

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	Queen Margaret University
<b>Programme name</b>	Diploma in Higher Education Hearing Aid Audiology
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC Register</b>	Hearing aid dispensers
<b>Date of visit</b>	11 – 12 April 2012

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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 'Hearing aid dispenser' 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 12 June 2012. At the Committee meeting on 12 June 2012, 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 Hearing aid dispenser profession came onto the register in 1 April 2010 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider and validating body did not 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 HPC visitors and profession	Hugh Crawford (Hearing aid dispenser) Patricia Fillis (Diagnostic radiographer)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Victoria Adenugba
Proposed student numbers	15 per cohort
First approved intake	September 2009
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2012
Chair	Roni Bamber (Queen Margaret University)
Secretary	Marcus Walker (Queen Margaret University)

## 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 55 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 2 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 number of recommendations 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.

## Conditions

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

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit all of the programme documentation, and any advertising material, to ensure that the terminology in use is accurate and reflective of HPC regulation.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that elements of the programme documentation submitted by the education provider did not comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, there were instances of incorrect or out-of-date terminology with reference to HPC accrediting the programme (Rational for proposed changes, School Academic Board 2011). The HPC does not accredit education programmes we approve education programmes. Within the 'Supervisors handbook' (page 7), the visitors also noted the statement, "... this course also gives graduates a clinical qualification leading to a licence to practice." Upon successful completion of the programme all students become eligible to apply for registration with the HPC and as such the language the education provider uses needs to reflect this. The visitors also noted that the programme documentation and website consistently make reference to HPC regulating 'Hearing Aid Audiologists'. The protected title regulated by the HPC is 'Hearing aid dispenser' which allows registrants to undertake the protected functions associated with the title. The visitors require the education provider to revisit the programme documentation and website to ensure that the protected title is consistently referred to throughout. The visitors considered that the incorrect use of terminology could be misleading to applicants and students and therefore require all programme documentation, including advertising materials, to be amended to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology.

### **5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide further evidence of formal mechanisms in place which ensure that student concerns whilst on placement are managed to ensure all placements remain safe and supportive.

**Reason:** During discussions with the programme team and students the visitors learnt that any issues or concerns that arose whilst students were on campus were dealt with formally and procedures are in place to record issues or concerns. The visitors reviewed these policies and were satisfied that enough support was provided to students whilst they were on campus. However, the visitors also learnt that concerns or issues that arose whilst students were at placement were dealt with informally by the programme leader and no formal record of the concerns or issues were kept. The visitors noted that the current cohort is small and this allowed the programme leader to keep on top of any issues of concerns raised by the students at placements. However as the programme cohort is expected to increase the visitors considered this method of informal monitoring to not be rigorous enough to ensure that all placements remain safe and supportive. The visitors require the programme team to ensure

that formal mechanisms are in place which ensures that student concerns whilst on placement are managed to ensure all placements remain safe and supportive.

## Recommendations

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

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider revisiting the programme documentation to ensure module learning hours correlate with the module credits.

**Reason:** From a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted that the learning hours associated with modules S1160 'Psycho-social aspects of deafness', S1172 'Basic Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology of the Audio-Vestibular System' and S2152 'Counselling Skills 2' did not correlate with the education provider's policy on awarding credit. The visitors recommend that the education provider should review these modules to ensure the module learning hours correlate with the credits awarded.

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

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider amending the student consent protocols to clearly articulate that consent to participate as a service user in practical and clinical teaching can be withdrawn.

**Reason:** The visitors noted discussions with the programme team and students where it was stated that consent to participate as a service user in practical and clinical teaching could be withdrawn at any point in the programme. However, from a review of the current consent protocols the visitors felt that this was not clearly communicated. . The visitors recommend that the education provider consider amending their current consent protocols, including the consent form to clearly articulate that consent to participate as a service user in practical and clinical teaching can be withdrawn.

### **3.15 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 education provider should consider amending the student handbook to clearly articulate the attendance requirements for the programme.

**Reason:** Through discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that students must attend 100 percent of the programme and all elements are therefore mandatory. The visitors also noted that the attendance requirement was stated within each module descriptor and were therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, from a review of the programme documentation the visitors did not feel that the attendance policy was clearly articulated. The visitors recommend that the education provider should consider amending the current student handbook to clearly articulate the attendance requirements as they currently do within the supervisor handbook.

Hugh Crawford  
Patricia Fillis