

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	De Montfort University
Programme name	Aptitude Test
Mode of delivery	Flexible
Relevant part of HPC Register	Hearing aid dispensers
Date of visit	3 – 4 April 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 'Hearing aid dispenser' 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 4 December 2012. At the Committee meeting on 4 December 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 as the Hearing aid dispenser profession came onto the register in April 2010 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.

The visit also assessed whether a number of standards under SET 5 (Practice placements) were applicable to the programme as a result of entry requirements for prior qualifications and experience as an audiologist working in the NHS.

This visit was an HPC only visit. The education provider and validating body did not validate or review the programmes at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programmes. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Audiology, full time, BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology), full time and Foundation Degree in Hearing Aid Audiology, full time. Separate reports exist for these programmes.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Claire Brewis (Occupational therapist) Linda Mutema (Diagnostic radiographer) Tim Pringle (Hearing aid dispenser)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Lewis Roberts
Proposed student numbers	6 per iteration (up to 35 per annum)
First approved intake	April 2010
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	June 2012
Chair	Debbie Lockton (De Montfort University)
Secretary	Sophia Welton (De Montfort University)

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Application Form and supporting information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information applicants receive once accepted on to the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review a programme specification prior to the visit as the education provider does not create programme specifications for this award type.

The HPC did not review descriptions of the modules prior to the visit. This programme does not include any teaching so there are no descriptions of the modules.

The HPC did not review a practice placement handbook prior to the visit. This programme does not include any practice placements so there is no practice placement handbook.

The HPC did not review a student handbook prior to the visit as the documentation does not exist.

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports for the last two years prior to the visit. The programme does not have an external examiner.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>
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The HPC did not meet with any placement providers or practice placement educators. This programme does not include any practice placements so there are no placement providers or practice placement educators to meet with.

The HPC met with students from the Foundation Degree in Hearing Aid Audiology, BSc (Hons) Audiology and BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme, as students from the programme seeking approval were unable to attend the visit.

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 to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of SETs are not applicable to this education programme and they are not required to be met before ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 18 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 26 SETs. The visitors agreed that 13 of the SETs are not applicable to this 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.

Conditions

2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must revisit all programme documentation, and any advertising materials, to ensure that the terminology in use is accurate and reflective of HPC regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted that elements of the programme documentation submitted by the education provider did not comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. The visitors noted that the programme documentation consistently made reference to HPC regulating 'Hearing Aid Audiologists'. The protected title regulated by the HPC is 'hearing aid dispenser', which allows registrants to undertake the protected functions associated with the title. The visitors require the education provider to revisit the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure that the protected title is consistently referred to throughout, as the visitors considered that the incorrect use of terminology could be misleading to applicants and students.

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 revisit the admissions procedures to apply selection and entry criteria, including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was not clear what the English-language requirements were for entry to the programme. It was also not clear if, or what, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level was required for entry to the programme. The visitors require the education provider to revisit programme documentation to clearly state the English-language requirements needed for entry to the programme, to ensure that this standard is met.

2.3 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the admissions procedures to apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted, the visitors were unable to clarify the procedures in place that ensure the education provider runs appropriate and relevant criminal convictions checks on all applicants to the programme. In order to meet this standard the visitors require the education provider to revisit the admissions procedures to apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the admissions procedures to apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was not clear what the health requirements were for entry to the programme. The visitors were unsure how the programme team ensured that they had taken all reasonable steps to keep to any health requirements set and make any reasonable adjustments as part of their admissions procedures. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require further evidence regarding the admissions procedures on health requirements to ensure potential applicants and students are fully aware of the requirements for the programme.

2.5 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the selection and entry criteria to ensure they are appropriate, clear and consistent.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and there were no formal teaching or learning approaches in place. The visitors noted students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The education provider evaluated applicants on a case by case basis through the admissions procedures, often using a CV to inform a decision. Applicants were required to demonstrate audiological knowledge, skills and experience equivalent to at least a Foundation Degree level. The education provider used this method in place of the programme having a taught curriculum. The visitors noted the education provider required applicants to meet eight different entry criteria. Some of the admissions criteria appeared to be contradictory, for example, criteria number three related only to international applicants and criteria number eight was only relevant to applicants who had undertaken in-service training. The visitors require the education provider to review the admissions criteria to ensure they are appropriate, clear and consistent.

With this model of programme and admission criterion the visitors expressed concern that the admissions procedures may not ensure absolute consistency. The visitors noted applications were not judged on a competency framework and the education provider did not map evidence against the standards of proficiency. The visitors noted the entry criteria do not ensure that standards of proficiency not assessed within the programme are evidenced through admissions. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revisit the admissions procedures to ensure that academic and professional entry standards are appropriate to the programme and ensure standards of proficiency that are not assessed within the programme are addressed through the admissions procedures.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the selection and entry criteria to ensure they include accreditation of prior (experiential) learning mechanisms.

Reason: The visitors noted students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The education provider evaluated applicants on a case by case basis through the admissions procedures, often using a CV to inform a decision. Applicants were required to demonstrate audiological knowledge, skills and experience equivalent to at least a Foundation Degree level. The visitors expressed concern that the admissions procedures may not ensure absolute consistency as applications were not judged on a competency framework and the education provider did not map evidence against the standards of proficiency. The visitors noted the entry criteria do not ensure that standards of proficiency not assessed within the programme are evidenced through admissions. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revisit the selection and entry criteria to ensure they include accreditation of prior (experiential) learning mechanisms and ensure the standards of proficiency that are not assessed within the programme are addressed through the admissions procedures.

3.3 The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate the programme has regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was not clear how the education provider regularly monitored or evaluated the programme. The visitors noted discussions with the senior management team indicated the programme was subject to regular monitoring and evaluation systems in line with the education providers quality assurance processes. The visitors were unable to determine how the education provider was able to ensure the programme's effectiveness, adapt the programme in light of student feedback or ensure appropriate standards in the assessment. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate the programme has regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place, including mechanisms for gathering student feedback and reviewing external examiners' reports.

3.12 There must be a system of academic and pastoral student support in place.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of a system of academic and pastoral support.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was not clear what systems are in place to ensure students are able to access academic and pastoral support. The visitors noted that students are required to complete a range of assessments within the programme and may require academic and

pastoral support. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate that the programme has a system of academic and pastoral support in place.

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the complaints process is clearly articulated to students.

Reason: From a review of programme documentation relating to approval of the BSc (Hons) Audiology, BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) and Foundation Degree in Hearing Aid Audiology programmes the visitors noted that the education provider has an institution wide student complaints process. The visitors were satisfied that this process ensures that students concerns and complaints are dealt with. However, from a review of the documentation submitted for the Aptitude Test, the visitors were unable to find reference to a formal student complaints process. The visitors require the education provider to revisit the programme documentation to ensure that the complaints process is clearly articulated to students.

3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of a formal process for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was not clear what the formal process was for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct. The visitors noted that students on the programme undertake a range of practical and theoretical assessments and the education provider has a role in identifying students who may not be fit to practise and help address any concerns about their conduct. The visitors therefore require evidence of a formal process for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

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 revise the programme documentation to demonstrate how the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The visitors were unable to determine whether the assessments were mapped against specific learning outcomes. The visitors were also unable to determine how the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet all the standards of proficiency. The visitors require the

education provider to provide evidence that clearly sets out the learning outcomes for the programme that ensure all the specific standards of proficiency are covered within the programme.

4.3 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that demonstrates that theory and practice are integrated.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum or placements. In light of the programme design the visitors were unable to determine how theory and practice were integrated within the programme. They therefore require further information to show how this standard continues to be met.

4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the curriculum ensures that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted that 'Section 6' of the programme assessment is framed around HPC standards. The visitors noted that this assessment involves a thirty minute written paper, half of which focuses on the HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics. The visitors could not see how this assessment was sufficient to ensure that all students understand the implications of these standards; including how and where they apply. The visitors therefore require additional evidence to identify how the programme team ensure that students on the programme understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

4.6 The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how delivery of the programme supports and encourages students to develop skills in autonomous and reflective thinking.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The visitors were unable to find evidence of independent and reflective thinking through student-centred learning, teaching and assessment strategies. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate how delivery of the

programme supports and encourages students to develop skills in autonomous and reflective thinking.

4.7 The delivery of the programme must encourage evidence based practice.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how delivery of the programme encourages evidence based practice.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The visitors were unable to find evidence of evidence based practice through student-centred and independent learning, teaching and assessment strategies. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate how delivery of the programme encourages evidence based practice.

4.8 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the range of learning and teaching approaches used is appropriate to the effective delivery of the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The visitors noted that the education provider used the admissions procedures to assess an applicant's prior experience to ensure they have the theoretical knowledge and skills to undertake the assessments within the programme. However, from a review of the admissions procedures, programme documentation and the 'Standards of proficiency mapping document' the visitors were unable to clearly identify where all the standards of proficiency were covered within the programme. The visitors were unable to identify the learning outcomes within the programme and therefore could not determine whether the range of learning and teaching approaches used were appropriate. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate that the range of learning and teaching approaches used is appropriate to the effective delivery of the programme.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the assessment strategy and design ensures that students who successfully complete the programme have met all the standards of proficiency for hearing aid dispensers.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors were unable to determine how the assessment strategy and design ensures that those who successfully complete the programme meet all the standards of proficiency. The visitors were unable to identify the learning outcomes that were assessed within the programme and were therefore not able to determine if all the standards of proficiency were covered. The visitors require the education provider to provide evidence that clearly sets out the assessment strategy that includes a direct reference to the learning outcomes and associated assessment methods, to demonstrate that all the standards of proficiency are assessed within the programme.

6.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must articulate how the programme's assessments provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. From a review of the programme documentation the visitors were unable to identify the learning outcomes that were assessed within the programme. The visitors were also unable to determine the level at which the learning outcomes were assessed and therefore were not able to determine if assessments ensure that all the standards of proficiency were covered within the programme. The visitors therefore require detailed documentation, such as an assessment strategy, to articulate how learning outcomes will be assessed at the appropriate level and reflect the requirements of external reference frameworks. The visitors require this evidence to ensure that students who successfully complete the programme have met the relevant learning outcomes and subsequently all of the standards of proficiency.

6.3 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that demonstrates that professional aspects of practice are integral to the assessment procedures

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. From the information provided the visitors were not able to make a clear judgement on whether professional aspects of practice are integral to the assessment procedures. The visitors require further evidence that demonstrates how the assessment procedures address professional issues.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the assessment methods employed measure the learning outcomes.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The visitors were unable to identify the learning outcomes that were assessed within the programme and were therefore not able to determine if all the standards of proficiency were covered. The visitors require the education provider to provide evidence that clearly sets out the assessment strategy, that includes a direct reference to the learning outcomes and associated assessment methods, to demonstrate that all the standards of proficiency are assessed within the programme and that those who successfully complete the programme can practise safely and effectively.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the measure of student performance is objective and ensures fitness to practice.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The visitors were unable to identify the learning outcomes that were assessed within the programme and were therefore not able to determine if all the standards of proficiency were covered. The visitors were also unable to determine how the education provider monitored and measured student performance and what criteria were in place to make sure students are fit to practise. The visitors require further information to demonstrate that the measurement of student performance is objective and ensures fitness to practice.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure there are effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was not clear how the programme was monitored or evaluated. The visitors noted discussions with the senior management team where it was stated that the programme was subject to regular monitoring and evaluation systems in line with the education providers quality assurance processes. The visitors were not provided with evidence of

regular monitoring and evaluation systems for the programme. The visitors therefore require information that demonstrates that there are effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place, including internal and external moderation of assessment to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly specify the requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors noted that students on the programme were assessed against a range of competencies based on prior learning and experience and the programme had no taught curriculum. The visitors were unable to identify the learning outcomes that were assessed within the programme and were therefore unable to determine how the education provider made students aware of the requirements of the programme. The visitors require the education provider to clearly specify the requirements for student progression and achievement, information outlining how the education provider decides what prevents a student from progressing on the programme and what the options available to a failing student are.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly state that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the Register.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine where in the assessment regulations there was a clear statement regarding aegrotat awards. The visitors could therefore not determine how the programme team ensured that students understood that aegrotat awards would not enable them to be eligible to apply to the Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that there is a clear statement included in the programme documentation.

6.10 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for a procedure for the right of appeal for students.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the procedure for the right of appeal for students.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors were unable to find reference to an appeals procedure. The visitors were therefore not clear how a student can ask for a review of a decision made on their assessment, progression and achievement. The visitors require further information that clarifies the appeals procedure for students and details of how students are told about the right to appeal to ensure this standard is met.

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 clarify the arrangements that are in place for the appointment of at least one external examiner who is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors were not provided with information relating to an external examiner for the programme. The visitors require further information that outlines the arrangements that are in place for the appointment of at least one external examiner who is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, are from the relevant part of the Register. If no external examiner is in place the visitors require the education provider to revisit the assessment regulations to specify the requirement for the appointment of an external examiner.

Recommendations

2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider developing additional programme documentation, including a student handbook.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted that it offered limited guidance to applicants and students. The visitors noted that the education provider supplied applicants and students with a brief programme introduction and information about the types of assessment. The visitors considered this documentation to be lacking detail and recommend that the education provider should consider developing additional programme documentation, including a student handbook to give both applicants and students on the programme further information relating to the programme and the education provider.

2.5 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revisiting the admissions procedures to develop a more robust approach to evidence applicant's prior experience and qualifications.

Reason: The visitors noted that the education provider evaluated applicants on a case by case basis through the admissions procedures, often using a CV to inform a decision. The visitors expressed concern that the admissions procedures do not ensure absolute consistency as applications were not judged on a competency framework and the education provider did not map evidence against the standards of proficiency. The visitors recommend that the education provider should consider revisiting the admissions procedures to develop a more robust approach to evidence applicant's prior experience and qualifications, including using accreditation of prior learning mechanisms. The visitors noted that the education provider may want to develop a portfolio model that would allow the education provider sign off specific proficiencies and assess student's competence and understanding in greater depth and over a longer timeframe.

4.8 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider should consider introducing learning and teaching approaches within the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme consisted of several competency based assessments and no formal teaching or learning approaches were in place. The visitors recommend that the education provider should consider introducing teaching and learning approaches within the programme.

Standards of education and training not applicable to the programme

5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme. The visitors therefore recommend this standard is not applicable to 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.

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.2 is not applicable to the programme.

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

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied

that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.3 is not applicable to the programme.

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

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.4 is not applicable to the programme.

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.

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.5 is not applicable to the programme.

5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of

seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.6 is not applicable to the programme.

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

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.7 is not applicable to the programme.

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

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.8 is not applicable to the programme.

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

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to

work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.9 is not applicable to the programme.

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

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.10 is not applicable to the programme.

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.**

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.11 is not applicable to the programme.

5.12 Learning, teaching and supervision must encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected applicants that to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.12 is not applicable to the programme.

5.13 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of service users and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Reason: Prior to the visit the programme team submitted documentation for the programme. This included a SETs mapping document in which the education provider has made the case that standards under SET 5 are not applicable to the programme because the programme does not incorporate practice placements. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that it was expected that applicants to the programme would be practitioners returning to work, competent with working with service users but needing to update their clinical skills. Alternatively, they would be practitioners in practise with the aim of seeking registration as a hearing aid dispenser. The visitors have set conditions on the admission procedures for the programme to ensure there are robust admissions procedures in place for this programme. The visitors were satisfied that if the programme meets all conditions in this report, practice placements would not need to be integral to this programme, and therefore recommend standard 5.13 is not applicable to the programme.

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