

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Oxford Brookes University
Programme name	MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Occupational therapist
Date of visit	1 – 2 June 2011

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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 'Occupational 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 approval of the programme. The education provider has until 27 July 2011 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 25 August 2011. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

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 25 August 2011. At the Committee meeting on 6 December 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. The education provider validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered an MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-registration) 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 all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. A separate report exists for the other programme. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Joanna Goodwin (Occupational therapist) Kathryn Heathcote (Physiotherapist) Dugald MacInnes (Lay Visitor)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
Proposed student numbers	15 per cohort
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2012
Chair	Peter Bradley (Oxford Brookes University)
Secretary	N/A (Meetings were recorded)
Members of the joint panel	Ailsa Clarke (Internal Panel Member) Hilary Currie (Internal Panel Member) Louise Scowen (Internal Panel Member) Phil Harper (Internal Panel Member) Meera Shah (Internal Panel Member) Joy Butcher (External Panel Member) Caroline Grant (College of Occupational Therapists) Chris McKenna (College of Occupational Therapists) Gail Boniface (College of Occupational Therapists)

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"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit as there are currently no external examiners as 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 BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy and BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy programmes as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

The visitors did not see the library facilities during the tour at the visit. The visitors received the information they needed regarding the library resources during the meetings of the visit.

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 52 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 5 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

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

Condition: The programme team must resubmit any revised programme documentation to ensure the information included is accurate and supports student learning.

Reason: Documentation received prior to the visit was presented in draft form and the visitors noted there were some instances of inaccurate information in them. In Document 1- Student programme handbook, the visitors noted the statement, “graduates meet the criteria for their students to apply eligibility for registration with the HPC on graduation” (p12). On completion of an approved programme a successful student will be eligible to apply for HPC registration. Therefore, for clarity, the visitors require this sentence to be corrected and all statements referring to the eligibility to apply for HPC registration to be checked for accuracy. Also in the Student programme handbook, the visitors noted there was an instance of a confusing statement, “The College of Occupational Therapists (COT)...represents the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) for approval and accreditation of all occupational therapy programmes in the UK” (p12). This terminology is inaccurate in that the COT accredits programmes and the HPC are the body who approve programmes. For clarity the visitors require this sentence to be corrected and all statements referring to the bodies accrediting, validating or approving the programme to be checked for accuracy. In Document 2 – Appendix 7, section 16, the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy programme was referenced instead of the MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration) programme. To ensure clarity, the visitors require all documents to be checked and corrected, where necessary, to ensure the correct programme is referred to in the correct final versions.

It was indicated the programme team may need to make other revisions to programme documentation in light of the discussions raised at this joint event. In particular this involved the programme learning outcomes, the module learning outcomes and the assessment methods. The visitors require any documentation that is revised to be resubmitted. This is to ensure there are no instances of inaccurate information in the final documentation and that the visitors have the necessary evidence to be sure that the learning resources developed by the programme team are effectively used.

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.

Condition: The programme team must submit the final versions of the module descriptors for the programme.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors for the programme. However, the module descriptors seen were draft and not finalised versions. Discussions at the visit indicated the programme team will make changes to the programme learning outcomes, the module

learning outcomes and assessments as a result of this joint event. The visitors can not determine whether this standard is met until the programme documentation is finalised. As such the visitors will need to review the finalised documentation to determine that the learning outcomes ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the register. The visitors therefore require the programme team to submit the finalised module descriptors for the programme to ensure that the programme meets this standard.

4.8 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence that demonstrates the learning and teaching approaches used for this programme are appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Reason: Documentation provided indicated the programme team planned to implement “dual level teaching” for the programme; students on the programme would “learn the core skills and specific attributes of occupational therapy alongside the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy students” (Document 1 – Student handbook, p36). Discussion at the visit indicated that although the teaching in lectures would be carried out simultaneously, there would be tutorials attached to the modules in which learning at the two different programme levels would be separate. Discussion at the visit examined the student cohort numbers expected. The programme team were aware the numbers of students on the programme may be low. If numbers of students on this MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) programme were very low it was discussed that tutorial sessions may not be as effective as they would be if there were higher numbers of students. Other means of giving the students the tutorial experience required, such as holding tutorials alongside students from the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy programme, were presented as an option if this occurred.

The visitors were concerned the programme team had not fully considered the implications of having lower numbers on the MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) programme. The visitors require reassurances that the learning strategies used for the MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) students are appropriate to ensure the profession specific learning needs for their level particularly in the tutorial sessions. The visitors suggest the programme team plan a strategy to use if numbers of students on the programme are low. The strategy should take into account the learning needs for the students completing the programme at this level as opposed to the lower level of the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy programme. The visitors therefore require the programme team to provide further evidence that demonstrates the learning and teaching approaches used for this programme are appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must submit the final versions of the module descriptors for the programme.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors for the programme. However, the module descriptors seen were draft and not finalised versions. Discussions at the visit indicated the programme team will make changes to the programme learning outcomes, the module learning outcomes and assessments as a result of this joint event. The visitors can not determine whether this standard is met until the programme documentation is finalised. As such the visitors will need to review the finalised documentation to determine that assessments of the learning outcomes ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the register. The visitors therefore require the programme team to submit the finalised module descriptors for the programme to ensure that the programme meets this standard.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Condition: The programme team must submit the final versions of the module information and the assessment methods for the programme.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included details about the module assessment methods of the programme in the module descriptors and student handbooks. However, the documents describing this module information were draft and not finalised versions. Discussions at the visit indicated the programme team will make changes to the assessment methods as a result of this joint event. The visitors can not determine whether this standard is met until the programme documentation is finalised. As such the visitors will need to review the assessment methods to ensure they will be appropriate to measure the learning outcomes and ensure those who successfully complete the programme can practise safe and effectively. The visitors therefore require the programme team to submit the finalised documentation that describes the assessment methods for the programme to ensure that the programme meets this standard.

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 creating a checklist of information they will provide for potential applicants when they come to create the advertising materials for the programme.

Reason: The visitors have seen 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 education providers' internal requirements for the approval, accreditation and validation process to be complete. The visitors suggest the programme team create a checklist to ensure specific information is included in the advertising material for this programme. The visitors suggest the checklist include the criminal convictions check, health requirements, the fees to be paid for the programme (and associated details), the English level language requirements (both for entry to the programme and upon entry to the Register), and the fact that the programme will be granting eligibility to apply for HPC registration. The visitors recommend this so the programme team can be sure they are including all relevant and pertinent information for potential applicants.

Joanna Goodwin
Kathryn Heathcote
Dugald MacInnes