

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Cumbria
Name of programme(s)	MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration), Full time BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, Full time
Approval visit date	12-14 September 2018
Case reference	CAS-12171-C1V7C1

Contents

Section 1: Our regulatory approach.....	2
Section 2: Programme details.....	3
Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment.....	4
Section 4: Outcome from first review.....	5
Section 5: Visitors' recommendation	7

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:

Louise Whittle	Lay
Jennifer Caldwell	Occupational therapist
Joanna Goodwin	Occupational therapist
Shaista Ahmad	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

This was a multi-professional visit with two HCPC panels. One panel for the occupational therapy programmes and another for the physiotherapy programmes. For both programmes, there were representatives from their respective professional bodies, the Royal College of Occupational Therapists and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.

For both professions at this multi-professional event there were representatives from the education provider and the external panel members from their relevant professions. Outlined below are the details of the other groups in attendance at this approval visit. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Internal panel members		
Michael Mitchell	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Cumbria
Suzanne Parkes	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Cumbria
Karen Mills	Internal panel member	University of Cumbria
Michael Mitchell	Internal panel member	University of Cumbria
Tony Greenwood	Internal panel member	University of Cumbria
External panel members		
Elizabeth McKay	External panel member – Occupational therapy representative	Edinburgh Napier University
Anne Wallace	External panel member – Physiotherapy representative	Robert Gordon University
Professional body panel members		
Helen Carey	Representative of Royal College of Occupational Therapists	Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Maureen Shiells	Representative of Royal College of Occupational Therapists	Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Ruth Heames	Representative of Royal College of Occupational Therapists	Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Nina Paterson	Representative for Chartered Society of Physiotherapy	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Steven Ryall	Representative for Chartered Society of Physiotherapy	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
HCPC Physiotherapy panel members		
Fleur Kitsell	HCPC panel member – Physiotherapist	HCPC
Joanna Jackson	HCPC panel member – Physiotherapist	HCPC
Joanne Watchman	HCPC panel member – Lay	HCPC
Eloise O’Connell	HCPC panel member – Executive	HCPC
Ismini Tsikaderi	HCPC panel member – Observer	HCPC

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Occupational therapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2008

Maximum learner cohort	Up to 60
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01816

Programme name	MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Occupational therapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2013
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 27
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01813

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.

The education provider informed the HCPC that they were revalidating their pre-registration occupational therapy provision. The education provider highlighted there were significant changes in practice-based learning since the last validation, and there will be major changes in the structure and content of the programmes.

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 16 November 2018.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there is a process in place to ensure that the individual holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided the name and curriculum vitae of the current programme leader for the programmes. In discussions with the senior team, the visitors explained that as this is a new standard, we now require the education provider to make sure there is an effective process in place to identify a suitable person and, if it becomes necessary, a suitable replacement. The senior team explained there is no formal written process in place, however there is a process they follow to ensure there is an appropriate person at all times. The senior team explained they work on '5 year rotation' where a senior lecturer would be recruited, and would shadow the current programme leader before moving into the position. The education provider ensure the senior lecturers are appropriately qualified and registered, as it is part of their job description. While the visitors agree this is an effective process, as it is not currently a written formal process they cannot be sure that this will be ongoing, in order to meet the standard. As such, the visitors require evidence of the education provider's process to ensure that there is an effective process in place to ensure the person holding overall professional responsibility for the

programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

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 articulate what interprofessional learning there will be on the programme, and how they will ensure that learners will learn with, and from professionals in other relevant professions.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation, the visitors noted that there was an interprofessional learning strategy but they were unable to find any information on how this strategy would be applied in the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors were informed there would be ‘opportunities for interprofessional learning’ with paramedics, physiotherapists and social workers such as during “home visits” to make the situation realistic to the real-life setting. There were plans to have two activities per year with one per semester on a different topic area. However, from the visitors understanding, this session was an extracurricular activity as opposed to required learning. With this information, the visitors were unable to determine how these ideas would be embedded into different levels of the programme. Therefore, the education provider is required to articulate what interprofessional learning there will be on the programme, and how they will ensure that learners on this programme will learn with, and from professionals in other relevant professions.

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Condition: The education provider must communicate to learners where attendance is mandatory and the consequences associated with not attending

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted, “The university expects 100% attendance”. In discussions with the learners, the visitors were informed that attendance was an issue and there were several sessions where learners did not attend as there was no tutor present. During the programme team meeting, the visitors were informed that learners are expected to attend all sessions. To monitor this, a paper register is taken to monitor attendance but an electronic system has now been introduced where tutors will now be noting down attendance in a spreadsheet. Where there are group sessions with no tutors, learners are expected to attend and sign the paper register. However, this is not currently monitored and the learners have raised this concern with the programme team to take action. With the information provided the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that learners are aware of the mandatory attendance requirements throughout the programme and what consequences there would be for any learner who failed to meet those requirements. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence that clearly stipulates the attendance requirements for the programme, the consequences should attendance fall below the required level, and how this is clearly communicated to learners.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do

not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

2.1 The admissions process 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.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider keeps the information for applicants under review in light of the funding reforms and any future additional costs which may occur for learners in the future.

Reason: From reviewing the documentation and discussions with the programme team at the visit, the visitors were provided with information about the admissions process applicants would require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. As this information was provided, the visitors were satisfied that this standard was met. However, as there are ongoing funding reforms taking place the visitors recommend that the education provider keeps information to applicants under review in relation to any future costs which the learner may be required to cover on this programme.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should ensure that there is a strategy to ensure ongoing service user and carer involvement in the programme.

Reason: From discussions with the service users and carers, the visitors noted that service users had been involved in the development of the programme including aspects such as talking with learners, sharing their experiences, and allowing learners to “practice” on them as experience before going onto complete the practice-based learning element of the programme. As this information was provided, the visitors were satisfied that this standard was met appropriately. However, from discussions with the service users and carers the visitors were informed there is limited involvement from the service users on the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors were told the education provider is working on a plan for involving service users and carers more in the academic setting, which is yet to be formalised as well as developing partnerships in the local areas and third sector. As these plans had not been finalised, there may be a risk of meeting this standard in future, due to the limited nature of involvement currently. Therefore, the visitors recommend strengthening involvement of service users and carers by widening participation and the areas of the programme there are involved in.

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 05 December 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](#).