

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	London South Bank University
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC Register</b>	Operating department practitioner
<b>Date of visit</b>	15 – 17 June 2011

## Contents

Contents .....	1
Executive summary .....	2
Introduction .....	3
Visit details .....	3
Sources of evidence .....	4
Recommended outcome .....	5
Conditions .....	6
Recommendations .....	10

## 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 approval. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 25 August 2011. At the Committee meeting on 13 October 2011 the programme was approved. 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 it was a new programme which was seeking HPC approval for the first time. 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.

This visit was part of a joint event as the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes - DipHE Operating Department Practice, BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, Pg Dip Occupational Therapy, BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography, BSc (Hons) Therapeutic Radiography and Pg Dip Therapeutic Radiography.

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. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, the professional bodies, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

## Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Nick Clark (Operating department practitioner) Paul Blakeman (Chiropodist / podiatrist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
Proposed student numbers	30
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2012
Chair	Holly Nicholas (London South Bank University)
Secretary	Catherine Moss (London South Bank University)
Members of the joint panel	Lisa Greatrex (Internal Panel Member) Helen Booth (College of Operating Department Practice)

## 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 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Additional information about programmes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit as there are no external examiner reports' because the programme is new.

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 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 met with students from the DipHE Operating Department Practice programme as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 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 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 recommendation 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 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

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

**Condition:** The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they will monitor and evaluate the management of placement setting allocations.

**Reason:** In discussion with students from the DipHE Operating department practice programme at the visit the visitors noted that it was possible for a student to be placed in a practice setting without having had any theoretical teaching about that setting beforehand. This model of practice placement setting allocation which will be used for this programme means that it will be the responsibility of the practice educator to manage the allocation of placement settings. The visitors also noted that the practice placement educator was not always aware of what theoretical teaching a student had undertaken before undertaking placement. From these discussions the visitors were assured that this was an intermittent issue that did not occur with one particular required setting or with one particular placement provider. However, it is the programme teams' responsibility to support students through the programme and for the programme team to monitor and subsequently act appropriately on any student feedback. The visitors considered this to be particularly important in light of the potential for differing students' experiences of placement setting management and the need to maintain parity of placement experience across the cohorts. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the programme team will monitor the management of placement setting allocation. In this way the visitors can be sure that there will be no repeated instances of theoretical learning following placements occurring and that there will be a parity of student placement experience across all cohorts.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must provide evidence of how the programme specific information, provided in the placement handbook, will be effectively used.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors noted the practice placement handbook (Document H, Appendix 4). The handbook was generic to all of the programmes within the Interprofessional Scheme in Allied Health Professions (IPSAH). From their reading of the handbook the visitors were satisfied that the generic programme material was complete. However, the section designed to contain the specific material for this programme was incomplete (Section 3, p37). The visitors therefore could not determine where information, specific to this programme, would be provided to students. The conditions against SETs 3.3, 4.3 and 5.11 can be looked at alongside this standard as they will help the programme team consider the relevant information the visitors wish to see. The visitors therefore require the programme team to provide further evidence as to how the programme specific information in the placement handbook will be effectively used.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must provide further evidence that clearly demonstrates the requirements of the programme team, the practice educators and the students in terms of ensuring the theoretical and practical aspects of the programme will be effectively integrated.

**Reason:** Discussion with the students from the DipHE Operating department practice programme at the visit indicated it was possible that a student could be placed in a practice setting without having had any theoretical teaching about that setting beforehand. For this programme also, as independent learners, the programme team expects that students will take responsibility to ensure they have the required knowledge base prior to undertaking any placement, including those of which they have received no theoretical teaching from the education provider. To facilitate this, a full set of programme documentation will be available to students electronically. However, the visitors noted that the students felt that it was beneficial to receive theoretical teaching prior to placement rather than conducting their own research.

As it will be expected of some students to undertake their own research into some areas of practice the visitors did not have sufficient evidence to be satisfied that theory and practice were effectively integrated in the curriculum. If some students have different preparation for the application of theoretical knowledge in a practical environment this could lead to perceived differences in the quality of their placement experience. The visitors therefore require further evidence that the programme team are aware of the issues arising from students being assigned to practice settings even if theoretical aspects of that setting have not been taught. This evidence should also include how the programme team will address these issues in future if they arise. The conditions against SETs 3.3 and 5.11 should be looked at alongside this condition as they are linked together. In this way the visitors can be sure that the theoretical and practical aspects of the programme will be effectively integrated and that this standard is met.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must consider ways to ensure the practice educators will be fully prepared to work with students from this programme.

**Reason:** Documentation and discussion at the visit indicated the programme team currently monitors and evaluates practice placements. This ensures that practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience, and are appropriately trained, prior to working with students on the DipHE Operating Department Practice programme. However, the visitors did not have sufficient evidence to determine how the programme team would ensure that practice placement educators will be prepared to supervise students on this programme. As this programme requires students to reach a level of attainment to make them eligible for a bachelor of honours degree the criteria for achievement will be different from those on the DipHE Operating Department Practice programme. The visitors therefore require evidence to determine how, before commencement

of the programme in 2012, practice placement educators will be appropriately prepared to supervise students and help them achieve the level of attainment required for this programme. In this way the visitors can be sure that the practice placement educators will have the different knowledge, skills and experience required to supervise students on this 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.**

**Condition:** The programme team must provide evidence that demonstrates the arrangements the programme team has to ensure students will be fully prepared for each of their individual placement settings.

**Reason:** Discussion with the students from the DipHE Operating department practice programme at the visit indicated that it was possible for a student to be placed in a practice setting without having had any theoretical teaching about that setting beforehand. For this programme also, as independent learners, the programme team will expect students to take responsibility for ensuring that they have the required knowledge base prior to undertaking any placement, including utilising the expertise of the placement educators as necessary. However, the visitors did not have sufficient evidence to determine how the programme team will ensure that preparation for placement is consistent across the cohorts and what consideration is given to the effects any inconsistencies in preparation may have on students' practice placement experience. In preparing students for placement the education provider should provide the required knowledge base in an appropriate way for students. There must be adequate time for the student to prepare and allow for discussion if needed. The programme team should ensure the student can understand all information. The visitors also noted that the management of placement setting allocation is undertaken by the practice placement educators. However they were unsure how practice placement educators were informed about the resources provided for them by the education provider to aid them in undertaking their role.

The visitors therefore require evidence of how the programme team will ensure that students and practice placement educators are fully prepared for placement. This evidence should demonstrate how the team ensure that students have the required theoretical knowledge in order to achieve what they need to while on placement. It should also demonstrate what information practice placement educators will be provided with in order to manage placement setting allocations. The conditions against SETs 3.3 and 5.11 should be looked at alongside this condition as they are linked together. In this way the visitors can be sure that practice placement educators will be fully prepared to supervise students and that students on the programme will be able to achieve the required learning outcomes associated with the practical aspects of the programme.

**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 programme team 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 in the external examiner recruitment policy specific to the programme. The visitors were satisfied with the recruitment policy and procedures as discussed at the visit and noted that as a new programme the external examiner(s) have not been recruited yet. However, the visitors require evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate that this standard continues to be met.

## 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 programme team may wish to consider using the existing advertising materials for the DipHE Operating Department Practice website when they look to designing the advertising materials for this programme.

**Reason:** The visitors have had evidence regarding the admissions procedures for this programme and are satisfied this standard is met. The advertising materials for this programme have not yet been created due to the programme commencement date of September 2012. The visitors have seen the advertising materials on the website for the DipHE Operating Department Practice programme and suggest the programme team use it to inform their design of the BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice advertising website materials. The visitors have seen that the DipHE Operating Department practice website includes information about the programme leading to eligibility to apply for HPC registration, the need for occupational health and criminal records bureau checks and pertinent information about the profession and the course. The visitors feel this is all important information for both programmes and that by using the existing website to help create the new one it will reduce the workload for the preparations for the new programme.

### **3.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.**

**Recommendation:** The programme team may wish to consider their own developmental needs in light of the commencement of this programme.

**Reason:** The visitors have noted there are systems in place to ensure continuing professional and research development for staff at the education provider. The visitors saw how the systems could be used and were satisfied this standard was met. The visitors note this is a new programme designed to enable students to achieve learning outcomes leading to the award of a bachelors degree with honours. As the learning outcomes leading to this award will be a different academic level to the higher level than the DipHE Operating Department Practice programme, the visitors recommend that the programme team utilise the staff development processes in place to ensure they are properly prepared to teach students on both levels. In this way the programme team can utilise their staff development plans to gain appropriate support from the education provider to prepare for the new, and differing, demands of running this programme.

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

**Recommendation:** The education provider should monitor how the implementation of the Placement Management Partnership (PMP) will impact on how the programme's placements are approved and monitored.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in the documentation and in discussions at the visit the programme team will maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements as they did with the DipHE Operating Department Practice programme. They were therefore satisfied this standard is met. However in discussions with the senior team, practice placement providers and the programme team it was clear that the PMP system would shortly be implemented and utilised. The visitors therefore recommend that any future change to how practice placements are approved and monitored as a result of the PMP system should be communicated to the HPC through the major change process. In this way any changes can be monitored to ensure that the programme continues to meet all of the standards of education and training.

Nick Clark  
Paul Blakeman