

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Birmingham City University
Programme name	Post Graduate Diploma Approved Mental Health Practitioner
Mode of delivery	Full time
Type of programme	Approved mental health professional
Date of visit	26 – 27 June 2014

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Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using a protected title must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

As well as approving educational programmes for people who want to join the Register or have an annotation on their Registration record, the HCPC also approve a small number of programmes which are not linked to HCPC Registration. These programmes are for the profession of approved mental health practitioners (AMHPs) (for social workers, mental health and learning disabilities nurses, occupational therapists and practitioner psychologists).

The HCPC criteria for approving AMHP programmes set out the systems and processes an education provider is expected to have in place to deliver an AMHP programme, as well as the competencies professionals must achieve on completing the programme.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 4 December 2014. At the Committee meeting on 4 December 2014, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the conditions outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

When the regulation of social workers in England transferred from the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to ourselves, we took responsibility for approving AMHP programmes in England. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gives us powers to set criteria for approving AMHP programmes. A decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing AMHP programmes. This visit is to assess the programmes against the criteria for approving AMHP programmes and professionals who complete it will be able to achieve the criteria for approved mental health professionals

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider also reviewed the programme for validation. The visit also considered the MSc Mental Health programme. The education provider and the HCPC 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 HCPC's recommendations on this programme only. A separate report exists for the other programme. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the criteria for approving approved mental health professional (AMHP) programmes. A separate report, produced by the education provider, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and visitor role	Robert Goemans (Approved mental health professional) Shelia Skelton (Approved mental health professional)
HCPC executive officers (in attendance)	Brendon Edmonds
Proposed student numbers	20 (two cohorts per year)
Proposed start date of programme approval	January 2015
Chair	Stuart Brand (Birmingham City University)
Secretary	Tess Clarke (Birmingham City University)
Members of the joint panel	Diane Kemp (Internal Panel Member) Nicola Bartholomew (Internal Panel Member) Jim Rodgers (External Panel Member) Carol Lewis (External Panel Member) Kay Duhig (External Panel Member)

	Tendayi Gwaze (External Panel Member) Julie Nettleton (Observer) Alex Harmer (Observer)
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Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC 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 criteria for approving AMHP programmes	<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"/>
Admissions guidance for applicants 2014-15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admissions guidance for staff 2014-15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Critical review document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section B – Awards of the University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section K2 – Standard Postgraduate Assessment Regulations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMHP Resource paper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
QAA Mapping document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During the visit the HCPC 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 (eg 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 criteria for approving AMHP programmes and professionals who complete it will be able to achieve the criteria for approved mental health professionals

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 34 of the criterion have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 16 criteria.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can have its ongoing approval reconfirmed. Conditions are set when certain criteria have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the criterion being met.

The visitors have also made two recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the can have its ongoing approval reconfirmed. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular criterion has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

A.1 The admissions procedures 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 provide further evidence about how students and applicants to the programme are made aware of the expectations placed upon them to utilise AMHP networks to access a range of mental health assessments during placement.

Reason: In discussions with the senior team and programme team the visitors noted that students were expected to be proactive in ensuring they could access a range of formal AMHP assessment experiences as part of the practice placement. This would ensure students could achieve the required learning outcomes associated with the placement and demonstrate understanding and experience across a variety of AMHP settings. To achieve this, students are expected to utilise existing AMHP networks across local authority and health trust settings. This includes approaching AMHPs within and across health and social care teams to secure observations if and when new AMHP assessment opportunities arise. Whilst the visitors were satisfied students would be able to access a range of placement experiences, they were unclear how students were made aware of the requirement to source these once in placement, prior to them taking up an offer of a place on the programme. Furthermore, the visitors were unclear how students from non-social work professions (registered nurses, occupational therapists and practitioner psychologists) would be aware of and familiar with networks in existence within a local authority setting.

To ensure this criterion is met, the visitors require further evidence which demonstrates how students and applicants to the programme are made aware of their responsibility to be proactive during the placement experience to ensure they can assess a range of mental health assessments, prior to them taking up an offer of a place on the programme. Any evidence provided should highlight how students are made aware of the networks available to them and how they should go about accessing these to support their placement experience.

A.1 The admissions procedures 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 provide further evidence which clarifies the criteria used to assess applicants to the programme, particularly in relation to any assessment of an applicant's written statement and interview.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation the four stage process applicants are required to complete before being offered a place on the programme. This includes the need to submit a written statement and attend an interview held with members of the programme team. Whilst the visitors were satisfied with the entry criteria and assessment methods used at admissions, they were unclear from the programme documentation of the criteria used to assess an applicant's written statement and interview. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors noted that these two methods are used to assess an applicant's reflections in a range of areas, including their understanding and experience of social perspectives, values and

mental health disorders, and their commitment to learning at a postgraduate level. The visitors were unclear how applicants to the programme were made aware that the written statement and interview would focus on these areas.

To ensure this criterion is met, the visitors require further evidence of the measures used during the admissions process to assess an applicant's written statement and interview. Any evidence should address how applicants are informed of the areas which are being focused on and assessed in the written statement and as part of the interview process.

A.3 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of their accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) procedure for the programme, how any applications for AP(E)L are assessed, and how such requirements and procedures are clearly communicated to applicants.

Reason: The visitors noted the information provided to applicants regarding the application for AP(E)L, specifically that applications can be made once an offer of a place on the programme has been made. In discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that applicants were assessed on a case by case basis with regards to AP(E)L. The visitors also noted that ability to receive AP(E)L for aspects of the programme differed depending on whether it was in relation to the PgDip or Masters programme. The visitors also noted that the programme team were not certain if AP(E)L would apply at all for entry onto the PgDip programme.

To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require further evidence which clarifies the education provider's requirements regarding AP(E)L. In particular, the visitors require further information clarifying which elements of the programme an applicant can be exempted from completing for the PgDip and Masters programmes through the AP(E)L process (if any), and how this information is clearly communicated to applicants. Any further evidence submitted should also address how any assessment of AP(E)L is carried out by the programme team and the criteria against which any decisions regarding the awarding of AP(E)L are made.

B.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the formal partnership arrangements in place with local authorities which demonstrate a commitment to commission students to undertake the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation submitted prior to the visit the education provider's strategic intent regarding the delivery of the programme. In particular, they noted that work was underway to develop new partnerships with other local authorities, in addition to the long standing collaboration with Birmingham City Council. At the visit, the visitors noted the programme team had continued discussions with other local authorities regarding their intentions to commission students from their respective organisations to undertake the programme. The visitors were advised these discussions were progressing well and that there was clear

interest in the programme. It was also the case that no formal marketing of the programme had commenced whilst it was still subject to university validation and regulatory approval. In discussions with the senior team and placement educators, it was noted that Birmingham City Council had yet to confirm its commissioning intentions regarding AMHP students for the 2014-15 academic year. Although the visitors were clear there were potential opportunities for commissioned students to undertake the programme, they were unclear if any of these would be likely to be in place the foreseeable future. To be satisfied this criterion is met the visitors must be satisfied the education provider has enough support from employers to ensure it has a viable future.

The visitors therefore require further evidence which demonstrates a clear intent, on the part of employers, to commission students to undertake the programme in the foreseeable future to be satisfied this criterion is met.

B.2 The programme must be effectively managed

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the programme timetable ensures students are able to complete the credits necessary to fulfil the requirements of the final award.

Reason: The visitors noted the Post Graduate Diploma Approved Mental Health Practitioner award is structured around the completion of three 40 credit modules. These modules are completed within seven months, at which point successful students would fulfil the requirements necessary to receive the postgraduate diploma award. The visitors also noted that the internal University Panel required the programme team to re-examine the feasibility of the current programme design. In particular, it was unclear how a student could achieve all of the credits for the programme as proposed within the current timescales proposed, and in accordance with QAA guidelines regarding programme award credits and notional study hours required to achieve these. Whilst acknowledging the intense nature of the programme, the University Panel required the programme team to make changes to the programme timetable to ensure students were realistically able to achieve the required credits.

Although the visitors were satisfied the programme could be managed and delivered appropriately within the current timetable, they require further clarity regarding any proposed changes to meet the validation requirements of the university. Any further evidence provided by the education provider to meet this criterion should include any revisions made to the programme timetable to accommodate the achievement of the required credits. In this way, the visitors can be satisfied that the programme can be effectively managed and delivered within the programme timetable to ensure students are able to complete the final award.

B.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence of professional development opportunities for the programme team and how such opportunities inform the development and delivery of the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the education provider's statement in the programme documentation submitted regarding the development of staff, specifically, that any development needs are discussed as part of individual performance reviews. In discussion with the senior team, the visitors were informed that staff attend relevant conferences and workshops to inform their professional development. In addition, staff are required to perform research. However, there was currently no research underway which would specifically inform the development of the programme or contribute more broadly to the development of AMHP practice. The education provider clarified that it was their intent to see research activity in this area develop. Based on the information provided, the visitors were unable to determine how staff are supported to develop their professional and research skills to ensure the programme is delivered effectively.

To be satisfied this criterion is met, the visitors require further evidence of the staff development strategies in existence for the programme and evidence of how these are implemented. In particular, the education provider must provide clarity regarding how professional development and research opportunities are appropriate to ensuring staff are able to develop their professional and research skills and to contribute to the ongoing development and delivery of the programme.

B.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must review the module reading lists and provide further evidence of how they support the learning and teaching activities of the programme, specifically in relation to the delivery of content regarding social perspectives and mental health disorders.

Reason: The visitors noted, as part of the programme documentation prior to the visit, the reading lists set to support the delivery of four modules for the programme. At the visit, the visitors discussed the delivery of the curriculum with the programme team, particularly in relation to learning and teaching activities regarding social perspectives, and mental health disorders. From the evidence provided and from discussions at the visit, the visitors were unclear how the reading lists for the modules supported the delivery of programme content in relation to these areas.

To be satisfied this criterion is met, the visitors require further evidence of how the reading lists set for the programme support the delivery of learning and teaching in the areas of social perspectives and mental health disorders. In particular, the visitors will need to be satisfied any essential and recommended reading lists support students in meeting section 2 of the HCPC's approval criteria for approval mental health professional programmes upon completion of the programme.

B.14 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation to ensure students are aware of the options available to them when they have been unable to attend mandatory elements of the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted during their discussions with the programme team that students were able to make up any mandatory sessions they were not able to attend in

a number of ways. This included the possibility for further e-learning and tutorial time to ensure students met the required mandatory attendance requirements and covered all the required teaching and learning activities included in the programme. Whilst the visitors were satisfied with these arrangements, they were unclear how students were made aware of the options available to them in the programme documentation they reviewed.

The visitors therefore require the education provider to revise the programme documentation in relation to mandatory attendance to provide further clarity for students as to how they can make up any sessions they may have missed.

C.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics and / or the NMC's code: standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives on their practice as an AMHP

Condition: The education provider must revise the Practice Portfolio to include reference to the Nursing and Midwifery Council's (NMC) standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives.

Reason: The visitors noted the Practice Portfolio included reference to the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics as part of the student's evaluation of practice on page 22. However, the visitors could not find any reference to the NMC's equivalent set of standards for nurses and midwives.

To meet this criterion, the visitors require the Practice Portfolio be revised to include reference to the NMC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives.

D.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment

Condition: The education provider must provide further information clarifying how students are supported in working out of hours whilst on placement.

Reason: The visitors noted through meetings with students and placement educators that students may be required to work out of hours whilst on placement. This would most often be the case where mental health assessments are started during or after normal working hours and extend through to and past midnight. In such circumstances, the visitors were unclear what support a student should expect to receive from the education provider and placement provider.

The visitors therefore require further information regarding the support mechanisms available to students on placement, specifically in relation to out of hours work. Any evidence should clearly address what support mechanisms are available from the education provider and placement provider and how this information is communicated to the student.

D.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate they maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: The visitors noted a number of different documents submitted by the education provider to demonstrate how the programme meets this criterion. The Practice Placement Profile is used to approve placement providers and is completed by agencies seeking to offer placements for the programme. Appendix 4 of the Practice Portfolio includes a Placement Audit Pro Forma, which mirrors the Practice Placement Profile and gathers the same information about the placement provider, and is used to audit placement sites. The portfolio also outlines the roles and responsibilities of placement educator, the university tutor and student involved in the provision of a specific placement experience. The portfolio also contains information about an interim review meeting held for all placements. The portfolio is also used to gather feedback from the student and placement educator at the conclusion of the placement. The visitors also noted that Quality Days are held with various stakeholders involved with the programme, including students and placement educators. In their meetings with the senior team and placement educators, the visitors also noted the local authority independently audits the placement environments. Finally, the visitors noted section 10 of the Placement Educators Handbook which briefly outlines the education providers approach to monitoring the quality of practice placements.

In considering the programme documentation and discussions held at the visit, the visitors could not find any evidence of overarching policies and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements used by the programme. As such, the visitors could not determine the criteria used by the programme team to assess a placement and the overall process undertaken to approve it, including how the programme documents and activities mentioned above feed into this. Furthermore, once approved, the visitors could not determine how and when a placement site was reviewed to ensure it remained appropriate, effective and supportive for an AMHP student. The visitors were also unclear how any information gathered about the quality of placements was acted upon and resolved where necessary in a timely manner.

The visitors therefore require further evidence of the overarching policies and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements, and how they are put into practice, to ensure this criterion is met. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used to approve placement providers and settings, the overall process for the approval and ongoing monitoring of placements, and how information gathered from placement providers at approval, or during a placement experience is considered and acted upon. Any such evidence should articulate how the process in place supports the review of the quality of a placement and provides the education provider with assurance that any placement issues can be identified in a timely manner. Where the education provider relies upon audit activities carried out by the employer, clarity should be provided as to the appropriateness of these activities and how information is fed back to the education provider's own quality assurance processes.

D.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced and, where required, registered staff at the practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced and, where required, registered staff.

Reason: The visitors noted the roles and responsibilities of staff involved with supporting students whilst on placement, as set out in the Practice Educator Handbook and the Practice Portfolio documents. The Course Guide outlines that the employer is responsible for identifying and providing appropriately qualified and experienced practice educators. In considering the programme documentation and discussions held at the visit, the visitors could not find any evidence of policies and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements used by the programme. In line with the condition for criterion D.4, the visitors were unable to determine how the programme team ensures all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced and, where required, registered staff.

The visitors therefore require further evidence of the policies and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements, and how they are put into practice, to ensure this criterion is met. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of how the audit process ensures all placement settings contain an adequate number of staff who are appropriately qualified and experienced. Where the education provider relies upon audit activities carried out by the employer, clarity should be provided as to the appropriateness of these activities and how information is fed back to the education provider's own quality assurance processes to ensure this criterion is met.

D.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence which clearly articulates the knowledge, skills and experience required to perform the role of placement educator on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted reference to a number documents submitted by the education provider in relation to how the programme meets this criterion, specifically the Practice Portfolio, Course Guide and Practice Educator Handbook. The Course Guide outlines that the employer is responsible for identifying and providing appropriately qualified and experienced practice educators. The Practice Educator Handbook advises that the requirements to be a placement educator are outlined on the education provider's Academic Quality SharePoint site, which the visitors did not have access to review. The Practice Portfolio states placement educators "...are registered with the HCPC and/or other relevant professional bodies and are themselves approved AMHPS who are nominated by the employer practice partner agency on the basis that they have the relevant qualification, knowledge, skills, experience and practice educator training." In discussions with the programme team, the visitors noted all placement educators must have completed a Practice Educator Stage 2 qualification, or an equivalent qualification (for non-social work AMHP's) in order to supervise AMHP students. Although clarified during the visit, the visitors could not clearly identify where in the programme documentation the qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience that the education provider requires in appointing

individuals to be placement educators for the programme is reflected. In addition, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures employers are clearly informed of the requirements regarding the recruitment of placement educators who are appropriately qualified and experienced.

The visitors therefore require further evidence of the education provider's requirements regarding the qualifications and experience of placement educators involved in the supervision of AMHP students. The information provided should clearly demonstrate how these requirements are communicated to employers involved in recruiting and appointing suitable placement educators.

D.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the effective collaboration with local authorities providing practice placements.

Reason: The visitors noted the longstanding relationship education provider has with Birmingham City Council. In meeting the senior team and placement educators the visitors were informed that regular meetings took place between both parties to discuss the programme and matters regarding the provision of placements. The visitors were provided with minutes of meetings between the two organisations on the second day of the visit but did not have sufficient time to review these.

To ensure this criterion is met, the visitors require further evidence of regular collaboration between the education provider and the local authority. In particular, the visitors expect to receive minutes of meetings held to discuss programme specific matters, including the provision of placement settings and educators.

D.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation to ensure students are made aware of the expectations placed upon them to utilise AMHP networks to access a range of mental health assessments prior to the commencement of the placement.

Reason: In discussions with the senior team and programme team the visitors noted that students were expected to be proactive in ensuring they can access a range of formal AMHP assessment experiences as part of the practice placement. This ensures students can achieve the required learning outcomes associated with the placement and demonstrate understanding and experience across a variety of AMHP settings. To achieve this, students are expected to utilise existing AMHP networks in existence across local authority and health trust settings. This includes approaching other

AMHPs within and across health and social care teams to secure observations if and when new AMHP opportunities arise. Whilst the visitors were satisfied students would be able to access a range of placement experiences, they were unclear how a student was made aware of the requirement placed upon them to source these once in placement. Furthermore, the visitors were also unclear how registered professionals from non-social work professions (nurses, occupational therapists and practitioner psychologists) would be aware of and familiar with any networks in existence within a local authority setting.

To ensure this criterion is met, the visitors require further evidence which demonstrates how students are made aware of their responsibility to be proactive during the placement experience to ensure they can assess a range of mental health assessments. Any evidence provided should highlight how students are made aware of the networks available to them and how they should go about accessing these prior to the commencement of the placement.

E.8 Assessment regulations must clearly specify that any requirements for an aegrotat award which may be made will not lead to eligibility to be approved as an AMHP

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence that assessment regulations clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility to apply to a local authority to be approved as an AMHP.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not identify where it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to a local authority to be approved as an AMHP. The visitors were also unclear as to how this information is clearly communicated to students. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate where in the programme documentation it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to a local authority to be approved as an AMHP.

E.10 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of an appropriate professional register

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence which makes clear in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of an appropriate professional register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of an appropriate professional register. In order to determine this criterion is met, the visitors require further evidence of the HCPC requirements regarding external examiners within the programme documentation.

Recommendations

C.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the criteria in section 2.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider further development of the curriculum, specifically in relation to the delivery of content regarding social perspectives and mental health disorders.

Reason: The visitors noted that the 'Role of the Approved Mental Health Professional' module included teaching and learning regarding social perspectives, mental health disorders and values. Whilst the visitors were satisfied this criterion was met, they recommend the programme team consider further development of the curriculum to support the delivery of content covering these specific areas.

E.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme

Recommendation: The programme team should consider providing further clarity to students regarding the implications of failure of assessment on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme team provide students with a link to the University's regulations regarding assessments, including the numbers of re-sits allowed for any failed assessment. Whilst the visitors were satisfied this criterion was met, they recommend the programme team consider embedding this information directly in the student handbook. This would ensure all students are absolutely clear about the implications of assessment failure and the options available to them, particularly for students who are returning to academic study after an extended period.

Robert Goemans
Sheila Skelton