Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Leeds Metropolitan University
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Physiotherapist
Date of visit	1 – 2 July 2010

Contents

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Physiotherapist' or 'Physical therapist' 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 16 September 2010. At the Committee meeting on 16 September 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 - curriculum 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 education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Fleur Kitsell (Physiotherapist) Karen Harrison (Physiotherapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
Proposed student numbers	33
Initial approval	1 September 1995
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	20 September 2010
Chair	John Hawker (Leeds Metropolitan University)
Secretary	Jess Owens (Leeds Metropolitan University) Alison Bohan (Leeds Metropolitan University)
Members of the joint panel	Jennifer Duthie (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) Nina Paterson (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) Alison Caswell (Internal panel member) Julia Lawrence (Internal panel member) Claire Arditto (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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐
Critical appraisal for periodic review	☒	☐	☐
Admissions profile	☒	☐	☐

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a 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 53 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 have also made a number of recommendations for the programme.

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

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

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 advertising materials for the programme (including the website) to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation and to follow the guidance provided in the HPC "Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers".

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider did not always fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. The visitors require that the documentation is reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology. In particular the visitors noted that the documentation stipulated that 1000 hours of practice are required for registration with the HPC. The HPC do not set a specified number of hours to be completed for placement, therefore this needs to be clearly stated as a professional body requirement to prevent any confusion. The documentation also referred to CPR training guidance from the HPC. The education provider must ensure that references to the roles and requirements of professional bodies and regulatory bodies are accurate and up-to-date.

It should also be made clear throughout all documentation that HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for those who complete the programme or 'eligibility to practice' but rather to 'eligibility to apply for HPC registration'. Finally the term 'state registration' is no longer in use and so needs to be removed from the programme documentation.

In order to provide students with the correct information to make an informed choice about whether to join the programme and to prevent confusion for students on the programme the programme documentation must be amended.

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 all programme documentation, including advertising materials for the programme, to clearly and consistently articulate the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) standard or equivalent required for entry on to the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted prior to the visit the visitors noted that the IELTS level for entry on to the programme was stated as 6.5 with no skill below 6.0. Prior to the visit the education provider submitted an amended admissions profile which stated the IELTS average score required was 7.0 with no skill below 6.5. This change in the requirement was confirmed in discussions with the programme team.

The visitors require the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to be revised to clearly state the IELTs requirement for entry on to the programme consistently throughout all documentation to ensure that applicants and the education provider are fully aware of the required criteria.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and update the content to reflect the changes made to the programme and ensure documents referenced are current.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted before the visit it was apparent that the programme documentation required some updating to reflect changes made to the programme and to ensure the documents referenced throughout are current. In particular the visitors noted that there were instances where the most recent version of the HPC standards of proficiency (SOPs) was not referenced. The visitors were concerned that this could direct students to out of date information.

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 visitors require that the programme team reviews the information provided on the attendance policy and requirements to ensure that all parties involved are clear about the requirements.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors noted that the attendance requirements for the programme were being amended from a level of 80% to an expectation of 100% attendance. The visitors noted that the information contained in the programme documentation on attendance was potentially confusing. From discussions with the programme team the requirements and expectations were clarified. The visitors require that the programme documentation is revisited to include clearer guidelines for students and the education provider on the attendance requirements for the programme.

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 articulate the policy on aegrotat awards, and demonstrate how this information is clearly communicated to the students.

Reason: From the documentation provided there was insufficient detail regarding the policy for aegrotat awards for the programme. The visitors need to see evidence that this policy is clearly communicated within the documentation, so

that it is clear that aegrotat awards would not enable students to be eligible to apply to the Register to ensure that this standard is being 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 revisit 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 documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail in the external examiner recruitment policy. The visitors were happy with the external examiner arrangements for the programme but need to see evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of this requirement.

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 visitors wish to recommend that the programme team strengthen the links to further information regarding some of the entry requirements for applicants.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors found that whilst the Criminal Records Bureau checks and health requirements were mentioned in the advertising material for the programme further information on these requirements was not included. The visitors also noted that this was the case with the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) policy. The visitors felt that applicants would benefit from having clearer links to information on these areas in order to help applicants make an informed choice on the programme.

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

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the programme team considers referencing the HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics throughout the programme documentation.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors noted that whilst the HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics were referred to in areas of the programme documentation this referencing was not always consistent. The visitors felt that students would benefit from further references to this document wherever appropriate, and for these to be linked to the references to the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists and the education providers conduct requirements and guidelines.

Fleur Kitsell
Karen Harrison