

Education and Training Committee, 11 June 2020

Non-approval decision – The University College of Osteopathy – BSc (Hons) Integrated Nutrition and Dietetics, FT (Full time)

Executive summary and recommendations

At its meeting on 24 March 2020, the Committee decided that they were ‘minded to’ not approve this programme (decision notice included as appendix 2). The substantive reasons for reaching this decision were:

- The education provider’s own reflections, through their written observations and verbal representations, were that the standards of education and training (SETs) were not met.
- The visitors had applied a reasonable test of the SETs at a threshold level.
- The education provider had been given several opportunities to demonstrate the conditions had been met and had been unable to do so.
- Given the nature of the outstanding issues, there is a significant prospect that these issues will not be resolved in a timely manner.

When the Committee makes a ‘minded to’ not approve decision, the education provider is given the opportunity to provide observations on this decision. The education provider’s observations are provided as appendix 3.

In reaching their decision, the Committee is asked to focus on whether the substantive reasons for not approving the programme still apply, considering the education provider’s observations, and make one of the following decisions:

- If they apply, the programme should not be approved; or
- If they do not apply, the Committee should consider whether the programme should be approved based on the observations, or if another course of action is required to seek assurances that the SETs are met.

Decision

The Committee is asked to consider the contents of this paper and the appendices, and make one of the following decisions:

- Not approve the programme;
- Approve the programme; or
- Undertake another course of action to seek assurances that the SETs are met.

Background information

Appendix 1 – [Non-approval recommendation ETC paper](#) (24 March 2020)

Appendix 2 – ETC decision notice

Appendix 3 – Education provider observations

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Date of paper

28 May 2020

Education and Training Committee

Programmes previously recommended for approval subject to conditions where the visitors have recommended non-approval:

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Integrated Nutrition and Dietetics
Education provider	University College of Osteopathy
Mode of delivery	FT (full time)
Assessment ref	APP02083
Date of decision	24 March 2020

Panel: Maureen Drake
Luke Jenkinson
Penny Joyce
Sonya Lam
Kathryn Thirlaway
Stephen Wordsworth (Chair)

Decision
That the programme, which was previously recommended for approval subject to conditions, has not met the conditions and that the Committee would initiate non approval proceedings.
Reasons
<p>Visitors recommended that the programme was not approved, as they were not satisfied that two conditions were met. The Committee considered this recommendation, alongside observations from the education provider</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Condition 3.6 – the Committee noted the visitors’ position in relation to this condition not being met was that the education provider had not yet formally secured external practice-based learning for all learners in years two and three of the programme, and they were not clear how the education provider would secure all the remaining practice based learning. <p>The Committee agreed that further evidence demonstrating how the education provider would secure the necessary practice-based learning had not been provided and that therefore the condition had not been met.</p> Condition 5.6 – the Committee noted the visitors’ position in relation to this condition not being met was that the provider had not been able to

evidence what practice-based learning would be available to learners after year one of the programme. Therefore the visitors were unable to determine if this practice-based learning would cover an appropriate range, which would support learners to meet the SOPs for dietitians.

The Committee agreed that the education provider had not demonstrated that it could secure an appropriate range of practice-based learning for years two and three of the programme. Therefore the Committee agreed that the condition had not been met.

The Committee noted the education provider's own reflections, through their written observations and verbal representations, that the standards were not met.

The Committee agreed that the visitors had applied a reasonable test of the SETs at a threshold level. The provider had been given a number of opportunities to demonstrate the conditions had been met and had been unable to do so.

Given the nature of the outstanding issues, and the prospect that these issues will not be resolved in a timely manner, the Committee is minded to not approve the programme.



Signed:..... **Panel Chair**

From: Sharon Potter

Received: 20/04/2020 08:05

To: Approvals

Subject: Re: [CONFIDENTIAL] APP UCO BSc (Hons) DT 25/06/2019 - Committee decision to not approve the programme

Dear Jamie

**Re: Education provider: The University College of Osteopathy
Programme details and validating body: BSc (Hons) Integrated Nutrition and Dietetics, The University College of Osteopathy, FT (Full time)**

Many thanks for your email concerning the decision of the Education and Training Committee that they are minded to not approve the programme. Thank you for providing us with an opportunity to provide our observations in advance of your 11th June meeting.

We would like again to note our disappointment at the Committee's intention that it is minded to deny accreditation to our proposed Nutrition & Dietetics programme.

Fundamentally there is little area of disagreement with the core finding concerning conditions 3.6 and 5.1 as noted in the minutes that securing placements in years 2 and 3 is work in progress. Clearly your expectation is that these should be formal agreements to enable these conditions to be met.

As a new provider in this field the key challenge is providing sufficient NHS placement opportunities within years 2 and 3 of the programme. We felt that there was little tangible evidence that sufficient consideration was given to the timeframe within which these placements would come on stream, that is, two years hence and the reality of this in a real-world context. Instead the Committee seemed mainly interested in whether or not these NHS providers had provided written agreements now concerning a future arrangement in two years' time. Clearly placement providers as they have acknowledged to us, cannot commit to guaranteed placements so far in advance, given the continuous flux within the healthcare environment.

There was little or no acknowledgment of the non-NHS placements already secured, either within the Visiting Team's report or during the Committee's deliberations, clearly at variance with BDA guidance. We raised with you evidence of good practice from other healthcare regulators concerning widening access to new providers, and we felt that the HCPC is effectively perpetuating what one of the Committee members succinctly articulated, as a continuation of 'the golden circle'. To ignore as irrelevant the pragmatic approach of setting accreditation conditions concerning placements linked to managed low student number cohorts at the programme start-up phase actually serves as a block to new niche providers and so sustaining the status-quo.

We argue that by taking this approach, the HCPC is effectively acting to the detriment of the profession and contrary to Government's agenda to expand the profession by creating unnecessary barriers to new providers, unrelated to risk

management. Clearly HCPC can act to protect standards, whilst enabling development and expansion of the profession, if it resolved to do so.

In HCPC's January 2018 response to the Department of Health consultation: 'Promoting professionalism, reforming regulation. A paper for consultation' HCPC noted that 'we agree that the decisions about regulation should be made primarily on the basis of risk mitigation'. We argue that by setting appropriate conditions of approval HCPC could have effectively managed risk whilst preventing clearly evident barriers to new providers. Furthermore, whilst HCPC argues in this response that regulators routinely work together including through attendance at various fora designed to share good practice, in this case that good practice has not translated into a risk managed pragmatic approach to its consideration of standards 3.6 and 5.1.

Clearly, we anticipate that HCPC will make this same determination at its forthcoming June meeting but we would request a clear understanding from the Committee as to its perspective of the existence or not of this 'golden circle', this will help us determine our next steps.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Potter

Sharon Potter
DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR (EDUCATION)