hpc health professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Canterbury Christ Church University
Programme name	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	18 - 19 March 2011

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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Practitioner psychologist' or 'Clinical psychologist' 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 12 May 2011. At the Committee meeting on 12 May 2011, 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 as the practitioner psychologist profession came onto the register in 2009 and a decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing programmes from this profession. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether 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 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	Ruth Baker (Clinical psychologist) Laura Golding (Clinical psychologist)
HPC executive officer	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	33
Initial approval	January 2008
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2011
Chair	Keith Gwilym (Canterbury Christ Church University)
Secretary	Samantha Ray (Canterbury Christ Church University)
Members of the joint panel	Richard Brown (Internal Panel Member) Dan Donoghue (Internal Panel Member) Steven Davies (British Psychological Society) Helen Beinart (British Psychological Society) Nick McGuire(British Psychological Society) Robert Knight (British Psychological Society) Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society)

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)	☒	☐	☐

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 condition is set on the programme, which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 56 of the SETs have been met and that a condition should be set on the remaining SET.

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.

Condition

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation provided to clearly state that the requirement for trainees to progress through the programme by meeting relevant professional competencies takes precedent over time spent on practice placement.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation that trainees were expected to meet relevant professional competencies while on practice placement in order for them to progress through the programme. They also noted that there was a requirement for trainees to complete 333 days in a practice placement setting in order to successfully progress through and complete the programme. In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that trainees would progress and successfully complete the programme if they met the relevant competencies and that it was only an expectation that this would be normally be completed in 333 days. However, the visitors articulated that the programme documentation did not make the distinction clear between the requirement to meet the competencies and the normally expected time period when this would be undertaken. This lack of clarity may lead to trainees being successful with academic appeals and completing the programme, becoming eligible to apply for registration with the HPC, despite possible concerns of the programme team. The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be revised to ensure that trainees are clear that meeting the competencies takes precedent over and above the amount of time spent on placement.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should inform the HPC if any changes are made to the way in which Trust Training Coordinators interact with the programme

Reason: In the programme documentation and in discussion with the programme team the visitors noted the key role that the Trust Training Coordinators play in organising, approving, monitoring and coordinating practice placements for trainees. The visitors are therefore happy that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the senior team, the practice placement providers and the programme team the visitors noted the potential changes to the way those employed in these roles may interact with the programme in the future. The visitors recommend that the programme team and the practice placement providers do all they can to retain the knowledge and skill of those employed as Trust Training Coordinators despite the possible changes. The visitors also recommend that the programme team inform the HPC if any changes occur to the way the Trust Training Coordinators interact with the programme. This should be done through the major change process as any changes may affect how the programme continues to meet several SETs.

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.**

Recommendation: The education provider should consider how to continue to support practice placement supervisors in fulfilling their role assessing a trainee while they are undertaking a practice placement.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation and in discussion with the practice placement educators that practice placement supervisors are fully prepared to supervise trainees undertaking practice placement. Therefore the visitors are happy that this standard is met. However the visitors recommend that the programme team continue their work to support practice placement supervisors. This is to ensure that supervisors are aware of the learning outcomes trainees are required to meet while on practice placement and also that they are sufficiently equipped to adequately assess trainees against these learning outcomes.

6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes

which contain any reference to an HPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

Recommendation: The education provider should inform the HPC about any exit awards which may be instituted as a result of the recommendations of the internal panel.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation provided prior to the visit that there are no exit awards from the programme due to its integrative nature and lack of modularisation. This is clearly stated in the documentation and as such the visitors are satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the internal panel were recommending that an exit award be introduced. The visitors therefore recommend that if an exit award from the programme was instituted, the education provider should notify the HPC through the major change process. This is due to the fact that the introduction of an exit award, which would not confer eligibility to apply to the HPC Register, may change how the programme continues to meet this standard.

Laura Golding
Ruth Baker