

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	Metanoia Institute
<b>Validating body / Awarding body</b>	Middlesex University
<b>Programme name</b>	Doctorate in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy by Professional Studies (DCPsych)
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Part time
<b>Relevant part of HPC Register</b>	Practitioner psychologist
<b>Relevant modality / domain</b>	Counselling psychologist
<b>Date of visit</b>	9 - 10 February 2011

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## Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approves 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 'Practitioner psychologist' or 'Counselling psychologist' 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 31 March 2011. At the Committee meeting on 7 July 2011, 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 practitioner psychology profession came onto the register in July 2009 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.

This visit was part of a joint event as the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair, 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

## Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Peter Branston (Educational Psychologist) Richard Kwiatkowski (Counselling Psychologist)
HPC executive officer	Ben Potter
HPC observer	Tracey Samuel-Smith
Proposed student numbers	18
Initial approval	January 2001
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2011
Chair	Tracey Cockerton (Middlesex University)
Members of the joint panel	Elena Manafi (British Psychological Society) Yvette Primrose (British Psychological Society) Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society)

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

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"/>

## 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 47 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 10 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 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 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 the programme and admissions documentation to ensure that the terminology in use is accurate and reflective of the current terminology used in relation to statutory regulation.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that the documentation submitted by the education provider contained instances of inconsistent use of terminology in relation to statutory regulation. The visitors noted that there were some instances of the HPC being referred to as a professional body for the counselling psychology profession (Placement handbook, Appendix VII p7; Student programme handbook, p 76.) The HPC is not a professional body and it should be referred to as a 'regulatory body' or 'statutory regulator'. It is also the case that some information (Applicant Information, p3 and p7; Student programme handbook, p28 and p30) was unclear as to the relationship between completion of the programme and registration in that it could be held to imply that registration is automatic upon completion. HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for students who successfully complete the programme; rather it leads to 'eligibility to apply for HPC registration'. The visitors considered some of the terminology and the omission of some of the requirements for HPC registration and ability to work as a counselling psychologist could be misleading to applicants and students. The visitors therefore require the documentation to be reviewed to remove any instances of inconsistent or out of date terminology.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify further the roles and responsibilities of the persons involved in the organisation and supervision of students while they are on practice placement.

**Reason:** In discussions with the students, practice placement educators and the programme team the visitors identified that there was a comprehensive system in place to organise placements and supervise students while they are on placements. However, the visitors were unclear as to the distinct roles and responsibilities of all of those involved in this process especially as one person could be fulfilling different roles for different students (for example, but not limited to, primary supervisor, primary tutor, placement supervisor, placement manager and placement coordinator.) The visitors were therefore unclear as to how the persons in the different roles interacted with one another and what the process was for dealing with any disagreement which may arise between them in relation to student performance; or conversely what sorts of issues students could legitimately raise with each category of person. This also affects how the programme continues to meet SETs 5.8, 5.9 and 5.11. The visitors therefore require a detailed description and definition of the roles involved in the organisation of practice placements and the supervision of students. They also

require an indication of how specifically the people in these roles interact to ensure that a student is adequately supported and meets the relevant learning outcomes associated with the practice placements.

### **3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how the contract signed by students at the commencement of each academic year ensures that students are giving their consent for participation in practical teaching.

**Reason:** In discussion with the programme team the visitors identified that the education provider ensures that students grant their consent for participation in practical teaching by including the appropriate protocol in the contracts students sign at the beginning of each academic year. However, a copy of the contract which students sign was not included in the documentation provided prior to the visit. To ensure that this standard is met the visitors would like to see a copy of this contract to identify if appropriate protocols are being used to obtain students' consent.

### **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 clearly articulate in the programme handbook where the teaching and learning on the programme ensures that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in the programme documentation, in discussions with students and with the programme team that general standards of conduct, performance and ethics are dealt with in the curriculum. However in discussion with the students it was clear that they were not aware of the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. The visitors considered that students should be aware of the implications of the HPC standards of conduct performance and ethics on their time as a student and for their practice in the future. The visitors therefore require evidence to demonstrate that the programme documentation includes sufficient information about the HPC's standards of conduct performance and ethics and where this is delivered in the curriculum. This is to demonstrate that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics and that the programme continues to meet this standard.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place and how the policies are implemented and monitored.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in the programme documentation, in discussion with the practice placement educators and programme team that the education provider approves and monitors all practice placements. However the visitors articulated that while an equality and diversity policy is requested on the approval form for placements, there was no indication of how this would be pursued by the education provider to ensure that the policy itself existed or was applied. The visitors therefore require more information to determine how the education provider ensures that there is an equality and diversity policy in place at practice placements to ensure that the programme continues to meet this standard.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must identify what training is available and required to be undertaken by those practice placement educators involved in supervising and managing students while they are on placement.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in the programme documentation and in discussions at the visit that there was a comprehensive system in place to organise placements and supervise students while they are on placements. However, the visitors were unclear as to the distinct roles and responsibilities of those involved in this process. As this was the case the visitors could not determine what the requirements for training were for all of the various practice placement educators involved in this process and what training provision was offered. The visitors therefore require information regarding what training is offered to those involved in supervising and managing students while on placement. The visitors also require an indication of whether training is a requirement of undertaking any of these roles to ensure that the programme continues to meet this standard.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must identify how they ensure that the practice placement educators are appropriately registered and what mechanisms are in place if this is not the case.

**Reason:** From the programme documentation and in discussions at the visit the visitors noted that there was a comprehensive system in place to organise placements and supervise students while they are on placements. However, the visitors were unclear as to the distinct roles and responsibilities of those involved in this process and as such could not determine if the practice placement educators were appropriately registered. Therefore the visitors require information to determine how the programme team ensure that students are supervised by appropriately registered practice placement educators, unless other arrangements are agreed. This is to ensure that the students get as consistent and appropriate an experience as possible on placement while gaining sufficient experience to meet the relevant learning outcomes.

#### **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 education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure that the practice placement educators involved with supervising and managing students while on practice placement are fully prepared to undertake their role.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that there was a significant amount of information provided by the programme team for students, practice placement educators and practice placement providers to prepare them for practice placements. However there were no 'external' practice placement educators or providers at the visit. The visitors could therefore not determine if the information provided sufficient preparation for those who were not closely associated with the programme or the education provider. Therefore the visitors require further information about how the programme team ensure that those practice placement educators who are involved with organising and managing practice placements and in supervising students, but are not part of Metanoia or Middlesex University, are fully prepared to undertake their roles. This is to ensure that students get consistent and appropriate experience as possible on placement.

#### **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 clearly state in the programme documentation that there is no facility for an aegrotat award to be conferred on students from this programme.

**Reason:** In discussion with the programme team the visitors noted that an aegrotat award would not be conferred to any student exiting this programme. However, this standard requires that the programme documentation clearly states this to avoid confusion and possible academic appeal. The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be updated to clearly specify that an aegrotat award would not be conferred and would not provide students with eligibility for admission to the Register. This is to provide clarity for students and to ensure that this standard continues to be 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 make it clear that external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have previously been agreed with the HPC.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail concerning the recruitment of external examiners to the

programme. This standard requires that the assessment regulations of the programme states that any external examiner appointed to the programme needs to be appropriately registered or that suitable alternative arrangements should be agreed. Therefore the visitors require evidence that HPC requirements regarding the appointment of external examiner to the programme have been included in the relevant documentation to ensure that this standard continues to be met.

## Recommendations

### **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.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider mapping the relevant standards of proficiency (SOPs) to the learning outcomes of the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that the programme team had mapped the relevant SOPs for counselling psychologists to the learning outcomes associated with the learning and teaching on the programme. The visitors were therefore content that this standard continues to be met by the programme. However the visitors wished to recommend that the programme team include a mapping of the HPC SOPs against the learning outcomes as they have done for other benchmarks (Student programme handbook, p217-218.) This would be to highlight how and where students were meeting the SOPs throughout the programme and may help raise awareness of the students development throughout their time with the education provider and potentially into the future.

Peter Branston  
Richard Kwiatkowski