hpc health professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Bournemouth University
Programme name	Dip HE Operating Department Practice
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Operating Department Practitioner
Date of visit	12 - 14 May 2009

Contents

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 'Operating department practitioner' 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. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 25 August 2009. At the Committee meeting on 25 August 2009, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme continues to meet 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 retains open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

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 standards, programme management and resources standards, 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 and validating body validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy and FdSc Paramedic Science. 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	Andrew Steel (Operating department practitioner) Julie Weir (Operating department practitioner)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Anne Shomefun
Proposed student numbers	35
Initial approval	1 September 2003
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	1 September 2009
Chair	Catherine Symonds (Bournemouth University) Adam Biscoe (Bournemouth University/Operating department practice chair)
Secretary	Nikki Finnes (Bournemouth University) Jo Forsyth (Bournemouth University/ Operating department practice secretary)
Members of the joint panel	Nigel Conway (External panel member) Hannah Abbott (College of Operating Department Practitioners)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☐	☒	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☐	☒	☐

The HPC did not see the learning resources or the specialist teaching accommodation as the nature of the major change did not affect learning resources or specialist teaching accommodation, so there was no requirement to visit them

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 60 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 3 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 admissions documentation to clarify whether direct entry applicants are eligible to apply for student loans.

Reason: From the submitted documentation and discussions with the programme team and students the visitors noted that there was some contradiction about whether applicants on secondment from the NHS and those receiving an NHS bursary were eligible to apply for student loans. The visitors, therefore, require the programme team to clarify the eligibility ODP students to apply for student loans in the admissions documentation, so as to enable applicants to make an informed choice about whether to take up the offer of a place.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence which identifies the clinical qualifications and relevant experience of practice placement educators.

Reason: From documentation submitted during the visit the visitors noted that the database is incomplete and does not consistently identify the clinical qualifications and relevant experience of the respective practice placement educators. This may result in students being allocated to practice placement educators who are insufficiently qualified and experienced to provide appropriate student support. The visitors, therefore, require the programme team to submit full and up to date evidence which identifies the clinical qualifications and relevant experience of all the practice placement educators.
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5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the mechanisms used to ensure that practice placement educators receive appropriate programme specific training.

Reason: From discussions with the students the visitors learnt about the disparity between practice placement educators in their interpretation of clinical assessment standards. The students expressed concern about this disparity and requested that it be addressed. It emerged that mentor training is offered at several local universities and it was unclear whether preparation of mentors in the completion of assessment documentation was always addressed. To ensure consistency in assessment among practice placement educators, the visitors require the education provider to clearly articulate the mechanisms used to ensure that practice placement educators receive appropriate programme specific training.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider improving communication between the programme team and its practice placement providers regarding the attendance of NHS seconded students.

Reason: From submitted documentation and discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that, although there is a mechanism for monitoring the attendance of students both in class and on placement, issues surrounding absenteeism amongst employed/seconded students do not appear to be routinely communicated to NHS service partners. This is especially pertinent to seconded students as attendance at university is part of a paid working day. . The visitors, therefore, recommend the programme team to put in place a mechanism to formally monitor the attendance of seconded students and for this to be communicated to practice placement providers.

4.6 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider increasing the use of basic classroom-based clinical skills simulation whilst awaiting the planned purpose built skills laboratory facility to become operational.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and students, the visitors heard concerns regarding the limited opportunity to hone practical/ clinical skills (e.g. gloving, gowning, airway management etc) in a safe environment prior to 'live' clinical practice. The programme team clarified that clinical skills simulation did take place and that to enhance this within the programme, a dedicated operating department practice skills laboratory has been commissioned. The visitors recommend the programme team optimise the use of classroom based clinical skills simulation opportunities in a consistent manner until the planned skills laboratory becomes operational so as to enhance student learning.

Andrew Steel
Julie Weir