

Health Professions Council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Nottingham Trent University
Name and titles of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science
Mode of Delivery (FT/PT)	FT
Date of Visit	27/28 June 2006
Proposed date of approval to commence	September 2006
Name of HPC visitors attending (including member type and professional area)	Christine Murphy (Biomedical Scientist) David Houlston (Biomedical Scientist)
HPC Executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Abigail Creighton
Joint panel members in attendance (name and delegation):	Prof Paul Periton, Head of Centre for Academic Standards & Quality (CASQ), (Chair) Mr John Griffiths, School CASQ officer, (Secretary) Mr G Bosson, University of Northumbria, (IBMS Academic Representative) Mr N Kirk, Papworth Hospital, Cambridge, (IBMS Professional Representative)

Scope of visit (*please tick*)

New programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major change to existing programme	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visit initiated through Annual Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>

Confirmation of meetings held

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior personnel of 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students (current or past as appropriate)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Confirmation of facilities inspected

	Yes	No	N/A
Library learning centre	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IT facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Confirmation that particular requirements/specific instructions (if any) of the Education and Training Committee that have been explored e.g. specific aspects arising from annual monitoring reports.

Requirement (please insert detail)	Yes	No	N/A
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Proposed student cohort intake number please state	12
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The following summarises the key outcomes of the Approvals event and provides reasons for the decision.

CONDITIONS

The admission procedures must:

2.1 give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make, or take up the offer of a place on a programme

2.2 apply selection and entry criteria, including:

2.2.2 criminal convictions checks;

2.2.3 compliance with any health requirements; and

Condition: The programme team should submit the information, which is given to prospective students about the programme. This information should include details about the travel and cost implications of placements, the differences and similarities between this programme and the traditional BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science programme and the requirements for CRB and health checks prior to starting the programme.

Reason: From the meeting with the current students, it was apparent that they were unclear on the uniqueness of this programme, compared to the traditional BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science programme. There also appeared to be some confusion over the timing and responsibility of CRB and health checks. Graduates of the traditional programme were very positive about the placement opportunities on the new programme and the fact that they would be eligible to apply for registration with the HPC after three years of study. Both students and graduates agreed that they would like to know about the potential relocation and/or increased travel costs and bursary arrangements associated with placements at the earlier opportunity. The Visitors felt that all this information should be available to applicants to allow them to make an informed choice about whether to apply or accept a place on this programme.

2.3 ensure that the education provider has an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The programme team should clarify that the statement in their admissions procedure 'This programme is partly funded by THSA, a public body, such that only UK/EU nationals are eligible' is in line with the University's equal opportunities policy.

Reason: The Visitors were concerned that the distinction between UK/EU ('home') and international ('overseas') applicants *may* be at odds with the anti-discriminatory policy of the University. As the Visitors had not seen the anti-discriminatory policy, they were unable to accept that the admissions statement was in line with university policy. The Visitors appreciated that the origins and purpose of the statement and acknowledged that the situation may change in time, as the programme team

explained that they may, in the future, consider allowing self-funding students to apply to the programme.

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

Condition: The programme team should submit information about the formal staff development policy at the University. This should include the provision available for full-time and part-time staff (including visiting lecturers).

Reason: During the meeting with the programme team, examples of current and past staff development activities were described as well as the options available to new and part-time members of staff. The Visitors wish to receive evidence of the University's staff development programme so they are confident that mechanisms and opportunities are in place to allow all members of the programme team to undertake professional and research development.

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The programme team should submit the form, used to obtain students' consent.

Reason: The teaching and learning methods of many of the modules suggest that students may be asked to participate as patients or clients in practical and/or clinical sessions. The programme team informed the Visitors that a consent form was already in use and the Visitors asked to see a copy of this form.

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.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Condition: : The programme team should review the various documents which detail how and where the HPC's Standards of Proficiency are assessed throughout the programme and submit a combined document that can be easily understood by students, placement providers, placement educators and external examiners. The revised document must clearly define what HPC's Standards of Proficiency are covered within each placement module and how these can be achieved.

Reason: The Visitors received an assortment of documents (mapping documents and relevant pages in the different handbooks) both before and during the visit. The Visitors felt that the separate pieces of information were disjointed and many assumed

a prior knowledge (e.g., there was no key, acronyms were used, and there was an unexplained colour coding). The Visitors wish to see a simplified presentation of the linkage between the HPC Standards of Proficiency, the learning outcomes, the teaching and learning methods and the individual pieces of assessment, so that new students and placement educators can easily track how and where the HPC Standards of Proficiency are assessed through the programme.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The programme team should review the handbooks and module descriptors to ensure that the both the reading lists and references to the HPC are up-to-date.

Reason: Some of the reading lists in module descriptors contained out of date editions of texts and the Visitors wish for students to be directed to the current editions. The handbooks include references to 'state registration' and 'the HPC being a professional body', both of which are factually inaccurate. The term 'state registration' is outdated and the HPC is a regulatory body, not a professional body.

5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement, which will include information about and understanding of the following:

5.7.1 the learning outcomes to be achieved;

5.8 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators:

5.8.1 have relevant qualification and experience;

5.8.2 are appropriately registered; and

5.8.3 undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team should submit information on the University's requirements for placement educators (in terms of their expected qualifications, experience and training) and evidence to support this for the individuals who are currently in place to act as placement educators ('training officers') from September 2006 onwards.

Reason: During the meetings with the senior team and programme team, the requirements for placement educators were discussed and certain qualifications, levels of post and models of training felt appropriate. The Visitors wish to receive a formalised version of these discussions, so that the criterion for becoming a placement educator on this programme is documented and can be used when new and/or replacement appointments are made in the future. The information about the University's plans for training (both initial and refresher) should be comprehensive and show how the placement educators will be prepared for the delivery and assessment of the placement modules as well as the role of project supervisor. Following on from this, the Visitors wish to receive evidence (if possible CVs) of the

current placement educators to ensure that they are appropriately qualified and experienced.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide:

5.3.1 a safe environment; and for

5.3.2 safe and effective practice.

Condition: The programme team should clarify the mechanism in place for checking whether placement sites are CPA accredited and detail the contingency plans for when CPA accreditation lapses and/or is provisional.

Reason: During the meeting with the placement educators, it became apparent that the one of the placements only had provisional CPA accreditation and although the underlying reason had been addressed, it concerned the Visitors that the University did not have a system in place for ensuring CPA accreditation and taking action when necessary. The Visitors felt that a monitoring mechanism was needed to ensure a safe environment and safe and effective practice.

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

Condition: The programme team should clarify the system for monitoring all placements.

Reason: During the meeting with the programme team, it was explained that the new Clinical Tutor post would hold responsibility for monitoring placements and that this would involve frequent communication with the placement educators and visits to the placements. The Visitors wish to receive more detail on how the monitoring will happen at an operational level (i.e. how many visits will take place? How often will the visits be? Who will the clinical tutor meet with? What records will be kept of these visits?) and how the monitoring is embedded into the University quality assurance systems (i.e. how will this evidence be considered and actioned (if necessary) by the University? Who has ultimate responsibility to monitoring placements?). The Visitors believe that this information is necessary to determine whether the system in place is thorough and effective.

6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The programme team should clarify the mechanisms in place for the internal and external moderation of the placement modules.

Reason: The documentation clearly details the system of internal and external moderation that is in place for all taught modules; however, there is no reference to the placement modules. From the meeting with the placement educators, it became apparent that the roles of moderation, second marking and external examiners had not been discussed with them. The timelines in the placement educator handbook imply

there is no period of internal moderation. The Visitors wish to see evidence that there is an effective mechanism in place to assure the standards in *all* the modules included in the programme.

6.7 Assessment regulations clearly specify requirements:

6.7.5 for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team should provide evidence of the appointment of an external examiner from the Biomedical Sciences part of the Register.

Reason: There was no information in the documentation received prior to the visit detailing the credentials of the existing external examiners for the programme. However, after discussion with the programme team, it became evident that a new external examiner, who is HPC registered, needs to be appointed. The Visitors wish to see evidence that the University is seeking the appointment of a new external examiner who is HPC registered.

Deadline for Conditions to be met: Friday 14 July 2006

To be submitted to Approvals Panel on: 3 August 2006

RECOMMENDATIONS

3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider tightening up the information in the student handbook, which relates to how students make up any absences from their placement modules.

Reason: The information in the handbook currently suggests the arrangements for making up of missed time from a placement will be negotiated on a case by case basis by the programme leader and placement educator. The Visitors welcomed the flexible approach adopted by the programme team but felt that in some circumstances, students may be unable to make up the missed time (either because there is insufficient time or the placement educators are unable to take students at certain times of the year) and this possibility and the implications should be flagged up to students. The Visitors suggested that the programme team consider using 'cut off' points (i.e. more than 50% or 500 hours missed) so that students are aware that periods of absence may result in an extension to the three year programme and/or a revised programme of study).

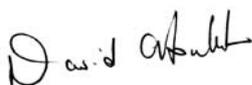
COMMENDATIONS

- The liaison and collaboration between Strategic Health Authority Multi Professional Deanery, the hospitals and the University.
- The secured funding arrangements for the delivery programme over the next eight years.

The nature and quality of instruction and facilities meets the Standards of Education and Training.

We recommend to the Education and Training Committee of the HPC that they approve this programme (subject to any conditions being met).

Visitors' signatures:



David Houlston

Christine Murphy

Date: 6 July 2006