

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Gloucestershire
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time
Approval visit date	25-26 April 2019
Case reference	CAS-14308-J6Z4J0

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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:

Carol Rowe	Physiotherapist
Ian Hughes	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.

Caroline Mills	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Gloucestershire
Debbie Jones	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Gloucestershire
Dan Ramsay	Internal panel member	University of Gloucestershire
Stuart Porter	External panel member	University of Salford
Nina Paterson	Head of Education	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists

Graham Copnell	Education representative	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists
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Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed first intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02042

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	Reason(s) for non-submission
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	The programme is not approved and has not run so is unable to provide external examiners' reports.

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	The programme is not approved and has not run, so we met with learners from BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, BSc (Hons) Nursing and BSc (Hons) Sports and Exercise Sciences programmes.
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 21 June 2019.

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.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that applicants are given appropriate, clear and consistent information about any English language requirements set at the point of admission.

Reason: From their review of the programme documentation, the visitors were made aware applicants could access the programme specification. The visitors considered information available to applicants about the programme's English language requirements was not clear or not correct. The programme specification gave incomplete reference to requirements for applicants whose first language is not English. The visitors were not able to determine whether the information provided was accurate to enable applicants to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. They therefore require the education provider to review all relevant

materials to ensure that accurate and complete information about the programme's English language requirements is available to applicants.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Condition: The education provider must ensure learners on the programme have access to practice-based learning which meets their learning needs.

Reason: From their review of the programme documentation, the visitors were made aware the programme has a placement education strategy in which capacity is agreed through the Strategic Workforce Development Partnership Board. The visitors were also made aware of the placement agreement template document, which would be used between the education provider and the local Trust. The visitors were made aware in the meeting with practice educators of their commitment to the programme. However, the visitors did not receive any evidence to demonstrate that the practice-based learning providers had formally committed to provide the amount and range of practice-based learning required to deliver the programme. The visitors were therefore unclear whether the education provider has secured the required number of placements for the programme. The visitors require further evidence of the formal arrangements in place with all practice education providers, and that these arrangements can support the maximum number of learners on the programme.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate they have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware the academic course leader is in post. The visitors were also made aware the process to recruit a senior lecturer is ongoing. In the meeting with the programme team, the visitors were informed shortlisting for this position had been completed, and interviews were scheduled for the following week. As such, the visitors were unable to determine at this point whether there are an appropriate number of staff whose qualifications and experience is appropriate to deliver the programme effectively. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that there is, or will be, an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme throughout the whole length of the programme.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that subject areas will be taught by staff with the specialist expertise and knowledge.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware the academic course leader is in post. The visitors were also made aware the process to recruit a senior lecturer is ongoing. The visitors were informed the education provider planned to recruit this individual to have knowledge and experience in the field of the musculoskeletal system. In the meeting with the programme team, the visitors were

informed shortlisting for this position had been completed, and interviews were scheduled for the following week. As such, the visitors were unable to determine at this point whether educators have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver their parts of the programme effectively. The visitors therefore require information as to how the education provider will ensure educators are suitable and well equipped to take part in teaching and to support learning in the subject areas they are involved in.

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 22 August 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](#).