

Education quality assurance – Course change review report

Report date:

30/06/2026

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Documentary review details

Inspection ID	TU_2320
Course provider	Teesside University
Validating body (if different)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Course name	BA (Hons) Social Work Full Time
Mode of study	Full time
Proposed first intake	07/09/2026
Maximum student cohort	60
Review type	Course change
Review team	Katie Parkin, Steven Stericker, Joanne Benn
Review team recommendation	Approved
Regulator decision	Approved
Regulator decision date	13 July 2026

About the review

Teesside University are proposing changes to the BA (Hons) Social Work programme as part of their internal reapproval process. The programme structure has been amended to align with the university's accumulative framework.

In Year 2, the existing structure remains broadly comparable, with students completing three 20-credit modules and a 70-day practice placement. However, the credit weighting of the placement has increased from 40 to 60 credits.

In Year 3, the programme has been revised to include two modules instead of three. The dissertation module remains at 40 credits, while Practice Placement 2 has increased from 60 to 80 credits to reflect the increased placement duration and associated portfolio requirements.

As part of these changes, the 20-credit Values, Theories and Ethics module has been removed. The university has indicated that the content from this module has been integrated across Year 1 and Year 2 modules, ensuring that core teaching in these areas is delivered prior to students undertaking their first placement.

There are no changes to overall student numbers.

Findings

The university identified a number of standards that would be impacted by the proposed changes. After reviewing the evidence submitted across both initial and second review stages, the inspectors identified the following:

For the majority of standards, the university demonstrated a continuation of their ability to meet the Education and Training Standards.

However, standards 2.1, 3.8, 4.1, 4.4, and 4.9 were directly impacted by the proposed changes and required further evidence to satisfy the inspectors that the standards would continue to be met. These standards related to curriculum design, assessment, staffing, and the integration of professional standards and learning outcomes.

Supporting evidence was submitted across two review stages. The evidence and how it relates to each impacted standard is summarised below:

Standard 2.1

Ensure that the curriculum and learning experience are structured to support student progression and readiness for practice.

Inspectors reviewed evidence relating to the structure of placements and skills development. Placement 1 (70 days) and Placement 2 (100 days) remain in place, although credit weighting has increased.

Following additional evidence, the Course Handbook confirmed how skills days are embedded within modules. Students complete two introductory shadowing days as part of the Year 1 communication module, which contribute to the development and assessment of communication skills.

Assessment of readiness for practice has been updated, with a shift towards assessment within a shadowing environment. Students are assessed by qualified social workers, with academic oversight. An alternative internal assessment is available where shadowing is not undertaken.

Further clarification was requested regarding the circumstances in which students may not complete shadowing days and how consistency of assessment is ensured.

Following review of additional evidence, including assessment guidance and marking criteria, the inspectors were satisfied that the standard is met.

Standard 3.8

Ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver an effective course.

The university confirmed that student numbers remain unchanged and that the teaching team has increased in size, now including eight qualified social workers.

The curriculum changes do not require additional specialist knowledge or resources beyond those already approved.

Inspectors requested clarification on how social workers are supported to assess communication skills during shadowing experiences, including whether assessors are Practice Educators.

Additional evidence demonstrated that online preparation is provided for assessors undertaking the communication skills assessment. Academic staff retain responsibility for marking reflective components.

On balance, inspectors were satisfied that staffing arrangements remain sufficient and that appropriate support for assessors is in place.

Standard 4.1

Ensure that the curriculum is aligned to the Social Work England professional standards and relevant frameworks.

Initial evidence included mapping documents linking course learning outcomes to the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF), Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS), and Social Work England standards.

Additional evidence demonstrated mapping of professional standards to programme learning outcomes. Discussions confirmed that the programme had previously been approved against this standard and that content from the removed module had been integrated across existing modules.

Following further review and discussion, inspectors agreed that the changes relate primarily to credit weighting and assessment rather than substantive curriculum removal.

The inspectors were therefore satisfied that this standard continues to be met.

Standard 4.4

Ensure that the curriculum remains current and is informed by developments in practice, research, and policy.

Additional evidence, including the Course Handbook and course overview documents, demonstrated that contemporary issues are addressed across multiple modules. References to values, ethics, and emerging practice developments are integrated throughout the programme.

Inspectors were satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the programme continues to reflect current practice.

Standard 4.5

Ensure that the curriculum supports the integration of theory and practice.

The removal of the Values, Theories and Ethics module was identified as a potential risk to this standard. However, evidence confirmed that this content has been embedded into earlier modules within the programme.

The revised structure enables students to engage with theoretical concepts prior to practice placements, potentially strengthening the integration of theory and practice.

Inspectors were satisfied that this standard continues to be met.

Standard 4.7

Ensure that the programme is effectively designed in terms of learning hours and delivery.

The mapping documentation confirmed that learning hours remain aligned with credit requirements, despite changes in delivery patterns and the redistribution of content across the programme.

Inspectors were satisfied that this standard is met.

Standard 4.9

Ensure that assessment methods are appropriate and aligned to learning outcomes.

Initial evidence identified significant changes to assessment strategy, including a move away from traditional essay-based assessments towards more varied and practice-relevant approaches.

However, there was insufficient evidence at initial review to demonstrate how assessments aligned with module learning outcomes, particularly in the absence of module descriptors.

Following submission of the Course Handbook and assessment documentation, inspectors were able to review the sequencing and variety of assessment methods across the programme.

Subsequent discussion confirmed that module content had previously been approved and that changes relate primarily to assessment methods and credit weighting.

Inspectors were satisfied that assessment remains aligned with learning outcomes and that this standard is met.

Conclusions

The inspectors are recommending the course change is approved.

Regulator decision

Course change approved.