

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	City, University of London
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Speech and Language therapist
Date of visit	8 – 9 November 2016

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction.....	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence	4
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions.....	6
Recommendations.....	16

Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'speech and language therapist' must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care 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 March 2017. At the Committee meeting on 22 March 2017, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the conditions 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 HCPC 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, practice placements and assessment. The programme was already approved by the HCPC 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 reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes: MSLT Speech and Language Therapy, MSc Speech and Language Therapy and PGDip Speech and Language Therapy. The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC 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 HCPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Lorna Povey (Speech and Language therapist) Catherine Mackenzie (Speech and Language therapist) Clare Bates (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Tamara Wasylec
HCPC observer	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	70 per cohort, 1 cohort per year
First approved intake	September 2002
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2017
Chair	Laurence Solkin (City, University of London)
Secretary	Katy Beavers (City, University of London)
Members of the joint panel	Adam Brown (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists) Judy Clegg (Internal panel member) Judith Sunderland (Internal panel member) Zain Ismail (Internal panel member) Susan Barnes (Internal panel member)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC 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 HCPC 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"/>
Service users and carers	<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 approval, the visitors must be satisfied 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 the relevant 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 42 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 16 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. 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 two recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

2.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the criteria that is used to assess applicants' command of English and how applicants are made aware of the criteria.

Reason: In reviewing the documentation submitted prior to the visit the visitors could not determine what criteria the programme team use to assess applicants' command of reading, writing and spoken English. In discussions with the programme team it was highlighted that each applicant is subject to interview and that this is how verbal communication skills are assessed. The visitors were also informed that each member of their interview panel were expected to mark an applicant on their communication skills. However the visitors were unable, from the evidence provided, to determine what criteria are being used to assess candidates, how the criteria is being applied consistently and how applicants were informed of these criteria prior to the interview. The visitors therefore require additional evidence to demonstrate how the communication skills of applicants are assessed, what criteria is used and how applicants are informed about the admissions procedures.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition The education provider must provide further evidence of the commitment that has been made to ensure the programme has a secure place in the education providers' business plan.

Reason: In review of the programme documentation the visitors noted in the Response to UPAC (stage 1) Conditions – Speech and language therapy, page 4 that 'a conservative estimate of 10 students was proposed' for the MSLT student intake. In discussion with the programme team and senior team it was clear that this programme as well as the MSLT, MSc and PGDip programmes were considered together when decisions regarding resourcing are made. As such the visitors predicated their decisions about the resourcing of the programme, such as availability of physical resources or access to programme team members, on that number of students. However, in further discussions at the visit it was clarified that the figures in the documentation were not absolute figures and there may be variability between the programmes depending on recruitment numbers and how students progressed and achieved on the BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy programme. As such, if all 70 BSc (Hons) students achieved a 2.1 level at the end of Year 2 then the cohort number could potentially be 70 for the MSLT and not just 10 students. Due to the variability in the information available the visitors could not identify what the maximum number of students studying on these programmes may be and as such could not accurately evaluate the resourcing of this programme. The visitors were therefore also unable to evaluate the commitment that was made to these programmes by the education provider in their business plan. The visitors therefore require further information about the maximum cohort numbers for this programme and number of cohorts per year. They also require further, documented, evidence in order to identify how the programmes have a secure place in the education provider's business plan considering the clarified cohort numbers.

3.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Condition The education provider must provide further evidence detailing the role of PhD students in project supervision and the marking of students' project work.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted that PhD students at the education provider may have a role in supervising students' project work. In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that PhD students may be involved in the supervision of student project work and that they would be involved in the marking of this work. However the visitors were unclear, from the evidence provided, what the extent of the role a PhD student may have in supervising and marking students' project work. As such they were unclear as to how the education provider will ensure that the PhD students have the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge for the role that they are being asked to undertake. The visitors therefore require additional evidence that clearly describes the role of the PhD students with regards to the programme and how the programme team ensure that PhD students have the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge to undertake the role.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition The programme team must provide evidence of the protocols in place to obtain informed consent from students where they participate as service users and for managing situations when students decline from participating in practical sessions.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitor's noted that there exists a pro forma that is used to gain consent of students when they participate as a service user in practical or clinical teaching. However, in discussion with the students the visitors were made aware that none of the students had seen the consent form before and that it had not been used to obtain their consent. The programme team confirmed that the consent form had not yet been circulated and had not yet been used to obtain any students' consent, instead verbal consent had been sought from students. As such the visitors could not determine, from the evidence provided, how the consent form would be used by the programme team, when students would be expected to complete the form and what would happen if a student declined to consent. Therefore the visitors require additional evidence to demonstrate that there are appropriate protocols in place to obtain student consent where they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching. They also require further evidence as to when these protocols will be implemented, how often they will be renewed and how the team would deal with any student who may decline to give their consent to participate as a service user.

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

Condition The education provider is required to provide further evidence of the attendance requirements for students on this programme and how students are made aware of the expected attendance and associated monitoring mechanisms.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitors noted that in the programme handbooks, 'Attendance at all aspects of professional studies modules, lectures, tutorials

and placements is compulsory'. As stated in the programme handbooks attendance at clinical placements is mandatory for students. However, in discussions with the students it became clear that the students perceived that attendance at professional studies modules, lectures and tutorial counted towards their practice placement hours. As such attendance at all of these elements mean they attend over and above the required number of clinical placement hours and accumulate a surplus of hours. Because of this surplus students felt that while the placement aspects of the programme are mandatory, they could miss some practical sessions or placements as they would make up the hours elsewhere in the programme. In the programme team meeting it was clarified that this was not the case and that all practice placement elements of the programme are mandatory. Because of the discrepancies regarding clinical placements, the visitors were unable to determine which aspects of placement are mandatory and how students starting the programme would be informed of this attendance policy, how it would be enforced and what, if any, repercussions there may be for students who fail to attend. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the attendance policy, which parts of the programme are mandatory and how this is communicated to students. They also require further evidence to demonstrate how students are made aware of what effect contravening this policy may have on their ability to progress through the programme.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition The education provider must review the relevant module specifications and programme documentation to include appropriate references to when students will be learning about conditions which are prevalent in older people as well as children.

Reason: The visitors noted that in the documentation provided, specifically the module specifications for modules SL1013 and SLM103 on the BSc programme, there is reference made to 'lifespan studies'. Each student is required to attend a 'Nursery setting for three full days (nursery opening hours) and to attend a residential care setting or older people's community group for three days during the Autumn Term'. However upon reviewing the details of the module specifications, the visitors could not find any reference to older people studies within those modules. The visitors heard from the programme team, that students undertake older people studies and placements with older people. However it was unclear, from the evidence provided, at what point in the programme students undertake the older people studies and placements with this client group so the visitors could not establish when they took place. Therefore the visitors require further evidence which illustrates that older people studies are featured in the curriculum, where this features and when students will be expected to undertake the relevant placement experience with older people.

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.

Condition The education provider is required to provide further evidence of the range of placements a student will need to complete as part of this programme.

Reason: In reading the documentation provided prior to the approval visit the visitors were made aware of what information would be provided to students regarding any required placements that are a compulsory part of this programme. For instance, on page 599 of Part C of the documentation it states that during the first term of year 1 of the programme students attend a 'lifespan placement; either nursery or with older

people'. However, while students could choose their placement at this point in the programme the visitors heard from the programme team that all students would be required to undertake a placement with older people as well as one with children. As such the visitors were unclear as to how the team will communicate and ensure that all students will complete a mandatory placement with both children and older people. Therefore the programme team will need to provide further evidence as to what information will be provided to students to ensure that they know that they will have to undertake two placements with different service user groups. This evidence should also indicate as to how the programme team will then ensure that all students will be undertaking the relevant mandatory experience to enable them to complete the programme.

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.

Condition The education provider is required to provide further evidence of the number and duration of practice placements a student will need to complete as part of this programme.

Reason: In reading the documentation provided prior to the approval visit the visitors were made aware of what information would be provided to students regarding the number of placement hours that they would need to complete as part of this programme. The noted that in document C p496 that students would undertake '25 days supervised by SLT or in areas associated with SLT' and that this includes clinical tutorials. In discussion with students it was made clear that they thought these 25 days supervision also included professional studies modules that are studied at the education provider. The students therefore felt that they completed over any required number of mandatory clinical practice hours if they attended all practical elements of the programme, including the professional studies modules. Therefore if they missed elements of a practice placement they could make these up by using the practice hours associated with the professional studies modules. The visitors were also made aware that because students felt they completed over and above the placement hours they needed to they were unsure of the exact number of hours that they needed to successfully complete in order to achieve and progress on the programme. As a result the visitors were unclear as to the exact number of practice hours a student would need to complete in order for them to complete the practical elements of this programme. Consequently, the visitors require evidence which clearly demonstrates the number, duration and range of clinical practice placements including where placement hours are completed by students. This evidence should also include how students are made aware of the placement hours that they need to complete to successfully pass the practical elements of the programme.

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.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence of how they will source and secure the required number of placements.

Reason: From the documentation provided and the meetings held at the visit, the visitors noted that the provision and securing of placements happen in tandem across all of the speech and language programmes at the education provider. The visitors were also clear that with the changes proposed to this programme there will be different requirements for placement experience to ensure that students get the experience they need to meet the required learning outcomes. In particular some students would be expected to experience elements of clinical leadership as part of their placement. In discussion with the programme team the visitors noted that as the timing and structure of when the placement experience would be happening was not changing the programme team were confident that there would be no problem in sourcing relevant placements. The visitors also heard that the number of placements needed each year may be variable depending on recruitment to the MSLT programme which may lead to a requirement for more placements when recruitment to that programme is high. However, in discussions with the practice placement providers and educators the visitors were made aware that placement providers were not aware of any changes to the requirements for placements. They were also not aware of any additional requirement for students' experience such as clinical leadership, should this experience be required. The visitors therefore require further evidence as to how the systems in place will enable the programme team to ensure that there will be a sufficient number, duration and range of practice placements. As part of this evidence the programme team should also provide further information as to how any variation or increase in the number of placements that may be required will be managed each year.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how they ensure that all placements provide students a safe and supportive environment for students.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team and the practice placement educators the visitors noted that there exists a well-established partnership between the education provider and practice placement providers and educators. At the visit, the programme team articulated the collaborative system that is in place for sourcing, approving and auditing new placements, and the procedures for monitoring placements. This included the partnership working with NHS placement providers and other education providers to ensure that placements were allocated equitably. It was confirmed that all NHS placement providers are subject to approval and monitoring systems which take the form of an agreement signed by the placement provider and also an audit which is completed by the placement provider. However it was unclear to the visitors, from the evidence provided, how the systems in place to approve and to monitor placements do so in a consistent way in order to ensure that all practice placements provide a safe and supportive environment for students. Consequently, the visitors require further evidence demonstrating that there is an effective system in place for approving and monitoring all placements which ensure that all practice placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment for all students.

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 as to the formal process for approval and monitoring of placements for the programme.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team and the practice placement educators the visitors noted that there exists a well-established partnership between the education provider and practice placement providers and educators. At the visit, the programme team articulated the collaborative system that is in place for sourcing, approving and auditing new placements, and the procedures for monitoring placements. This included the partnership working with NHS placement providers and other education providers to ensure that placements were allocated equitably. It was confirmed that all NHS placement providers are subject to approval and monitoring systems which take the form of an agreement signed by the placement provider and also an audit which is completed by the placement provider. However, from the evidence provided the visitors were unclear as to when the placement agreements and audits would be completed and signed and if this would be done prior to a student attending the placement. The visitors were also unclear as to how the information gathered in the audits is collated, assessed and monitored to ensure that any issues that may arise on a placement would be identified and dealt with appropriately. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the approval and monitoring system that is in place. This evidence should include information about when the system is used to approve placements, how the system will enable information about placements to be gathered and acted upon and if the systems are used to approve placements outside of the NHS settings.

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 how they ensure there is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place at practice placements settings.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team and the practice placement educators the visitors noted that there exists a well-established partnership between the education provider and practice placement providers and educators. At the visit, the programme team articulated the collaborative system that is in place for sourcing, approving and auditing new placements, and the procedures for monitoring placements. This included the partnership working with NHS placement providers and other education providers to ensure that placements were allocated equitably. It was confirmed that all NHS placement providers are subject to approval and monitoring systems which take the form of an agreement signed by the placement provider and also an audit which is completed by the placement provider. However it was unclear to the visitors, from the evidence provided, how the systems in place ensure that all practice placement providers have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to support and supervise students on this programme. Consequently, the visitors require further evidence demonstrating that there is an effective system in place for approving and monitoring all placements which ensures that all practice placement settings have adequate numbers of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure all practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to supervise students.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team and the practice placement educators the visitors noted that there exists a well-established partnership between the education provider and practice placement providers and educators. At the visit, the programme team articulated the collaborative system that is in place for sourcing, approving and auditing new placements, and the procedures for monitoring placements. This included the partnership working with NHS placement providers and other education providers to ensure that placements were allocated equitably. It was confirmed that all NHS placement providers are subject to approval and monitoring systems which take the form of an agreement signed by the placement provider and also an audit which is completed by the placement provider. However it was unclear to the visitors, from the evidence provided, how the systems in place ensure that all practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support and supervise students on this programme. Consequently, the visitors require further evidence demonstrating that there is an effective system in place for approving and monitoring all placements which ensures that all practice placement educators have the skills knowledge and ability the programme team have determined are required to supervise students on this programme.

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

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to what training practice placement educators are required to undertake and how this training prepares them to act as educators for students on this programme.

Reason: From the initial documentary evidence provided, the visitors could not determine what expectations the programme team set to ensure that staff at practice placement providers can act as practice placement educators. They were aware that the team provide training but were unclear as to what this training covers and if this training is mandatory for anyone who wishes to supervise a student from this programme. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors learned that all practice placement educators must attend the training that is offered by the programme team before supervising a student. However from the evidence provided the visitors could not determine what this training consists of and how the team ensure that all practice placement educators have attended training prior to undertaking supervision of students. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the education provider communicates and ensures that the mandatory training requirements for all practice educators are met. This evidence should also articulate what this training covers to ensure that it is appropriate in preparing practice educators to supervise students in the placement setting.

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they facilitate and ensure regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Reason: In the evidence provided prior to this visit the visitors were directed to the Placement Agreement to demonstrate how the programme team and placement providers have regular and effective collaboration. During the programme team and practice placement provider meetings, the visitors were made aware that informal and

ad hoc collaboration takes place based on the nature of relationships that individuals have built up over a number of years. They were also informed that there are regular meetings between the programme team, another education provider and NHS organisations in the local area. At these meetings placement opportunities are agreed and shared between the education providers. However, in further discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers it was made clear that the providers had not been consulted about the changes to this programme. They were also unclear as to what expectations there may be on placements if the requirements for students on placements change. As such, from the evidence provided the visitors could not determine how the mechanisms in place ensure that there is regular and effective communication between the programme team and the placement providers. In particular the visitors were unclear as to how the programme team builds and maintains regular and effective communication with non-NHS placement providers. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the team have the policies and process in place which will ensure that there is and will continue to be, regular and effective collaboration with placement providers both in and outside of the NHS.

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 programme team should provide further evidence as to how they ensure that everyone involved in practice placements are aware of their responsibilities and understand the expected lines of communication should any issues arise.

Reason: From their review of the programme documentation, and in their meeting with students, the visitors were clear that every practice placement supervisor receives a practice placement educator handbook prior to supervising a student. The visitors understood that, in addition to practice placement educator training, placement educators have an initial meeting with students prior to the placement to discuss what students need to achieve in order to successfully pass their placement. The visitors were also aware that students have access to support from their personal tutor and clinical link tutor as well as their practice placement educator when they are on placement. In discussion with the programme team it was made clear to the visitors that students would be expected to flag any issues which may arise to their practice placement educator in the first instance and then escalate as appropriate. However, in discussion with the students the visitors were made aware that students' experience of support on placement, while positive, has been variable. In particular the visitors heard that depending on who they were supported by students would access their practice educator, clinical link tutor or personal tutor if they were having issues on placement. As such the visitors were unclear, from the evidence provided, how the programme team ensure that students, practice placement providers and educators are clear about each person's role and responsibility during a placement and what should happen if an issue arose. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the programme team

ensure that everyone involved in practice placements are aware of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of communication should an issue arise.

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 programme team should provide further evidence as to how they ensure that everyone involved in practice placements are aware what placements should cover and how students will be able to meet relevant learning outcomes.

Reason: From their review of the programme documentation and in their meeting with students the visitors were clear that every practice placement supervisor receives a practice placement educator handbook prior to supervising a student. The visitors also understood that, in addition to practice placement educator training, placement educators have an initial meeting with students prior to the placement to discuss what students need to achieve in order to successfully pass their placement. However, in the meeting with students the visitors heard that in some instances practice educators do not have sufficient time to read the paperwork in preparation for the placement. In this meeting it was highlighted that some practice educators have expected students to be able to demonstrate certain skills, such as transcription, prior to students having been taught those skills. Students also said that they felt they had attended placements in adult settings having only previously been taught about issues that may be experienced by different client groups such as children. As such the visitors were unclear, from the evidence provided, how the programme team ensure that students and practice placement educators are clear about what each placement should cover and what students would be expected to achieve in order to successfully complete that placement. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the programme team ensure that everyone involved in practice placements are aware of the learning outcomes to be achieved as well as the timings and type of experience a student should experience on each placement.

6.5 The measurement of student performance must be objective and ensure fitness to practice.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that the policies and process in place ensure that any issues which may arise out of assessment on placement, are identified and dealt with consistently.

Reason: From their review of the documentary evidence and from discussions with students, the programme team and practice educators the visitors noted that there were placements, and practical experiences that were a mandatory part of the programme. However, in discussion with the programme team, students and practice placement educators it was unclear how any issues that may arise about a students' fitness to practice would be consistently dealt with. In particular the visitors could not determine,

from the evidence presented, how potential issues that arise from the assessment of practice placements, such as non-attendance or failure to progress, would be consistently identified and dealt with across different placement settings. As such the visitors could not ascertain what policies or processes are in place to ensure that there are appropriate standards in the assessment of students and that issues regarding students' fitness to practice are dealt with consistently. As such, the visitors require evidence to demonstrate what monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are in place to ensure that appropriate assessment standards are applied on placement and that any issues which may arise are identified and dealt with consistently.

6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of where in the programme documentation it states that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team at the approval visit it was clarified that it would be a requirement of appointment that external examiners would be HCPC registered. However, in the documentation submitted by the education provider the visitors were unable to identify the criteria that external examiners must meet in order to be appointed. In particular the visitors could not identify where it was stated that at least one external examiner must be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register. As such, the visitors could not determine how the education provider will ensure that at least one external examiner is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register. The visitors therefore need to see evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the assessment regulations, or relevant programme documentation, to demonstrate that this standard is met.

Recommendations

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider keeping under review the language used in the consent form to ensure that it effectively obtains student consent and in the circumstances expected and that its use is helpful if consent is refused.

Reason: In reviewing the evidence provided the visitors noted that there exists a consent form as a means for obtaining students' consent. However, in reviewing it the visitors noted that the language used had been included to enable the form to be used in a variety of practical situations. As such the visitors felt that the form may be more useful in some situations than others and this may limit its effectiveness, particularly as a tool for recording why a student may refuse to consent. The visitors recommend that the programme team keep the implementation of the form under review. In this way the team may be better equipped to determine when and at what stage in the programme the consent form can be most effectively used to obtain student consent.

3.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider revisiting the programme documentation to ensure the terminology in use is correct and reflective of the current terminology used in relation to statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The visitors noted that the documentation submitted by the education provider included several instances of incorrect and out of date terminology. For example, page 31 and on page 894 of Part C, the Division of language and communication sciences staff handbook 2017/2018 states "RCSLT/HPC accreditation" this is incorrect. The correct name of the regulatory body is HCPC which approves programmes whereas the professional body accredits programmes. The visitors therefore recommend that the documentation be revised to remove all instances of incorrect terminology and ensure it communicates up to date information on the programme resources available. In this way students' may be better aware of the current language in relation to the statutory regulation of the speech and language therapy profession.

Lorna Povey
Catherine Mackenzie
Clare Bates