

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Derby
Programme name	BA Honours in Applied Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	25 – 26 February 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 14 May. 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 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 reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered a different programme, MA Social Work, full time. 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	Kim Bown (Social worker in England) Gary Dicken (Social worker in England) Louise Whittle (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Hollie Latham
HCPC observer	Almudena Lara (Department for Education)
Proposed student numbers	65 per cohort across full time and part time; 1 cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2015
Chair	Kevin Bampton (University of Derby)
Secretary	Shelley Nix (University of Derby)
Members of the joint panel	Angie Snow (Internal panel member) Douglas Carr (Internal panel member) Sue Taplin (External Panel Member) Bob Cecil (The College of Social Work) Nigel Simons (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 number of conditions are set on the programme, all of 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 two SETs.

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

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 revisit admissions documentation to ensure consistency and accuracy in the information made available to applicants.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to the programme website to evidence this standard. The visitors were satisfied that the web page was a suitable platform to inform applicants of the details of the programme, however, they noted instances of inconsistent and missing information. For example, the web page states that the required UCAS points for entry to the programme are set at 240, however the presentation delivered to applicants on open days states that minimum entry is 260 UCAS points. In addition to this the visitors noted that the programme requires each applicant to hold a C grade GCSE Maths and English as stated in the handbook for recruitment and selection of new students, page 8. "Passes in 5 other subjects at GCSE grade C or above which must include English and Maths, or their equivalent in other academic qualifications". However, the information provided on the university web page states "Your points at level 3 will be in addition to 5 GCSEs at grade C or equivalent level 2 qualifications". There is no specific mention of the Maths and English GCSE requirements. The visitors note that the inconsistent and missing information could be misleading to potential applicants for the programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to show that all information available to applicants is accurate and consistent to enable an applicant to make an informed choice on whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clarify the current AP(E)L policies for the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the visitors were directed to page 8 of the programme handbook which states "It may be possible to receive credit for relevant prior learning. APL applicants will be considered in line with University of Derby regulation...". However, in a discussion with the programme team the visitors heard mixed comments about the acceptance of AP(E)L on the programme, including statements that the programme did not accept prior learning. The visitors were therefore uncertain on the current status of accepting AP(E)L for the programme. Furthermore, the visitors were unable to identify, should AP(E)L be accepted, how it will be consistently applied to ensure that students' prior learning is mapped against the learning outcomes for the programme or individual modules. The visitors therefore require further documentation to clarify if the programme accepts AP(E)L and if so, how this will be consistently applied to ensure that students who are eligible for AP(E)L are able to meet the standards of proficiency for social workers in England on graduation.

Kim Bown
Gary Dicken
Louise Whittle