hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Winchester
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social Worker in England
Date of visit	18 – 19 June 2014

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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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 26 August 2014. At the Committee meeting, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the conditions 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 August 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 an HCPC only visit. The education provider and validating body did not validate or review the programme at the visit 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 of HCPC visitors and profession	David Childs (Social worker) Patricia Higham (Social worker)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	40 Full time once per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2014
Chair	Janice de Sousa (University of Winchester)
Secretary	Andy Wall (University of Winchester)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators / mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

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 nine of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 48 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 have also made a recommendation 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 all programme documentation, including advertising material and website, to ensure that potential applicants have all the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme.

Reason: From the information provided, the visitors were unclear as to how the education provider ensures that applicants to the programme have all of the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. The visitors could not determine where applicants were informed about the costs for the disclosure barring service (DBS) required through admissions. The visitors were also unable to determine if, and how, information about possible changes to the fee structure due to changes in bursaries will be communicated to potential applicants. The visitors consider this to be essential information for applicants and therefore, require the education provider to review the programme advertising materials, to ensure potential applicants are informed of the costs for the DBS and are kept up to date regarding possible changes to the fee structure. In this way the visitors can determine how the programme can meet this standard by ensuring that applicants have all the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the programme line management structure, indicating the roles and responsibilities of the programme team members, and how the roles interlink.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and in discussion with the programme team at the visit, the visitors were unclear regarding the management structure and the lines of responsibility of everyone involved in the day to day management of the programme. In discussion with the students it was clear that they understood the roles and responsibilities of various members of the programme team, and who their main points of contact were. However, from a review of the documentation the visitors could not see evidence that the programme management structure was documented, and as such the visitors could not be assured that future students and staff of the programme would have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the day to day management of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the roles and lines of responsibility of the programme team, to ensure that the programme continues to be effectively managed.

3.3 The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Condition: The education provider must revise the documentation to clearly articulate the feedback mechanisms in place for programme monitoring and evaluation.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine if there are regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place. The visitors discussed the monitoring and evaluation of several aspects of the programme with the programme team. However, these systems were not always clearly reflected in the programme documentation. From the documentation the visitors were unclear about several aspects of the feedback systems in place. In particular, how student feedback is considered by the programme team, how any changes initiated by this feedback are implemented, and how any changes to the programme following feedback are communicated to students. The visitors also noted there were feedback forms for students, practice placement educators and practice placement providers in the practice learning documentation. The visitors were unclear how practice placement feedback is considered by the programme team, how any changes initiated by this feedback are implemented, and how any changes to the programme following feedback are communicated to placement providers. The visitors were therefore unable to determine this standard is met. The visitors require information which clearly articulates student feedback mechanisms and practice placement feedback mechanisms in place for programme monitoring and evaluation.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the student support systems in place for the programme including the allocation of personal tutors to students, timing of tutor allocation, frequency of tutorials and the amount of time allocated to personal tutorials throughout the programme.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included information about the academic and pastoral support systems in place; the visitors noted each student was allocated a personal tutor. Discussions with students revealed the programme team was considered to be very supportive, but there was some variability in the levels of support offered to students and when allocations of personal tutors were made. Given this information the visitors were concerned about the ability of the programme team to sustain the level of support provided to students. Discussions with the programme team revealed that staff devoted much time and effort to supporting students. The senior team have recruited an additional member of staff (to start in August 2014) to manage and support the programme including personal tutoring. The visitors considered even with an extra member of staff, the demands placed on the programme team in supporting students on a programme that involves practice placements and academic work may impact on the sustainability and consistency of the support systems. To demonstrate the student support systems are sustainable and can be delivered consistently the visitors require further clarification about the student support systems in place including:
- the allocation of personal tutors to students;
- When allocations of tutors are made;
- frequency of tutorials; and
- the amount of time allocated to personal tutorials throughout the programme.

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 students' attendance is mandatory and how the attendance mechanisms are effectively communicated and monitored.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors could not identify the attendance requirements for students or how students are informed about the mandatory elements of the programme. In discussion with the students there was some confusion regarding understanding of the attendance policy and the associated monitoring mechanisms for this programme. The visitors also discussed the attendance policy with the programme team. It was highlighted that the education provider is currently drafting an education provider wide policy and that the programme team expect full attendance at all times from students. However, the visitors were unable to determine how the programme team monitor attendance and are able to intervene if attendance became an issue. The visitors could not see where attendance requirements are communicated to students. The visitors therefore require further evidence demonstrating how this standard is met.

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):

- **3 be able to maintain fitness to practise**
  - 3.1 understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional practice
  - 3.2 understand the importance of maintaining their own health and wellbeing
  - 3.3 understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career- long learning
  - 3.4 be able to manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice
- **4 be able to exercise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement**
  - 4.5 be able to make and receive referrals appropriately
- **9 be able to work appropriately with others**
  - 9.4 be able to support service users' and carers' rights to control
  - 9.5 be able to support the development of networks, groups and communities to meet the needs and outcomes
- **12 be able to assure the quality of their practice**
  - 12.2 be able to contribute to processes designed to evaluate service and individual outcomes
  - 12.3 be able to engage in evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures
- **15 be able to establish and maintain a safe practise environment**
  - 15.2 be aware of applicable health and safety legislations and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team, the visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the above standards of proficiency. From the standards of proficiency mapping document, the visitors were unable to determine how the above SOPs were being taught within the curriculum in such a way to ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register. The visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence that demonstrates that the learning outcomes ensure all standards of proficiency, specifically SOPs 3.1 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.5, 9.4, 9.5, 12.2, 12.3 and 15.2 are addressed within the curriculum.

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 education provider must provide evidence that demonstrates that the assessment strategy and design ensures that those who successfully complete the programme meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

- **3 be able to maintain fitness to practise**
  - o 3.1 understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional practice
  - o 3.2 understand the importance of maintaining their own health and wellbeing
  - o 3.3 understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career- long learning
  - o 3.4 be able to manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice
- **4 be able to exercise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement**
  - o 4.5 be able to make and receive referrals appropriately
- **9 be able to work appropriately with others**
  - o 9.4 be able to support service users' and carers' rights to control
  - o 9.5 be able to support the development of networks, groups and communities to meet the needs and outcomes
- **12 be able to assure the quality of their practice**
  - o 12.2 be able to contribute to processes designed to evaluate service and individual outcomes
  - o 12.3 be able to engage in evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures
- **15 be able to establish and maintain a safe practise environment**
  - o 15.2 be aware of applicable health and safety legislations and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team, the visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum the assessment of the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the above standards of proficiency (SOPs). From the standards of proficiency mapping document, the visitors were unable to determine how the above SOPs were being taught and assessed within the curriculum in such a way to ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for

their part of the Register. The visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence that demonstrates that the learning outcomes ensure all standards of proficiency, specifically SOPs 3.1 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.5, 9.4, 9.5, 12.2, 12.3 and 15.2 are assessed within the curriculum.

6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HCPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate what awards confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register and those exit awards which do not.

Reason: From the documentation the visitors were satisfied that anyone successfully completing this programme would be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC. However, the visitor were unable to see where in the documentation students were informed that anyone who received an exit award would not be eligible to apply to the HCPC Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students understand which awards confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register and which do not.

6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed. The visitors were satisfied with the current external examiner for the programme. However, the visitors need to see evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate that this standard is met.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should keep the staff numbers within the programme team under review to ensure that there continues to be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: The visitors noted from the documentation provided, and in the meeting with the programme team that there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to run an effective programme. Therefore, the visitors are satisfied this standard is being met. However, discussion with the senior team revealed that the education provider is currently thinking of developing a Foundation programme in Social Care to be taught and managed by the current programme team. The visitors recommend the education provider continue to carefully monitor the staffing resources for the BSc programme ahead of the development of the new Foundation programme to ensure a new programme does not impact on the sustainability and consistency of the teaching on this BSc programme.

David Childs
Patricia Higham