

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Canterbury Christ Church University
Name of programme(s)	Non-Medical Prescribing, Part time Non-Medical Prescribing, Part time
Approval visit date	12 December 2018
Case reference	CAS-13352-H9K1L1

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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 for prescribing (for education providers) (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:

James Pickard	Independent prescriber
Nicola Carey	Independent prescriber
Diane Whitlock	Lay
John Archibald	HCPC executive

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.

David Bradshaw	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Canterbury Christ Church University
Elizabeth Welch	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Canterbury Christ Church University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Non-Medical Prescribing
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Entitlement	Supplementary prescribing
First intake	01 March 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25 across both programmes
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01966

Programme name	Non-Medical Prescribing
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Entitlement	Independent prescribing
First intake	01 March 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25 across both programmes
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01967

We undertook this assessment of two new programmes proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programmes 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
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

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	This is a new programme, so the panel met with a learner from the Non-Medical Prescribing programme, which has been approved for nurses.
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 24 January 2019.

A.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and 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 ensure that correct and consistent information is available to applicants, which enables them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

Reason: From their review of the programme documentation, the visitors considered that some of the information available to applicants was not clear or not correct. For example, in the programme specification it states that the award of independent and / or supplementary prescriber 'must be recorded with the relevant regulatory body within 12 months of completing the programme'. The HCPC does not set such a requirement. The programme specification and student programme handbook also state learners will be able to apply to the HCPC to have their qualification recorded. It is the responsibility of the education provider to inform HCPC of successful graduates of the programmes.

As such, the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation to ensure that the information is accurate and avoids any potential confusion for applicants.

C.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the programmes reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence provided to meet this standard, which included the programme's learning, teaching and assessment strategy, the programme learning outcomes and the module learning outcomes. The visitors understood that the programmes are to reflect the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) competency framework for all prescribers. However, from the information provided, the visitors could not determine where the learning outcomes of the programmes identified how learners would meet these competencies. The visitors were therefore unable to make a judgment about the effectiveness of the education provider's strategy for ensuring that future graduates would be able to practise in line with the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base of independent and / or supplementary prescribing and need to see further evidence of this.

E.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards for independent and / or supplementary prescribers.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence that the assessment strategy and design ensures that those who successfully complete the programme meet the HCPC standards for independent and / or supplementary prescribers.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided information on the learning, teaching and assessment strategy and a mapping document of module outcomes mapped to programme outcomes. The education provider also submitted module descriptors and a mapping document detailing module learning outcomes mapped to the HCPC standards for independent and / or supplementary prescribers. However, the documentation did not include information about where the module learning outcomes were assessed on the programmes. The visitors were unable to see the link between the standards for independent and / or supplementary prescribers, the programmes' learning outcomes, and the assessment of those learning outcomes. Therefore, the visitors did not have sufficient evidence to make a judgement that this standard was met. The visitors therefore require further evidence, such as revised documentation, to clearly define how the assessment strategy and design ensures that learners who successfully complete the programmes meets the standards for independent and / or supplementary prescribing.

E.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how assessments are thorough and effective and meets any relevant external reference frameworks.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence provided to meet this standard, which included the programme's learning, teaching and assessment strategy, the programme learning outcomes and the module learning outcomes. The visitors understood that the programmes are to reflect the RPS competency framework for all prescribers. However, the programmes' module specifications did not link their assessments to this framework. The visitors were unclear to identify how learners would be directed to ensure they are assessed to demonstrate they meet the framework. The visitors were therefore unable to make a judgment whether the assessment methods used by the programmes provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured. As such, the visitors require further evidence to determine whether this standard is met.

E.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide clarity as to how the assessment methods are linked to specific learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the education provider referred to the marking criteria and module descriptors. From their review of the documentation, the visitors were not able to see how the assessment methods being used in the modules were linked to specific learning outcomes. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to submit evidence showing how each method of assessment used in the programme is linked to a particular learning outcome. In this way they can be confident that all learners successfully completing the programme will have demonstrated the skills and knowledge needed to be safe and effective prescribers.

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 06 March 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).