

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Salford
Name of programme(s)	MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration), University of Salford, Full time
Approval visit date	12-13 December 2018
Case reference	CAS-13507-Z9K7Y8

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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 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:

Claire Brewis	Occupational therapist
Laura Graham	Occupational therapist
Rabie Sultan	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.

Helen Matthews	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Salford
Julie Evans	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Salford
Anne Longmore	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists - Representative

Nicola Spalding	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists - Representative
Clair Parkin	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists – Education Manager

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Occupational therapist
First intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01995

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme 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	This is a new programme therefore no external examiner reports have been produced for this programme

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 07 February 2019.

2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Condition: The education provider must clarify whether applicant's prior leaning and experience will be considered for this programme and if so, what criteria and process would be applied and how this is made available to staff and applicants.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors noted, in section 17 of the programme specification, that APEL (accreditation of prior learning) will not be available for this programme. However, during the meeting with the programme team, the visitors were told that they will consider taking APEL and relevant prior learning experience into consideration when assessing learners' applications for this programme. From the disparity in the information provided, the visitors were not clear what criteria and policy would be used to make judgements about prior learning or how this policy would be made available to applicants and the staff who would apply it. As such, the education provider will need to clearly define the process for assessing applicants' prior learning, and how this information will be made available to staff and learners, in order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard is met.

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 is delivered on the programme, and how they will ensure that learners will learn with, and from professionals in other relevant professions.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were directed to the programme specification and programme handbook which made references to module outlines, real world scenarios and volunteering experience. From reviewing this, the visitors were unclear about how this ensured that interprofessional education will take place on this programme. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors were told that opportunities for shared interprofessional learning will be undertaken along with a combination of different professions during planned practice based learning and major incidents simulations, similar to the one which currently takes place for the approved BSc occupational therapy programme. From the information provided, the visitors could not determine the full involvement of learners in interprofessional sessions or how interprofessional learning would be delivered to ensure that learners could learn with and from professionals and learners in other relevant professions.. Therefore, the education provider is required to articulate how the intended interprofessional learning which will be delivered on the programme ensures that learners are able to learn with and from other professionals and learners from other relevant professions. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether this standard is met.

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 is 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](#).