

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Birmingham City University
Programme name	Non-medical Prescribing for Health Care Professionals (Level 6)
Mode of delivery	Full time Part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Physiotherapist Radiographer Chiropodist/Podiatrist
Relevant entitlement(s)	Supplementary prescribing
Date of visit	21 July 2010

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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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Physiotherapist', 'Radiographer' or 'Chiropodist/Podiatrist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

As well as approving educational programmes for people who want to join the Register, the HPC also approve a small number of programmes for those already on the Register. The post-registration programmes we currently approve are supplementary prescribing programmes (for chiropodists / podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists) and programmes in local anaesthetics and prescription-only medicine (for chiropodists / podiatrists).

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 16 August 2010 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 (Committee) on 16 September 2010. 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 23 August 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 16 September 2010.

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 admissions, programme management and resources, curriculum, and assessment. 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 (SOP) for this entitlement..

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered Principles of Prescribing for Health Care Professionals (Level 7) programme. The education provider, the NMC 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. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and the NMC, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Gordon Burrow (Chiropodist/Podiatrist) Gordon Pollard (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Brendon Edmonds
Proposed student numbers	45 per cohort (2 intakes per year)
Initial approval	1 September 2007
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Stuart Brand (Birmingham City University)
Secretary	Tess Clarke (Birmingham City University)
Members of the joint panel	Marie Roberts-Davis (Nursing and Midwifery Council) Diane Barrowclough (Nursing and Midwifery Council) Sandra Burley (University of Hull) Barbara Novak (City University, London) Julia Haines (Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust) Robert Timmerman (Mid

	Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust) Sharon Dempsey (Former Student Representative) Martin Harvey (Former Student Representative) Rachel Curzon (Birmingham City University) Phillip Dee (Birmingham City University) Barbara Nugent (Birmingham City University)
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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"/>

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 (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 standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

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 47 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 10 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 recommendation 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.

Conditions

2.1 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 revisit all the programme documentation to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme documentation made incorrect reference to HPC requirements for admission to the programme. In particular the programme specification makes the following reference:

'You must provide evidence of meeting the Health Professions Council criteria for eligibility to undertake the Supplementary Prescribing pathway:

- a) Registered with the Health Professions Council in one of the relevant Allied Health Professions.
- b) Be professionally practising in an environment where there is an identified need for the individual to regularly use supplementary prescribing.
- c) Normally have at least 3 years relevant post-qualification experience.

The HPC does not set criteria for eligibility to undertake supplementary prescribing. The visitors consider this information to be misleading to an applicant or student on the programme. The visitors require the education provider to redraft the programme documentation to remove the reference to the HPC setting any criteria for eligibility to apply to the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of an audit used to approve and monitor placements which ensures the provision of a safe and supportive environment.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation and at the visit, an audit of placements was conducted. However the visitors did not receive any documentation outlining the details of this audit and how the audit process ensures every placement setting provides a safe and supportive environment.

To be satisfied this standard is met the visitors require the education provider to submit further documentation which clearly illustrates the audit process. Any documentation submitted should also include a copy of the audit document and an example of a completed audit. The audit must clearly address how it is used to conduct a risk assessment of each placement site, and a placement induction, and how students are made aware about risks and safety issues.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the system used to approve and monitor placement environments.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation and at the visit, an audit of placements was conducted. However the visitors did not receive any documentation outlining the details of this audit and how the audit process ensures every placement setting provides an appropriate learning environment.

To be satisfied this standard is met the visitors require the education provider to submit further documentation which clearly illustrates the audit process and how this is used to approve and monitor all placements. Any documentation submitted should also include a copy of the audit document and an example of a completed audit.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of a system used to approve and monitor placement environments which ensures equality and diversity policies are in place, implemented and regularly monitored.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation and at the visit, an audit of placements was conducted. However the visitors did not receive any documentation outlining the details of this audit and how the audit process ensures every placement setting has equality and diversity policies in place.

To be satisfied this standard is met the visitors require the education provider to submit further documentation which clearly illustrates the audit process. Any documentation submitted should also include a copy of the audit document and an example of a completed audit. The audit must clearly address how it is used to ensure equality and diversity policies are in place, implemented and monitored.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the system used to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation and at the visit, an audit of placements was conducted. However the visitors did not receive any documentation outlining the details of this audit and how the audit process ensures every placement setting has appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

To be satisfied this SET is met the visitors require the education provider to submit further documentation which clearly illustrates the audit process. Any documentation submitted should also include a copy of the audit document and an example of a completed audit. The audit must clearly address how it is used to ensure each placement setting has appropriately qualified and experienced staff to support the students learning.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the system used to ensure practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation and at the visit, an audit of placements was conducted. However the visitors did not receive any documentation outlining the details of this audit and how the audit process ensures every placement setting has educators with relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

To be satisfied this standard is met the visitors require the education provider to submit further documentation which clearly illustrates the audit process. Any documentation submitted should also include a copy of the audit document and an example of a completed audit. The audit must clearly address how it is used to ensure each placement setting has educators which have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience needed to support the students learning.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must ensure Designated Medical Practitioners undertake training on a regular basis.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation that Designated Medical Supervisors were required to undertake training prior to working with students. However, at the visit the programme team advised the training sessions were not well attended due to the unavailability of the supervisors. The visitors were not satisfied there was an appropriate system in place to ensure all Designated Medical Supervisors received the necessary training to undertake the role.

The visitors require further documentation which addresses how Designated Medical Supervisors will receive training prior to working with students and on an ongoing basis. In particular, any documentation should detail an appropriate method of training delivery given attendance at training workshops is low.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the system used to ensure practice placement educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation and at the visit, an audit of placements was conducted. However the visitors did not receive any documentation outlining the details of this audit and how the audit process ensures every placement educator is appropriately registered.

To be satisfied this standard is met the visitors require the education provider to submit further documentation which clearly illustrates the audit process. Any documentation submitted should also include a copy of the audit document and an example of a completed audit. The audit must clearly address how it is used to ensure each placement educator is appropriately registered.

5.11 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 ensure Designated Medical Practitioners undertake training on a regular basis.

Reason: The visitors noted through the programme documentation that Designated Medical Supervisors were required to undertake training prior to working with students. However, at the visit the programme team advised the training sessions were not well attended due to the unavailability of the supervisors. The visitors were not satisfied Designated Medical Supervisors received the training required to be fully prepared for placement education.

The visitors require further documentation which addresses how Designated Medical Supervisors will receive training prior to working with students and on an ongoing basis. In particular, any documentation should detail an appropriate method of training delivery given attendance at training workshops is low.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft the programme documentation to clarify the assessment weightings on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the assessment weightings in the programme documentation. Some assessments were pass/fail and other assessments had pass/fail percentages applied. Overall assessment weightings were given to areas of assessment also. The visitors were not clear from the documentation, the requirements for progression and achievement and if the programme carried an overall weighting. Further clarity was sought at the visit regarding these issues. The programme team did clarify the assessment weightings set for the programme.

The visitors consider the lack of clarity regarding assessment weightings within the programme documentation could be potentially misleading to students. In order to be satisfied this standard is met, the visitors require the programme documentation be redrafted to further clarify the assessment weightings and requirements students must meet for progression on the programme.

Recommendations

2.1 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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the programme documentation to ensure it provides all the information an applicant from private practice would need to apply to the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted at the visit the programme primarily took students from public sector settings. However, on occasion, a self funded student from private practice would enrol on the programme. The visitors noted the programme documentation was primarily aimed at students within the public sector, but were satisfied private sector students were able to access the information they might require.

The visitors do however recommend the education consider reviewing all the programme documentation and promotional materials (including the website) to ensure applicants from the private sector have all the information they require prior to applying to the programme.

Gordon Burrow
Gordon Pollard