

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Bournemouth
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Physiotherapist
Date of visit	12 – 14 May 2009

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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 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' or 'Physical 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. 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 meets/continues to meet (delete as appropriate) 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/retains (delete as appropriate) 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 validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes - BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, Dip HE Operating Department Practice, 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	Joanna Jackson (Physiotherapist) Kathleen Bosworth (Physiotherapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Tracey Samuel-Smith
Proposed student numbers	
Initial approval	1 September 2005
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	
Chair	Catherine Symonds (University of Bournemouth) Keith Wilkes (University of Bournemouth Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy chair)
Secretary	Nikki Finnes (University of Bournemouth) Liz Walters (University of Bournemouth Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy secretary)
Members of the joint panel	Mark Ridolfo (Internal panel member) Barbara Richardson (Internal panel member)

Comment [s1]: Please the programme team confirm the numbers for the programmes?

Comment [s2]: Please can the programme team confirm dates?

	Rebecca Khanna (Internal panel member) Nina Thomson (The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) Sara Eastburn (The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)
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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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 49 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 14 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 did not make any 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 clearly articulate, within the advertising materials, the selection and entry criteria applicable to all applicants to the programme.

Reason: From the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that selection and entry criteria were in place for criminal conviction checks; English language; any health requirements; and academic and/or professional entry requirements for UK and EU applicants. However, the visitors could not see this information reflected in the advertising materials for the programme, either for UK or EU applicants. The visitors were therefore concerned that applicants would not have sufficient information to be able to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme and felt that the materials must be updated.

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 ensure the advertising materials for the programme follow the guidelines provided in the HPC “Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers”.

Reason: From the documentation submitted it was clear that the advertising materials for the programme did not fully comply with the advertising guidelines issued by HPC. Specifically, the advertising materials stated that graduates were eligible to register with the HPC. The visitors felt this implied that upon successful completion of the programme graduates could automatically gain registration with the HPC; which is not the case. To enable applicants to make an informed choice about the programme, the visitors felt the advertising materials must be updated to show that successful completion of an approved programme leads to ‘eligibility to apply for registration with the HPC’.

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 education provider must submit documentation which clearly articulates the learning outcomes to show how students who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors learnt that many of the academic modules were shared across the Faculty or with the occupational therapy

programme; for example the Foundations of Therapy and Clinical Reasoning modules. From the module descriptors, the visitors could not identify the profession specific learning outcomes which would be taught and assessed in each academic module. This was discussed with the programme team and they provided the visitors with further clarification. The visitors felt that this information must be incorporated into the programme documentation so that the learning outcomes for the academic modules are clearly articulated.

The visitors also received a draft practice placement handbook for the first year (Level C) of the programme. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and learnt that the practice placement handbooks for the second and third years (Levels I and H respectively) were also in draft format. However they did not receive a copy of these documents. The visitors were therefore unable to identify the placement learning outcomes across the three years and how students would progress through these. The visitors felt that the learning outcomes must be clearly articulated for the practical modules.

To enable the visitors to be able to identify the learning outcomes and therefore determine how students meet the standards of proficiency, the visitors would like to receive clearly articulated programme documentation for the academic and practical modules.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure the programme reflects the skills as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors learnt that many of the modules were shared across the Faculty or with the occupational therapy programme; for example the Foundations of Therapy and Clinical Reasoning modules. From the module descriptors, the visitors could not identify the profession specific learning outcomes and therefore skills which would be taught and assessed in each academic module. The visitors were therefore unable to determine whether the programme reflected the skills as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession and would like to receive further documentation.

4.7 Where there is inter-professional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the profession specific skills and knowledge are adequately addressed.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors learnt that many of the academic modules were shared across the Faculty or with the occupational therapy programme; for example the Foundations of Therapy and Clinical Reasoning modules. From the module descriptors, the visitors could not identify the profession specific learning outcomes which would be taught and assessed in

each academic module. This was discussed with the programme team and they provided the visitors with further clarification. The visitors feel that this information must be incorporated into the programme documentation to ensure the profession specific skills and knowledge are adequately addressed.

5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that all practice placement settings provide a safe environment.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and students, the visitors learnt that some placements are outside of the NHS, such as in the private sector or emerging markets. In addition, the visitors learnt that students undertake an elective placement at Level H. This could be in a local hospital but could be, if the student organised it, in a different country. From the discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that the education provider utilises a practice placement quality assurance tool to check that NHS placements provide a safe environment. This quality assurance tool did not appear to apply to placements outside of the NHS and did not apply to international placements. The visitors would therefore like to receive confirmation of how the education provider ensures that all practice placements provide a safe environment.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that all practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and students, the visitors learnt that some placements are outside of the NHS, such as in the private sector or emerging markets. In addition, the visitors learnt that students undertake an elective placement at Level H. This could be in a local hospital but could be, if the student organised it, in a different country. From the discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that the education provider utilises a practice placement quality assurance tool to check that NHS placements provide safe and effective practice. This quality assurance tool did not appear to apply to placements outside of the NHS and did not apply to international placements. The visitors would therefore like to receive confirmation of how the education provider ensures that all practice placements provide safe and effective practice.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the mechanisms which ensure that a thorough and effective system of approving and monitoring all placements is undertaken.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and students, the visitors learnt that some placements take place outside of the NHS, such as in the private sector or emerging markets. In addition, the visitors learnt that students undertake an elective placement at Level H. This could be in a local hospital but could be, if the student organised it, in a different country. During discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that the education provider utilises a practice placement quality assurance tool to approve and monitor NHS placements. This quality assurance tool did not appear to apply to placements outside of the NHS and did not apply to international placements. The visitors were therefore unsure of the systems used to approve these placements before use and monitor them on an ongoing basis. The visitors would therefore like to receive further documentation which details the mechanisms used for all placements.

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 education provider must ensure students and practice placement educators are provided with detailed information about the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors received a draft practice placement handbook for the first year (Level C) of the programme. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and learnt that the practice placement handbooks for the second and third years (Levels I and H respectively) were also in draft format. However, they did not receive a copy of these documents. The visitors were concerned that without specific learning outcomes, there was a risk that learning outcomes could be interpreted and applied differently depending on the practice placement educator. The visitors would therefore like to receive documentation which provides students and practice placement educators with detailed information about the learning outcomes to be achieved.

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 education provider must ensure students and practice placement educators are provided with detailed information about the assessment procedures, including the implications of failure, and any action to be taken in the case of such failure.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors received a draft practice placement handbook for the first year (Level C) of the programme. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and learnt that the practice placement handbooks for the second and third years (Levels I and H respectively) were also in draft format. However, they did not receive a copy of these documents. The visitors were concerned that without specific learning outcomes and associated assessment methods, there was a risk that assessments could be interpreted

and applied differently depending on the practice placement educator. The visitors would therefore like to receive documentation which provides students and practice placement educators with detailed information about the assessment procedures, including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that clearly articulated learning outcomes and assessment methods are supplied to practice placement providers.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors received a draft practice placement handbook for the first year (Level C) of the programme. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and learnt that the practice placement handbooks for the second and third years (Levels I and H respectively) were also in draft format. However, they did not receive a copy of these documents. The visitors were concerned that without specific learning outcomes and associated assessment methods, there was a risk that assessments could be interpreted and applied differently depending on the practice placement educator. The visitors felt that this was necessary information which must be provided to practice placement providers and would therefore like to receive updated information which clearly articulates the learning outcomes and assessment methods.

5.13 The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the placement providers' equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies are in place, and monitored.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and students, the visitors learnt that some placements are outside of the NHS, such as in the private sector or emerging markets. In addition, the visitors learnt that students undertake an elective placement at Level H. This could be in a local hospital but could be, if the student organised it, in a different country. From the discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that the education provider utilises a practice placement quality assurance tool to ensure that NHS placements have equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies in place and that they are monitored. This quality assurance tool did not appear to apply to placements outside of the NHS and did not apply to international placements. The visitors would therefore like to receive confirmation of how the education provider ensures that this standard is met for all placements.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate how the regulations on condonement ensure a student can demonstrate fitness to practice.

Reason: From the documentation and programme team meeting, the visitors learnt that students can not receive condonement for any of the practical modules. They also learnt that students could receive condonement for one academic module. However, the visitors were unclear which module, or at what level, this condonement could be applied. They would therefore like to receive information which demonstrates how the condonement policy allows students to demonstrate fitness to practice.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the assessment methods which measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors learnt that many of the academic modules were shared across the Faculty or with the occupational therapy programme; for example the Foundations of Therapy and Clinical Reasoning modules. From the module descriptors, the visitors could not identify the profession specific learning outcomes which would be taught and assessed in each academic module. This was discussed with the programme team and they provided the visitors with further clarification. The visitors felt that this information must be incorporated into the programme documentation so that the learning outcomes for the academic modules are clearly articulated.

The visitors also received a draft practice placement handbook for the first year (Level C) of the programme. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and learnt that the practice placement handbooks for the second and third years (Levels I and H respectively) were also in draft format. However they did not receive a copy of these documents. The visitors were therefore unable to identify the placement learning outcomes across the three years and how students would progress through these. The visitors felt that the learning outcomes must be clearly articulated for the practical modules.

To enable the visitors to be able to determine how students meet the learning outcomes and assessment methods for the academic and practical elements of the programme and therefore how they can practice safely and effectively, the visitors would like to receive updated programme documentation.

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 ensure the assessment regulations clearly specify the requirements for the measurement of student performance and progression.

Reason: The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 require the education provider to submit clearly articulated learning outcomes and assessment methods. It is therefore possible that amended learning outcomes and assessment procedures will be proposed. The visitors will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods measure student performance and progression through the use of objective criteria.

Joanna Jackson
Kathleen Bosworth