**SPPA Standards of Education and Training**

**Introduction**

The Social Pedagogy Professional Association (SPPA) has been set up as a membership based organisation to establish and uphold standards of social pedagogic practice in the UK. As part of the joining process, SPPA Members are asked to sign up to an agreed Social Pedagogy Charter and demonstrate that their practice meets the Standards of Proficiency (SOPs). One purpose of SPPA is to ensure that all social pedagogy education is of a high standard and has as its core a relationship-centred, situated and dialogical learning process.

SPPA will hold a list of approved education providers who demonstrate that they offer high quality learning in social pedagogy. For this reason, SPPA holds Standards of Education and Training (SETs) to ensure that social pedagogy qualifications, and other courses and learning programmes, are facilitated to the same standards by education providers across the UK. Any organisation wishing to have their learning programme approved by SPPA will need to ensure that it meets these SETs and equips learners to meet the Standards of Proficiency in social pedagogy. The process of approval is completion of a self-assessment form and inspection by the SPPA Professional Standards Sub-Committee.

Qualifications and learning programmes fall into three categories that relate to the use of the titles: *Social Pedagogue* or *Social Pedagogy Practitioner:*

1. Social Pedagogues have successfully completed a Bachelors (level 6) or Masters (level 7) degree in Social Pedagogy[[1]](#footnote-1)
2. Social Pedagogy Practitioners have successfully completed a lower level qualification. This must have a minimum of 400 learning hours and may be at level 3, level 4 or level 5.
3. Learning programmes or courses that are assessed below level 3 (or represent less than 400 learning hours) do not confer either of the above titles

These SETS apply to all categories with some exceptions for category 3 learning programmes.

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| Programme Admission | Category 1 and Category 2 | Category 3 |
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| * 1. How to select/admit students
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| * + 1. Education providers should clearly state entry criteria on all websites and marketing materials. This should include qualification requirements and any relevant previous experience that learners may be required to hold.
 | YES | NA |
| * + 1. Entry requirements should state that a good level of written and spoken English is required for entry onto the programme. Applicants may be required to take a written test in line with the organisation’s admission policy.
 | YES | NA |
| * + 1. Applicants should undergo an interview/selection process which should include a personal statement and interview process to assess motivation, academic ability and commitment. Students should be asked to verify their identity to gain admission to a course.
 | YES | NA |
| * + 1. Education providers must ensure that they have an equal opportunity and diversity policy which ensures their admissions procedure is inclusive. Providers must also ensure that all facilitators are aware of it and fully informed and equipped to implement it. This policy should be regularly updated.
 | YES | NA |
| * + 1. Learners should be assessed on their willingness and capacity to commit to the time required to take the course and their willingness to learn, grow and reflect.
 | YES | NA |
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| 1. Programme Management and Resources
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| * 1. Staff Recruitment and Expertise
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| * + 1. Course providers should have an effective process of staff recruitment to ensure appropriately qualified staff to facilitate the social pedagogy programme.
 | YES | YES |
| * + 1. Course managers and leaders should ensure that the standards, values and facilitation approach of those facilitating learning are commensurate with the standards and charter of social pedagogy.
 | YES | YES |
| * + 1. Course facilitators should have a theoretical, ethical and practical understanding of social pedagogy which enables competent facilitation of a social pedagogy course
 | YES | YES |
| * + 1. The education providers should monitor staffing levels to ensure provision of adequate numbers of qualified and competent staff.
 | YES | YES |
| * + 1. At least one facilitator must have a qualification in social pedagogy (or close equivalent[[2]](#footnote-2)), with relevant and up to date practice experience.
 | YES | YES |
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| * 1. Staff CPD
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| * + 1. Staff/facilitators are expected to demonstrate their continual relevant professional development in social pedagogy theory and practice.
 | YES | YES |
| * + 1. There should be an effective process to review staff performance
 | YES | YES |
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| Programme Management  |  |  |
| There should be a named and appropriately qualified person who has overall responsibility for the learning programme and a clearly laid out organogram identifying responsibilities. | YES | YES |
| Education providers should regularly monitor all resources to ensure they are sufficient and fit for purpose, including ensuring that staff have sufficient time to deliver, assess and mentor students.  | YES | YES |
| * + 1. There should be clear quality systems in place which are appropriate to the size of the education provider and supported by management.
 | YES | YES |
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| * 1. Learning Environment
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| * + 1. There should be a range of resources and methods to facilitate a creative and experiential learning process, where learners feel they and their opinions are valued and respected, confidentiality[[3]](#footnote-3) is upheld and a safe space is provided to share thoughts, emotions, feelings and vulnerabilities.
 | YES | YES |
| * + 1. The focus should be on building inclusive relationships between diverse group members (including facilitators) to reduce power imbalances.
 | YES | YES |
| * + 1. Providers should encourage supportive networks that participants can take part in, for example, drawing on their own group, previous participants or education provider staff/assessors.
 | YES | NA |
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| * 1. Learner support/mentoring
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| * + 1. Each participant should be assigned a suitably qualified or experienced tutor, mentor or supervisor to provide guidance, support and inspiration.
 | YES | NA |
| * + 1. Tutoring, mentoring and developmental supervision should facilitate reflective processes of learning for more purposeful practice.
 | YES | NA |
| * + 1. There should be a planned approach to facilitating learning through regular dialogue, observation, sharing of material, experience and knowledge, reflection and feedback.
 | YES | YES |
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| 1. Curriculum
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| * 1. Programme Content
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| * + 1. All SPPA approved courses must further learners’ understanding of social pedagogy in three areas that are integrated: theories and concepts in social pedagogy; self-knowledge and reflective capacities; and social pedagogical practice.
 | YES | YES |
| Learning programmes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the SPPA standards of proficiency (SOPs)  | YES | NA |
| The programme must reflect the historical context, philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base of social pedagogy as articulated in the SOPS. Curricula should have an international outlook and adapt theory and practice from around the world to the UK context.  | YES | NA |
| The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice. | YES | NA |
| The programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking. | YES | YES |
| The programme must encourage theoretically informed, values-based and evidence-supported practice. | YES | YES |
| The range of learning approaches used must be appropriate to the effective facilitation of the curriculum. | YES | YES |
| In a multi-disciplinary professional group of learners, adequate attention must be paid to the application of social pedagogy to each discipline or profession.  | YES | YES |
| * + 1. Programme content should be reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date and remains relevant to current social pedagogy practice and theory.
 | YES | YES |
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| 1. Learning and assessment
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| This section considers approaches to learning and how learning happens in practice. |  |  |
| * 1. Facilitators should provide a variety of learning methods, combining theoretical teaching with practice, experiential learning, creative activities and group projects. Learning may also be through individual and group supervision, blended (online and face to face) learning and self-directed study
 | YES | YES |
| * 1. Facilitators should join in with activities where appropriate and share their reflections
 | YES | YES |
| * 1. Students should be encouraged to bring learning from everyday life into their study
 | YES | YES |
| * 1. Assessment should be drawn holistically from a variety of sources and may include: art work, written assignments, essays, presentations, observation, peer assessment, video portfolio, reflective journal linking theory to practice, poster presentations, professional discussion, group presentations
 | YES | NA |
| * 1. Learning should include formative and self-assessment as a contribution towards summative assessment.
 | YES | NA |
| * 1. Assessment of student performance must be objective and use clearly defined and appropriate assessment methods to ensure valid and appropriate decisions.
 | YES | NA |
| * 1. There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment. Such mechanisms should include internal and external moderation of assessment.
 | YES | NA |
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| 1. Assessed Practice Experiences
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| * 1. Programmes are expected to include assessed practice in different settings for practice with children, young people and adults, so that learners can contextualise social pedagogy. Graduate social pedagogues are expected to have undertaken at least 300 hours of assessed practice and social pedagogy practitioners 200 hours.
 | YES | NA |
| * 1. ‘Assessed practice’ can be organised in different ways. It includes practice placements that are supervised, assessed and graded, or voluntary placements or previous employment experience that are drawn upon in written assignments. Education providers are expected to demonstrate how their approach will equip learners for practice.
 | YES | NA |
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 Examples of SPPA approved programmes are available at [www.SPPA-UK.org](http://www.SPPA-UK.org)

These SETS will be subject to periodic review. The next review will be 2019 via the SPPA Professional Standards Committee which will report to SPPA trustees.

Appendix One



1. Please see appended UK Qualification Comparison Chart for equivalent levels across the UK. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Close equivalent: e.g. Honours and Masters’ degrees in Social Work, Youth Work, and Education may provide an adequate basis for teaching social pedagogy, with additional subject specific learning and experience. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Where a learner discloses immediate harm to a vulnerable child or adult, confidentiality may not be able to be maintained. The education provider is under an obligation to communicate concerns to the learner and to relevant safeguarding authorities. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)