

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Kent
Name of programme(s)	MA Social Work (Step Up to Social Work) – Full time accelerated Postgraduate Diploma Social Work (Step Up to Social Work) – Full time accelerated
Approval visit date	13 September 2017
Case reference	CAS-11947-G1C1X6

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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:

David Ward	Social worker
Graeme Currie	Social worker
Ian Hughes	Lay
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive
Eloise O'Connell	HCPC executive (observer)

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.

Sally Kendall	Chair	University of Kent
Louise Tollervey	Secretary	University of Kent

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Step Up to Social Work
Mode of study	Full time accelerated
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 January 2018
Maximum student cohort	Up to 26
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01725

Programme name	Step Up to Social Work
Mode of study	Full time accelerated
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 January 2018
Maximum student cohort	Up to 26
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01727

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	Reason(s) for non-submission
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	Not required	This is a new programme.

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

Group	Met
Learners	Yes
Senior staff	Yes
Practice education providers and educators	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 50 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 16 October 2017.

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 provide further evidence to demonstrate how the programme will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: In their review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors noted the evidence provided for this standard, which included skill development activities, whereby learners 'undergo shadowing visits to other teams and receive input from other professionals during their workplace experience'. Learners also undertake collaborative working with other agencies and professions in other relevant professions while on placement. In assessing the evidence, the visitors recognised that there are plenty opportunities for learners to learn with, and from, professionals. However, the visitors were unclear how learners are able to learn with, and from, learners in other relevant professions. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors heard that, due to location, the programme team are unable to facilitate opportunities where learners are able to learn with, and from, learners in other relevant professions. However, these opportunities are crucial in developing learners' ability to communicate and work with

those outside their own profession, ultimately improving the environment and quality of care for service users. As such, the visitors require the education provider to submit further evidence to demonstrate how the programme will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, learners in other relevant professions.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how the assessment strategy will ensure that upon successful completion of the programme all students will meet the standard of proficiency (SOPs) for Social workers in England.

Reason: From the review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team, the visitors were content that the curriculum delivers the learning outcomes required to ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for Social workers in England. However, the visitors noted that the assessment for this programme was organised around the Professional Capability Framework (PCF) without any reference how the SOPs are being assessed. As such, the visitors were unclear how the assessment organised around the PCF linked to each of the SOPs, to ensure that a student completing the programme has demonstrated that they meet the SOPs for Social workers in England. The visitors therefore require further documentation to clearly evidence how the assessment of the learning outcomes will ensure that students meet the relevant SOPs on successful completion of the programme and how students meet and record the individual SOPs. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence to clearly define the link between the assessment of students associated with all aspects of this programme and how these assessments will ensure that students completing the programme have demonstrated that they meet all of the relevant SOPs for Social workers in England.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, 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 23 November 2017 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).