

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Edge Hill University
Programme name	Dip HE Operating Department Practice
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Operating department practitioner
Date of visit	28 – 29 April 2010

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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 'Operating department practitioner 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 7 July 2010. At the Committee meeting on 7 July 2010, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme admissions, programme management and resources, curriculum, practice placements and assessment. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered a BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice (Full time). The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. A separate report exists for the other programme. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Andrew Steel (Operating department practitioner) Nick Clark (Operating department practitioner)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
Proposed student numbers	50 twice a year
Initial approval	September 2003
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Nigel Simons (Edge Hill University)
Secretary	Susan Roper-Davies (Edge Hill University)
Members of the joint panel	Tim Lewis (Cardiff University, External Panel Member)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transitional Arrangements document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review the student handbook or the practice placement handbook prior to the visit as the documentation does not exist yet.

The HPC did not review External examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit as the education provider did not submit it. However, they did table it at the visit itself.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>

The HPC did not meet with the senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme as they were satisfied with the discussions that had already taken place and did not feel it was necessary to discuss the programme with them also.

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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 51 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 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 did not make any recommendations for the programme.

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

The visitors have also made a commendation. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

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 revise and resubmit programme documentation to ensure there is accuracy and clarity relating to references to the Health Professions Council.

Reason: In the documentation provided by the education provider prior to the visit there were instances of lack of accuracy and clarity when referring to the Health Professions Council. The online documentation for this programme had a misleading statement in that it claimed the programme led to successful students achieving “professional registration as an Operating Department Practitioner” rather than eligibility to apply to our register only. Additionally throughout the documentation there were typographical errors in the spelling of the ‘Health Professions Council’ and the ‘Standards of Proficiency’. This is inaccurate and confusing information. Therefore, in order to provide students with the correct information to make an informed choice about whether to join the programme and to prevent confusion amongst students on the programme, the visitors require revised documentation to take account of these inaccuracies and to ensure the programme has the correct information available online.

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 must revise and resubmit programme documentation to clearly identify the minimum attendance requirements and the associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Reason: The programme documentation submitted prior to the visit did not clearly specify the minimum attendance requirements or the associated monitoring mechanisms in place. During discussions with the programme team it became clear that all modules were compulsory and there was an allowed absence of a maximum of 30 days over the three years. The visitors were satisfied the programme had identified the attendance requirements but not satisfied they would be fully communicated to the students and teaching team. The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be revised to include the minimum attendance requirements and the associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

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 submit the revised module descriptors and revised programme documentation that clarifies which publication of the Standards of Proficiency are being used at which point.

Reason: The internal validation discussions at the visit from the external panel members' role included the approval of their modules. The modules were approved subject to amendments to the module descriptors. These resulted amendments were to include profession specific learning outcomes, the corrections of typographical errors and professional body inclusions. Additionally there were references in the programme documentation to the HPC standards of proficiency for both dates of publication – 2004 and 2009. The visitors were satisfied that the original module descriptors learning outcomes met the standards of proficiency for their part of the register. The documentary references to the standards of proficiency were confusing. The visitors require the education provider to resubmit the programmes module descriptors after the amendments have been made to ensure the learning outcomes continue to ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the register. The visitors also require the education provider to resubmit programme documentation that has clarification on the version of the Standards of Proficiency that is being used.

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 submit the revised module descriptors.

Reason: The internal validation discussions at the visit from the external panel members' role included the approval of their modules. The modules were approved subject to amendments to the module descriptors. These resulted amendments were to include profession specific learning outcomes, the corrections of typographical errors and professional body inclusions. The visitors were satisfied that the assessment strategy and design of the original module descriptors learning outcomes met the standards of proficiency for their part of the register. The visitors require the education provider to resubmit the programmes module descriptors after the amendments have been made to ensure the assessments of the amended learning outcomes continue to ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the register.

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 revise and resubmit programme documentation to include information regarding their aegrotat award policy.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit had no clear mention of any aegrotat award policies. Upon further discussions at the visit it became clear that the education provider did not use aegrotat awards for this programme. This information should be clearly communicated to students. For clarity for the

students the visitors require the programme documentation to be revised to clearly include this information.

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 revise and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed with the HPC.

Reason: In the programme specific documentation submitted prior to the visit there was no mention of the arrangements for the post of external examiner for the programme. The education provider did submit documentation which related to the internal validation of all of the programmes being validated at the event. This documentation stated that for each profession there would be profession specific external examiners. The visitors were satisfied with this blanket statement but for clarity require the education provider to revise the programme specific documentation to include clear reference to this standard of education and training.

Commendations

The visitors wish to commend the following aspects of the programme:

Commendation: The visitors wish to commend the education provider's innovative design and implementation of the diverse profession programme portfolio of which this programme is part of.

Reason: The education provider has designed this programme to be a part of a major combined portfolio of programmes which share common inter-professional modules alongside the profession specific modules. The visitors considered the design of the three year programme to raise the recognition of the professional profile of operating department practitioners amongst all health practitioners and were impressed by the faculty and programme teams' dedication and enthusiasm to this inter-professional learning approach.

Nick Clark
Andrew Steel