

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Brunel University
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
Mode of delivery	Full time and Part Time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Occupational therapist
Date of visit	1-2 February 2012

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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 'Occupational 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 22 February 2012. At the Committee meeting on 22 February 2012 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 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

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - curriculum, practice placements 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 (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider and validating/awarding body validated/reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. 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 the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Jennifer Caldwell (Occupational therapist) Joanna Goodwin (Occupational therapist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Victoria Adenugba
Proposed student numbers	130 Shared between the full time and part time cohorts
First approved intake	01 September 1997
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	01 September 2012
Chair	Derek Milligan (Brunel University)
Secretary	Sally McKinley (Brunel University)
Members of the joint panel	John Cossar (Internal Panel Member) Lee Romer (Internal Panel Member) Ruth Heames (External Panel Member) Caroline Grant (College of Occupational Therapists) Catherine Wells (College of Occupational Therapists)

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"/>
Annual review reports	<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 (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors did not set any conditions for the programme.

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.

Recommendations

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider expanding the number and range of their placements settings.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation and in discussion with the programme team that students had the opportunity to experience a suitable number and arrange of placements as part of this programme. The visitors were therefore content that this standard was met. However, in the meeting with the students, it was highlighted that not all students had the same opportunity to experience as much variation in their placements between NHS and community settings as each other. As such not all students were able to experience the range of placement experiences that are available. The visitors therefore recommended that the programme team continues to further develop the variety of placements available to students so that all students experience a wide range of different placement settings.

6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider how to better communicate the monitoring of the assessment grades across all placements to students and placement educators.

Reason: The visitors were content that this standard was met, and that assessments at placements were appropriately marked by placement educators to make sure students can meet standards of proficiency when they complete the programme. In the meeting with the students, the students said that they were happy with placements however some students felt that marks varied dependant on where they undertook their placements. During discussions with placement educators, the visitors learnt that some placement educators felt that other placement educators were marking more leniently which caused students concern when their marks varied at a different placement environment. The visitors recommended that the programme team communicate the monitoring of assessments across their placements to students and placement educators so that they are able to perceive what mechanisms are in place to ensure that marks are consistent across different practice environments.

Jennifer Caldwell
Joanna Goodwin