demonstrates how the programme team will ensure students have a sufficient breadth of social work experience on placement to support students meeting the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their profession.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence about their processes to ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that the education provider offers a three day training course to practice placement educators. The programme team meeting indicated that there is additional two days training for practice educators to achieve recognised practice educators qualification. This is delivered in partnership with other regional partners. However, the documentation provide limited information about this training and associated processes including how it is used to ensure that practice educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training. The programme team and placement providers also discussed the various practice educators training that is in place at CCC. The visitors acknowledged that there were training opportunities provided by the education provider for placement educators but were unable to see how each individual placement educator's training is monitored. To ensure that this standard is met, the visitors require further information of the programme specific training that is offered to practice placement educators to ensure they can assess students in line with the assessment requirements of the education provider and the processes in place for ensuring these requirements are met and monitored in practice.

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

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence of regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Reason: The documentation states that the 'link lecturer process' ensures that there are effective links between the education provider and students' placement. The visitors noted this is useful for individual placements and students on these placements. However, this standard requires the education provider to have regular and effective collaboration with all practice placements providers including private, voluntary and independent sector. The visitors met with practice educators and representatives for the partnership from the practice placement provider at the visit. The programme team meeting indicated that the education provider is part of the regional partnership and meets regularly with members of the partnerships. However from the documentation, the visitors were unclear about the nature of this regional partnership and the frequency of their meetings. Therefore, visitors require further evidence that the collaboration and joint work between the education provider and practice placement providers will be regular and effective.

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 to demonstrate how students will be fully prepared for placement through the 30 'skills days'.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation that the programme will be delivered through distance learning with some face to face teachings and guided independent study. The documentation submitted indicated the programme has 30 'skills days' which students are required to complete before their practice placements can begin. Discussions with the programme team indicated the 'skills days' are designed to prepare students so that each student has a basic level of knowledge and skills they need for practice placements. The visitors learnt, these 'skills days' will be covered in level 4 and level 5 modules. However, in relation to condition under SET 3.2 and due to the nature of the delivery for this programme, the visitors were unable to determine where in the programme these 30 'skill days' are covered. As such, the visitors were unable to determine that students would be fully prepared for placements. Therefore, visitors require further evidence of the detail and indicative content of the 'skills days', and how these 'skills days' will fully prepare students for placements.

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 programme team must provide evidence to demonstrate how the assessment strategy of the programme ensures students who complete the programme successfully meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

- 6.2 be able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination, disadvantage and oppression; and
- 3.3 understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career-long learning; and
- 9.8 recognise the contribution that service users' and carers' own resources and strengths can bring to social work

Reason: The education provider submitted a SOPs mapping document as part of the documentation for this visit. In the mapping document, the above SOPs were left blank. The visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum the above SOPs are delivered and consequently assessed. Through discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that the programme team may have missed to map the curriculum against these SOPs. The programme team gave examples of the curriculum delivering and assessing these SOPs. As such, the visitors will need to see documentary evidence to be satisfied that the above SOPs are delivered and assessed in the curriculum. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to demonstrate how in the

programme, students will be taught about, assessed, and when successfully complete the programme are able to meet the above SOPs.

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 programme team must provide evidence to demonstrate how the assessment strategy of the programme ensures students who complete the programme successfully meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

- 2.9 recognise the power dynamics in relationships with service users and carers and be able to manage those dynamics appropriately; and
- 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 and empowerment; and
 - the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour

Reason: The education provider submitted a SOPs mapping document as part of the documentation for this visit. In the mapping document, the programme team indicated the above SOPs would be delivered and assessed within modules HSWG 4001, 4003, 4004, 5002, 5003, 5004, 6001, 6003 and HSWG 6004. The visitors looked at the learning outcomes of these modules and noted that learning outcomes were implicit and therefore visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum, the above SOPs would be delivered and assessed. In discussions, the programme team highlighted that other modules would cover these SOPs generically. However, the programme team will update the learning outcomes to ensure the above SOPs are covered and assessed explicitly in the curriculum. From the documentation however, the visitors could not see where in the modules the learning outcomes ensured these SOPs are delivered and assessed. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence.

Patricia Higham
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