

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Coventry
Programme name	Diploma of Higher Education Operating Department Practice
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Operating department practitioner
Date of visit	28 – 30 May 2013

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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. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 16 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 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 August 2013. At the Committee meeting, 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 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 - Diploma Professional Development in Paramedic Practice, Foundation Degree in Paramedic Science, BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy and BSc (Hons) Dietetics. 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 of HCPC visitors and profession	Andrew Steel (Operating department practitioner) Joanna Goodwin (Occupational therapist)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
HCPC observer	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	19
First approved intake	September 1997
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2013
Chair	Chris Bland (University of Coventry)
Secretary	Julie Keane (University of Coventry) Tessa Piper (University of Coventry)
Members of the joint panel	Alan Mount (External panel member) Mike Rosser (Internal panel member) Tim Lewis (College of operating department practitioner)

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"/>
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 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 53 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 4 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.

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure the programme documentation accurately reflects the current landscape of regulation for Operating Department Practitioner.

Reason: The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider included several instances of incorrect terminology and information. For example, on page 15 of the Programme Specification states 'In order to be eligible for registration as an Operating Department Practitioner with the HCPC all modules and all clinical placements and clinical hours must be passed and achieved'. The HCPC does not have prescriptive requirements in terms of pass rates or the number of hours undertake as clinical hours. The HCPC's requirements around modules and clinical hours are for the education provider to demonstrate that students who complete their programme meet the standards of proficiency. Also the visitors noted on the student handbook page 46 states that programme is 'accredited' by HCPC, rather than it is 'approved' by HCPC, which is the correct terminology. The visitors noted other instances such as these throughout the documentation and feel that incorrect and inaccurate statements may mislead students and provide an incorrect impression of the HCPC as a statutory regulator. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation and ensure the terminology used is accurate, and reflects the language associated with statutory regulation and avoids any potential confusion for students.

4.9 When there is interprofessional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Condition: The education provider must submit information about the revised collaborative curriculum for the programme.

Reason: Documentation provided for the visit included information about the collaborative curriculum for interprofessional learning that students will undertake as part of this programme. The visitors noted in discussion at the visit that the programme team will amend the collaborative curriculum, as presented, to the requirements of the education provider. As such the visitors did not see the finalised version of the collaborative curriculum and how profession specific skills and knowledge will be addressed as part of this interprofessional learning. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence about the revised collaborative curriculum for the programme. In this way the, the visitors will be able to review the revised collaborative curriculum to ensure that when there is interprofessional learning in the programme the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group are adequately addressed.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence of how they ensure all practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included the procedures for approving and monitoring practice placement providers. The visitors reviewed this information but were unable to determine from this how the education provider ensures the practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place in relation to students. Discussions with the programme team indicated they are currently reviewing their placement audit process and in the future would ensure practice placement provider equality and diversity policies are in place. In order to determine how the programme could continue to meet this standard the visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place.

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 include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed. The visitors were satisfied with the current external examiner for the programme. However, the visitors need to see evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate that this standard continues to be met.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the programme team consider maintaining currency of records for practice placement educators and their training.

Reason: From the discussion with the programme team and the practice placement providers it was clear that the education provider run regular initial and refresher training courses for practice placement educators. The visitors were content that this standard continues to be met. However, the visitors recommend the programme team consider keeping an updated list of the training practice placement educators have received. In this way the visitors felt that the programme team may be able to more easily evaluate the currency of placement educators training and evaluate where any additional training may or should be delivered.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Recommendation: The visitors suggest the education provider consider a more formal system for checking the HCPC registration (or any other registration) details of each practice placement educator.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme has a detailed auditing and monitoring process for practice placement providers and placement educators. Through discussions with the programme team it was indicated the programme team would check the registration status of the mentors at the same time when undertaking the placement provider audit. The visitors were satisfied that this standard has been met. However, the visitors noted that subsequently the programme team left it up to placement providers to check that placement educators HCPC registration was up-to date. The visitors' therefore suggest the programme team consider a more robust system of checking practice placement educators' registration status after a placement provider has been audited. In this way the programme team may be better able to ensure that all placement educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Andrew Steel
Joanna Goodwin