

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	North East London Mental Health Training Partnership
<b>Validating body / Awarding body</b>	University of East London
<b>Programme name</b>	PG Diploma Approved Mental Health Practice (Higher Specialist Award)
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Work based learning
<b>Type of programme</b>	Approved mental health professional
<b>Date of visit</b>	2 – 3 April 2014

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## Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using a protected title must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

As well as approving educational programmes for people who want to join the Register or have an annotation on their Registration record, the HCPC also approve a small number of programmes which are not linked to HCPC Registration. These programmes are for the profession of approved mental health practitioners (AMHPs) (for social workers, mental health and learning disabilities nurses, occupational therapists and practitioner psychologists).

The HCPC criteria for approving AMHP programmes set out the systems and processes an education provider is expected to have in place to deliver an AMHP programme, as well as the competencies professionals must achieve on completing the programme.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 2 July 2014. At the Committee meeting, 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

When the regulation of social workers in England transferred from the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to ourselves, we took responsibility for approving AMHP programmes in England. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gives us powers to set criteria for approving AMHP programmes. A decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing AMHP programmes. This visit is to assess the programmes against the criteria for approving AMHP programmes and professionals who complete it will be able to achieve the criteria for approved mental health professionals.

This visit was an HCPC only visit. The education provider and validating body did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

## Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and visitor role	Sheila Skelton (Approved mental health professional) Christine Stogdon (Approved mental health professional)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Louise Devlin
Proposed student numbers	15 per intake, once a year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2014
Chair	Dr Alan White (University of East London)
Secretary	Adam Hall (University of East London)

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC 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 criteria for approving AMHP programmes	<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 HCPC 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as all teaching for the programme will take place at a new site, the Parkside Centre. The visitors were, however, provided with information regarding the new site of teaching and the facilities available to students and staff.

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the criteria for approving AMHP programmes, and professionals who complete it will be able to achieve the criteria for approved mental health professionals.

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 44 of the criterion have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining six criteria.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. Conditions are set when certain criteria have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the criterion 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 criterion has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

## Conditions

### **A.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 the admissions information to clarify access to the programme for part time employees.

**Reason:** From a review of the admissions information provided, the visitors were unsure of the arrangements regarding part time employees applying to the programme, as the Application Pack 2013-14 stated that “if you are a part-time worker..you may be considered for the training programme on a part-time basis, but you must be able to attend the full block weeks of teaching” (page 11). As such, it was not clear what elements of the programme could be studied on a part time basis. At the visit, the visitors asked for clarity around this arrangement, and the programme team informed them that the programme would be taught on a full time basis, but applicants would have the opportunity to complete placements over a longer period of time if they worked on a part time basis within their local authority role, and this would ensure that the programme was accessible to part time workers. The visitors could not see evidence of where the details regarding this option was clearly communicated to applicants, and therefore further evidence is required to ensure that all potential applicants are given the information they require to make an informed choice regarding whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

### **A.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 the admissions information to ensure that it relates to all applicants who are eligible to apply to the programme.

**Reason:** From a review of the documentation provided, the visitors noted that some of the information related specifically to Social work applicants to the programme, for example in the Application Pack, it states that “all social work candidates that successfully complete the AMHP programme will receive the Post Graduate Diploma” (page 5). Whilst the visitors noted that the current cohort consists of only qualified Social workers, as this programme is also open to Occupational therapists, Practitioner psychologists, and Nurses, the visitors require the education provider to review all documentation, and ensure that the information provided relates to all eligible professions. The visitors also noted reference to the previous regulator for Social workers, the GSCC. The education provider should ensure that the current regulatory requirements for all eligible professions is reflected in the information provided to applicants. Additionally, the visitors noted that “The AMHP training programme counts towards social work post registration requirements” and “other professionals should consult their registration body about their own post registration requirements” (Application Pack, page 6). The visitors require further evidence that the information provided for one profession is equivalent to the information provided for the other professions, and therefore that all applicants, regardless of professional background, are given the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a programme.

### **A.3 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 information provided to applicants to clarify that AP(E)L does not apply for entry onto this programme.

**Reason:** From a review of the mapping document provided, the visitors noted under criteria A.3 that “there are no modules that can replace attendance for parts of the AMHP training and completion of assessed assignments”. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that AP(E)L does not apply to this programme. From a review of the documentation, the visitors could not see where applicants were informed that AP(E)L will not be considered as any entry route onto this programme, and therefore the visitors require further evidence that the AP(E)L requirements of the programme are accurately reflected in the admissions documentation.

### **B.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure that all documentation relating to the programme is updated so that it is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation for AMHPs.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider included several instances of incorrect and out of date terminology. There are references to the previous regulator, the General Social Care Council (GSCC) throughout the documentation, for example in the application pack, the selection board recording sheet and the consortium agreement, as well as references to ‘GSCC/HPCP AMHP Competences’ (Application pack, front cover). The GSCC no longer exists and therefore references to this body should be reviewed to ensure the documentation accurately reflects the current landscape of AMHP programme regulation. At times in the documentation, the visitors noted reference to ‘competencies’. It was not clear if this referred to the Mental Health Act competencies, or the competencies of the previous regulator. The visitors therefore require that all references to competencies are revised to clarify this for students. The visitors also noted references to the GSCC competencies, which have been replaced by the HPCP criteria, and references to the ‘HPCP competencies’ in the programme handbook (page 36). The visitors sought clarification with the programme team regarding this, who confirmed that students were being assessed against the HPCP criteria, and the terminology in the documentation is yet to be updated. The visitors therefore require that the programme team review all documentation relating to the programme, to ensure that all references to the GSCC, and GSCC competencies, are updated to the HPCP and HPCP criteria. This will ensure that the resources to support student learning are being effectively used, and students have a clearer understanding of the frameworks of assessment.

### **C.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the criteria in section 2**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide further evidence regarding the learning outcomes that allow students to ‘understand child and adult protection procedures in relation to AMHP practice’ (Section 2 criterion 1.8).

**Reason:** From a review of the section 2 criteria mapping document, under criterion 1.8 the visitors were informed of training that the students complete regarding “legislation and children and adults” within the curriculum. This criterion relates specifically to child and adult protection procedures in relation to AMHP practice, and in discussion with the students at the visit, whilst they could identify learning regarding legislation, they could not identify how they were taught about procedures in relation to AMHP practice. From a review of the module descriptors, it also was not clear how the related learning outcomes ensured that this criterion would be met. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors noted that as well as the information provided in the mapping document, students would be expected to have prior knowledge of this area through their working roles within the local authorities in the partnership. However, as this criterion requires students to understand child and adult protection procedures specifically in relation to AMHP practice, the visitors felt that further evidence was required to demonstrate where within the curriculum this learning takes place, and how the learning outcomes ensure that upon successful completion of the programme, students are able to meet all criteria in section 2.

**E.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the competencies set out in section 2 of the criteria**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide further evidence regarding how student knowledge regarding child and adult protection procedures in relation to AMHP practice, (Section 2 criterion 1.8) is assessed on the programme.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors could not see where students were taught about child and adult protection procedures within the curriculum, and therefore how criterion 1.8 was being assessed within the programme. When the visitors asked the students how this was assessed, some students referred to the law assessment, whilst others indicated that it was not explicitly assessed. From a review of the documentation regarding the law assessment, the visitors could not see evidence that knowledge regarding child and adult protection procedures in relation to AMHP practice would be sufficiently assessed through this. The visitors therefore require further evidence that demonstrates where section 2 criterion 1.8 is assessed within the curriculum, and therefore that the assessment strategy and design ensures that upon successful completion of the programme, students are able to meet all criteria in section 2.



## Recommendations

### **E.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment**

**Recommendation:** The visitors recommend that the programme team continues to monitor and evaluate the timing of assessments, to ensure that students continue to be given sufficient time to prepare for assessments.

**Reason:** From the information provided the visitors were satisfied that the mechanisms in place will ensure that appropriate standards are maintained in the assessment of students, and that this standard can be met by the programme. However, in discussion with the students, the visitors noted some concerns in regards to the timing of assessments. These concerns relate specifically to the period of the programme when the students return to work in their roles at the local authority, as conflict between expectations of usual workload and assessment requirements can arise. The visitors would therefore like to recommend that the programme team continue to monitor the assessment timetable. In this way the team may be better able to ensure that students have the appropriate time to complete an assessment when they return to work, and have to undertake the assessment alongside their full workload.

Sheila Skelton  
Christine Stogdon