

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Huddersfield
Name of programme(s)	MSc Social Work, Full time Integrated Masters in Social Work, Full time
Approval visit date	14-15 March 2018
Case reference	CAS-11931-D8W6V2

Contents

Section 1: Our regulatory approach.....	2
Section 2: Programme details.....	3
Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment.....	3
Section 4: Outcome from first review.....	4
Section 5: Visitors' recommendation	6

Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Diane Whitlock	Lay
Anne Gribbens	Social worker
David Childs	Social worker
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Pete Woodcock	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Huddersfield
Leanne Hodge	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Huddersfield

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 July 2009
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01729

We undertook this assessment via the approval process, which involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme continues to meet our standards. We decided to assess the programme via the approval process due to the outcome of a previous assessment. Due to changes to the existing provision of the programme and the introduction of the Integrated Masters in Social Work, we decided to visit this programme.

Programme name	Integrated Masters in Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01730

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met
Learners	Yes
Senior staff	Yes
Practice education providers	Yes
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes
Programme team	Yes
Facilities and resources	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 04 May 2018.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how service users and carers are involved in the programmes, and how they will ensure the continuation of service user and carer involvement in these programmes.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were provided with modules that service users and carers contribute to. At the visit, the visitors met several service users and carers and discussed how they are involved in the programmes. During discussions, it was clear that the service users and carers are involved at a university level; however, the visitors were unable to determine how service users and carers are involved directly with this programme. From the documentation and discussion, the visitors saw no formalised information to demonstrate how service users and carers are involved in the programmes currently, or will be involved in the programmes going forward. The visitors therefore cannot determine:

- who the service users and carers are (or will be);
- how they will be involved in the programmes;
- how their involvement is appropriate; and

- the education provider's strategy for ensuring the continuation of service user and carer involvement in the programmes.

The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence demonstrating that service users and carers will be involved in the programmes, and how they will ensure the continuation of service user and carer involvement in the programmes.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the resources to support learning in all settings are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programmes.

Reason: The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider contained inaccuracies in relation to HCPC regulation. For example, appendix 44 states, "They must indicate whether the student has met the requirements of the HCPC Professional Capabilities Framework". HCPC does not have a Professional Capabilities Framework. In addition, the visitors noted reference to the National Occupational Standards (NOS); the NOS have not applied to social work for several years. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that the NOS is referenced in the documentation because several of the modules are taught to both social workers and social care learners. However, the visitors considered that this could potentially be confusing for social work learners on the programmes and the visitors were unclear how the education provider would avoid this confusion. It is important that learners are equipped with accurate information, and the visitors considered it to be important that the programme documentation accurately reflects the HCPC, and its role in the regulation of the profession. The visitors therefore require the education provider to ensure that the resources to support learning in all settings is effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programmes.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how learners will be able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear how the education provider ensures that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.. At the visit, the visitors heard that there might be opportunities for shared teaching and shared learning with other HCPC-approved programmes at the education provider. However, the visitors were unclear how the education provider made the judgement on which professions are most relevant to the programme and most useful in preparing learners for practice. From the discussions with the programme team, the visitors noted that no formal plans have been put in place to ensure that learners could learn with and from other professionals and learners from relevant professions. Therefore, in order for the visitors to make a judgment about whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions on these programmes.

6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must update their documentation to ensure it clearly specifies the requirements for progression and achievement within the programmes.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were directed to the assessment criteria, course handbook and module specification. From a review of the documentation, the visitors understood that in order for a learner to progress on Integrated Masters in Social Work, they would need to achieve 60 per cent at the end of Year 3. However, at the visit, the education provider confirmed that they have decided to change the progression and achievement requirement within the programmes to 55 per cent at the end of Year 2. From this discussion, the visitors note that the documentation no longer correctly reflects the progression and achievement within the programmes. As such, the visitors require further evidence that the programme documentation clearly reflects the requirements for progression and achievement within the programmes and how this will be communicated to learners. In this way, the visitors can make determinations about whether the programmes meets this standard.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, and the request for further evidence set out in section 5, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 24 May 2018 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).