

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Plymouth
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
Mode of delivery	Full Time
Relevant part of HPC register	Occupational Therapy
Date of visit	8 – 10 April 2008

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence	3
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions	6
Recommendations	8

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Occupational Therapist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. The education provider has until 19 June 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on 3 July 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 7 July 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on 18 August 2008.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme management and resources standards, curriculum standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy and BSc (Hons) Podiatry. The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Jennifer Caldwell (Occupational Therapist) Anthony Power (Physiotherapist) Jacqueline Waterfield (Physiotherapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Osama Ammar
Proposed student numbers	60
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2008
Chair	Chris Sturley (University of Plymouth)
Secretary	Maryann White (University of Plymouth)
Members of the joint panel	Remy Reyes (College of Occupational Therapy) Ruth Heames (College of Occupational Therapy) Patricia McClure (College of Occupational Therapy)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider.

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online access to relevant policies and documents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities;

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators/mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 59 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 4 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a number of recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation for the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy programme to remove references to state registration of Occupational Therapists.

Reason: Within the submitted documentation there are indications of state registration (page 84 of the student handbook). In order to present accurately the independence of the HPC in its role as a regulator, the visitors felt the programme documentation required review and amendment.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide clarity of the planned staff numbers and their proposed input into the programme.

Reason: From the submitted documentation and discussions with the programme team, students and senior team, it was apparent that the programme resources including staff have been subject to change. In discussions it was apparent that the relocation of the programme as well as overall reduction in staff numbers as a result of long term leave arrangements require additional clarification in the document. In order for the visitors to be able to understand how the number of staff is adequate to deliver the programme, it was felt the programme documentation must clarify which members of the programme team are currently delivering the programme.

3.7 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation to confirm the arrangements for the relocation of resources to Plymouth in time for the start of the academic year 2008-2009.

Reason: From the submitted documentation and discussions with the senior team, programme team and students, it was clear the programme was currently in a transitional phase of a relocation from Exeter to Plymouth. By the start of academic year 2008-2009 it was intended to be delivering the programme solely at the Plymouth site. In order to ensure resources are available to support student learning, the visitors felt documentation was required to describe the relocation process and to provide confirmation that resources will be in place in time for the start of the academic year.

5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the lines of communication and responsibility regarding placements.

Reason: From the discussion with students and practice communicators, it was apparent that the recent changes to the placement co-ordination / supervision model in relation the Practice Development Teams had not been effectively communicated. To ensure that practice educators and students fully understand what to do and who to contact when they require support, the visitors felt the documentation must be amended to provide clarity on the responsibilities of individuals.

Recommendations

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider increasing the regularity of obtaining consent from students on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted that a protocol for obtaining consent was in place at the start of the programme. However, the visitors recommended that consent should be obtained at the commencement of each year to ensure that students gave consent based on more current information.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revisiting the communication to all parties surrounding the role of the Practice Development Teams.

Reason: From discussion with the senior management team, programme team, placement providers and students, it was clear that there have been some changes to the placement co-ordination /supervision relatively recently. Whilst the visitors recognise the benefit and value of these changes to the programmes of study on which they impact, it was apparent that the various parties involved in the changes had differing levels of awareness. In order to improve understanding of the role of the Practice Development Teams, the visitors recommend that the communication strategy to this work is revisited.

Jennifer Caldwell
Anthony Power
Jacqueline Waterfield

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Plymouth
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Podiatry
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC register	Chiropodists & Podiatrists
Date of visit	8-10 April 2008

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence.....	4
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions	6
Recommendations	14

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Chiropodist' and 'Podiatrist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. The education provider has until 19 June 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on 3 July 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 18 September 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 30 October 2008.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - the curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy and BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy. The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Penny Renwick (Podiatrist) Gordon Burrow (Podiatrist)
HPC executive officers (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
Proposed student numbers	45
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2008
Chair	Dr Colin Wilkins (University of Plymouth)
Secretary	Lisa Lamb (University of Plymouth)
Members of the joint panel	Maureen O'Donnell (Society of Chiropodists & Podiatrists) Dr Colin Wilkins (Internal panel member, University of Plymouth)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider.

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Re-approval Document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities;

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators/mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 40 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 23 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a number of recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make, or take up a place on a programme.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to outline the process whereby an applicant demonstrates that they have sufficient information about the profession and the programme requirements during the selection process.

Reason: In discussions with the programme team it became clear that to ensure that candidates were fully prepared for the programme that they looked for candidates to demonstrate that they had experience in or had researched the profession. The visitors would like to see the programme documentation reflecting this policy.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide assurance of how effective clinical education will be delivered in this programme.

Reason: At the visit there was an indication that there may be changes to the way that clinical learning and teaching is carried out in the programme. In discussions the extent and full nature of these changes were not clear, but they are likely to impact on the management for and the resources available to the programme. In particular, if there may be an increase in clinical education being delivered at placement environments new to Plymouth, this will carry a burden for placement management, co-ordination and quality assurance. The visitors felt that they require full details of how clinical education will be delivered in this programme. Where there are changes to the delivery of clinical education the visitors will require assurance of the quality and equity of student experience and assessment, and sufficient resources including the number of placements. This issue impacts on a number of different areas covered separately in conditions under SETs 5 and 6.

3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to update the recommended reading lists across all module descriptors to ensure currency.

Reason: In the programme documentation the visitors noted that the reading lists in some of the current module descriptors contained texts that were not the most recent editions and feel that these should be updated to reflect the range of texts used on the programme.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the standards of proficiency mapping to ensure that the unit descriptors set out precisely where the HPC standards of proficiency are met. The module descriptors and all learning outcomes for the programme should clearly demonstrate how all of the standards of proficiency are addressed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the programme team the unit descriptors have minimal content which does not show where the HPC standards of proficiency are being met. Therefore the visitors felt that there currently was not enough evidence to ensure that this standard is met.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the unit descriptors to clearly identify, within the learning outcomes, where students will meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to use a systematic approach to formulate and test a preferred diagnosis, including being able to prescribe foot orthoses.

Reason: In the documentation provided to the visitors there was no indication that the students would demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4. The visitors felt that the documentation needs to make explicit the requirement for taking a cast of a patients' foot to ensure that this standard is being met.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the standards of proficiency mapping to clarify which standards of proficiency will be met at each of the step off levels on the programme.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team the standards of proficiency mapping suggests that all of the standards have been met at the level 2 step off point of the programme (Assistant Practitioner). In discussion with the programme team this was shown to be inaccurate therefore the visitors require the mapping to be redrafted and resubmitted, ensuring that the unit descriptors set out precisely where the HPC standards of proficiency are met, to clarify this matter.

5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to explain the reasons for the current placement structure of the programme.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to explain the rationale behind the programme placement structure. The visitors wished to receive further evidence demonstrating why the clinical model being used was chosen and giving further information on the balance between the current use of skills laboratories, Mount Gould clinic and placements and how this best enables students to meet the necessary learning outcomes.

5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly set out how the adequacy of the number of placement staff and their experience and qualifications is assured.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there were adequate numbers of placement staff and that their experience and qualifications were suitable to provide support to students in their learning in a safe practice environment. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the policies and processes for initial approval of placements and the systems for ongoing monitoring and assessment of placements, which should include the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

Reason: During discussions with the placement providers the visitors received information that suggested that clinical audits on the placements were not carried out except at initial approval. On discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the programme team had intended to move forward to a system of visits and meetings with the placements but that this plan had suffered due to previous staff shortages that have now been resolved. The visitors wish to receive the clinical audit policy to ensure that as new placements are identified that these are audited before students participate in placement, and information on the annual monitoring process that the programme team are undertaking to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the policies and processes for initial approval of placements and the systems for ongoing monitoring and assessment of placements, which should include the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

Reason: During discussions with the placement providers the visitors received information that suggested that clinical audits on the placements were not carried out except at initial approval. On discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the programme team had intended to move forward to a system of visits and meetings with the placements but that this plan had suffered due to

staff shortages that have now been resolved. The visitors wish to receive the clinical audit policy to ensure that as new placements are identified that these are audited before students participate in placement, and information on the annual monitoring process that the programme team are undertaking to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

5.4 Learning, teaching and supervision must be designed to encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly set out the number of placements available to the students and the range of opportunities within them.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there were adequate numbers of placements, and that students can gain access to a range of learning experiences in these practice environments. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.6 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the policies and processes for initial approval of placements and the systems for ongoing monitoring and assessment of placements, which should include the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

Reason: During discussions with the placement providers the visitors received information that suggested that clinical audits on the placements were not carried out except at initial approval. On discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the programme team had intended to move forward to a system of visits and meetings with the placements but that this plan had suffered due to staff shortages that have now been resolved. The visitors wish to receive the clinical audit policy and information on the annual monitoring process that the programme team are undertaking to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

5.7.1 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient information on the learning outcomes to be achieved at the practice placement.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that students are provided with adequate information in relation to learning outcomes. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.7.2 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient information relating to the practice placements.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that students are provided with adequate information regarding the practice placements. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.7.3 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the expectations of professional conduct.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students and practice placements are provided with sufficient information relating to the expectations of professional conduct of students at practice placements.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that both students and practice placements are provided with adequate information regarding professional conduct. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.7.4 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient information relating to the assessments and failure process on practice placements.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that students are provided with adequate information regarding assessments and failure on the practice placements. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students and practice placements are provided with sufficient information relating to the communication of information and lines of responsibility at practice placements.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that both students and practice placements are provided with adequate information regarding lines of responsibility and communication of information. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly set out how the education provider assures itself that placement staff have relevant experience and qualifications.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there were adequate numbers of placement staff and that their experience and qualifications were suitable to provide support to students in their learning in a safe practice environment. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit programme documentation to provide evidence of the educator training for practice placement educators. This should include the content and details of the initial training undertaken by placement educators and the ongoing updates that these placement educators receive in relation to the programme.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the training that new practice placement educators received and any follow up refresher training given. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the current partnership arrangements they have with practice placement educators.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the arrangements in place between the programme team and placement providers. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that service colleagues have input into the development of the programme, and to provide evidence of the communication strategy between the programme team and placement providers and the feedback mechanisms utilised between both parties.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that named service colleagues participate in developing the programme and it was felt that the communication between the programme team and practice placements could be strengthened. The visitors therefore require further evidence (possible documentation to evidence this to could be the minutes of recent development meetings) to ensure this standard has been met, and that effective systems are in place to monitor the placement environment and for the placement providers to feedback into the development and improvement of the programme.

6.1 The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

6.2 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be

prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the standards of proficiency mapping to ensure that the unit descriptors set out precisely where the HPC standards of proficiency are met. The module descriptors and all learning outcomes for the programme should clearly demonstrate how all of the standards of proficiency are addressed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the programme team the unit descriptors have minimal content which does not show where the HPC standards of proficiency are being met. Therefore the visitors felt that there currently was not enough evidence to ensure that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the unit descriptors to clearly identify, within the learning outcomes, where students will meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to use a systematic approach to formulate and test a preferred diagnosis, including being able to prescribe foot orthoses.

Reason: In the documentation provided to the visitors there was no indication that the students would demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to meet HPC standard of proficiency 2b.4. The visitors felt that the documentation needs to make explicit the requirement for taking a cast of a patients' foot to ensure that this standard is being met.

6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

Recommendations

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider increasing the regularity of obtaining consent from students on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted that a protocol for obtaining consent was in place at the start of the programme. However, the visitors recommended that consent should be obtained at the commencement of each year to ensure that students gave consent based on more current information.

3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Recommendation: The visitors wished to recommend that the programme team continue to update and improve the resources on campus and in trusts.

Reason: The visitors observed on the tour of facilities that, at the time, there was a narrow range of texts, a number of out of date editions and a limited number of copies of texts available in the library. In discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the resources were being updated, the use of e-books was being developed and that the budget was available for these improvements. The visitors wished to support the continuation of this work in order to aid the student experience.

4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

Recommendation: The visitors wished to recommend the removal of an out of date letter from the programme documentation in order to prevent confusion amongst students on the programme.

Reason: The programme handbook appendices supplied by the programme team contains a Chiropodists Board letter. The visitors wished to advise the programme team to remove this item as a reference, as it uses terms and references organisations that are out-dated, and this could be confusing to students on the programme.

5.6 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Recommendation: The visitors wished to recommend that, at a local level, the programme team engages podiatry clinicians in order to enhance partnership working in a developmental area of widening the range of placement environments available to enhance the student experience.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team it was apparent that they planned to continue the work already carried out in expanding the range of placement environments available to the students. The visitors wished to support the work of developing different placement environments and encourage that the programme team engage with local clinicians in order to achieve this target.

Penny Renwick
Gordon Burrow

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Plymouth
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of delivery	Full Time
Relevant part of HPC register	Physiotherapy
Date of visit	8 – 10 April 2008

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence	4
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions	6
Recommendations	8

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Physiotherapist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. The education provider has until 19 June 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on 3 July 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 7 July 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on 18 August 2008.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - curriculum standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy and BSc (Hons) Podiatry. The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Anthony Power (Physiotherapist) Jacqueline Waterfield (Physiotherapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Osama Ammar
Proposed student numbers	60
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2008
Chair	Richard Linford (University of Plymouth)
Secretary	Chelle Grant (University of Plymouth)
Members of the joint panel	Ann Green (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider.

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online access to relevant policies and documents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities;

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators/mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 59 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 4 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a number of recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the reason or purpose for registration is to entitle an individual to use the protected title 'physiotherapist' and not to provide entitlement for employment in the National Health Service (NHS)

Reason: In the submitted programme documentation (page 12 of the programme handbook), there is an indication that registration with HPC is required for employment in the NHS. As registration only allows an individual to use a protected title and does not entitle someone to be employed in the NHS or elsewhere, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to accurately describe the purpose of registration.

2.2.1 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including evidence of a good command of written and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that the entry requirement for English language when it is not an applicant's first language is IELTS 7.0.

Reason: In the submitted documentation there were contradictions in the level of IELTS required for entry to the programme. In the discussion with the programme team it was indicated that the correct level of entry is IELTS is 7.0. The visitors felt the programme documentation must be amended to ensure consistency.

2.2.4 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to remove references to a "strong academic profile" in relation to entry requirements for overseas applicants and include in its place an indication that equivalency in entry qualifications will be determined.

Reason: The programme documentation indicated that the entry requirements for overseas applicants to the programme would include a "strong academic profile". The visitors felt this requirement did not provide sufficient detail to advise applicants and admissions staff on the appropriate academic entry standards. In discussion with the programme team it was apparent that overseas applicants would be assessed for equivalency to standard entry requirements. The visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to better reflect the entry requirement.

6.4 The measurement of student performance and progression must be an integral part of the wider process of monitoring and evaluation, and use objective criteria.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to ensure that the final year practice assessment criteria ensure that individuals at the pass level and above will demonstrate autonomous, safe and effective practice.

Reason: The final year practice assessment criteria in the submitted documentation contained wording that indicated that someone performing at a pass level and above may not demonstrate autonomous, safe and effective practice. The visitors felt the objective criteria must be revisited to more effectively measure student performance for the final year practice assessment criteria to ensure that anyone performing at the pass level and above must have demonstrated safe and effective practice.

Recommendations

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider increasing the regularity of obtaining consent from students on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted that a protocol for obtaining consent was in place at the start of the programme. However, the visitors recommended that consent should be obtained at the commencement of each year to ensure that students gave consent based on more current information.

5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revisiting the arrangements for practice placement educator training with an aim to increase the regularity of updating sessions and clarifying the input of Practice Development Teams in the training.

Reason: The visitors recognised that the practice educator training and updating programme was in place and adequate to the needs of the programme. However, the visitors wanted to encourage the programme team to increase the regularity of updating to increase the effectiveness of the training programme. Additionally, the visitors felt the role of the Practice Development Teams in training and updating could be more clearly articulated.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revisiting the communication to all parties surrounding the role of the Practice Development Teams.

Reason: From discussion with the senior management team, programme team, placement providers and students, it was clear that there have been some changes to the placement co-ordination /supervision relatively recently. Whilst the visitors recognise the benefit and value of these changes to the programmes of study on which they impact, it was apparent that the various parties involved in the changes had differing levels of awareness. In order to improve understanding of the role of the Practice Development Teams, the visitors recommend that the communication strategy to this work is revisited.

Anthony Power
Jacqueline Waterfield