hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Sheffield Hallam University
Programme name	PG Cert Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP)
Mode of delivery	Full time Part time
Type of programme	Approved mental health professional
Date of visit	21 – 22 January 2015

Contents

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 4 June 2015. At the Committee meeting, 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 criteria for approving AMHP programmes and professionals who complete it will be able to achieve the criteria for approved mental health professionals. 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 part of a joint event. The education provider validated the programme. The education provider and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, 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 HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the criteria for approving approved mental health professional (AMHP) programmes. A separate report, produced by the education provider, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Christine Stogdon (Approved mental health professional)
	Sheila Skelton (Approved mental health professional)
	Kathleen Taylor (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officers (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
Proposed student numbers	20 per cohort once a year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2015
Chair	Peter Grover (Sheffield Hallam University)
Secretary	Lucy J Begley (Sheffield Hallam University)
Members of the joint panel	Lisa Reidy (Internal Panel Member)
	Colette Fegan (Internal Panel Member)
	Jim Rogers (External Panel Member)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the criteria for approving AMHP programmes	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators / mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Service users and carers	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

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 45 of the criteria have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining five criteria.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. 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 can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally 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 provide further evidence to demonstrate that the admissions materials are clear and provide applicants with the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

Reason: In the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors noted that the education provider has detailed the admission procedures and the requirements for admission to the programme. However, during meetings with the students and the programme team, the visitors learnt that some students may have face to face interviews whilst other may not. In addition, during the admission process, the students did not know how students are selected for an interview or otherwise. The visitors also noted that going forward, the education provider will make interviews compulsory as part of the admission process. Nevertheless, the visitors require further evidence to show how applicants are provided with the information, including information about interviews that they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

B.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to show that the partnership arrangements between the education provider and the partner organisations have been finalised and agreed.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation provided, that there are proposed partnership arrangements between the education provider and the partner organisations articulating the responsibilities each partner has in the effective delivery of the programme. In the senior team meeting it was discussed that there are new partner organisations in partnership agreements and that the education provider will update partnership agreements between the education provider and its partner organisations to reflect the changes. The visitors were unsure of the current status of the agreements and were therefore unable to identify how the arrangements will ensure that this programme has a secure position in the education provider's business plan. The visitors will require further evidence to show these partnership agreements are finalised and signed, to determine how the programme has a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

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

Condition: The programme team must revisit the programme documentation to ensure terminology used is accurate and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: In the documentation provided it states that; "all assessment tasks in each module have to be passed with no compensation between them in order to meet

HCPC and regulatory requirements." Programme specification, page 23. The HCPC does not set roles for student progression during a programme, HCPC set standards for education providers. Also "Candidates attending this programme are required to demonstrate their adherence to the HCPC Code of Practice for Social Care Workers see appendix viii" programme handbook, page 13. This statement is incorrect as HCPC does not have code of practice for social care workers however, HCPC has standards that programmes must meet to gain approval. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, to ensure that the terminology used is accurate, reflects the language associated with statutory regulation and avoids any potential confusion for applicants and students.

B.14 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how their policies for absence ensure students who could not attend classes learn about the missed elements of the curriculum.

Reason: From the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors noted the attendance requirements. On page 2 of the student handbook, it states "It is essential that all students take responsibility for their learning by engaging fully with their course and that as a minimum students should". For the practice placement settings, the visitors noted on page 10 of the practice placement handbook "In order for a fair assessment to be made of the student's capability, the student must have been present at the placement for all of the designated number of days allocated to the practice experience". However, the visitors could not determine how the education provider would ensure students who miss classes would learn about the missed elements of the curriculum. The visitors require the education provider to submit further evidence to demonstrate how their policies for absence ensure students who could not attend classes learn about the missed elements of the curriculum.

D.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how they maintain a thorough and effective system of approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: Documentation provided prior to the visit states "We have extensive audit systems in place for the regular and annual review of placement opportunities, which meets established PSRB requirements" programme specification page 8. The visitors learnt through discussions at the visit that the education provider is introducing a new system to approve and monitor placements. Due to the placement audit systems being in development the visitors are unable to determine how this criterion is met. The visitors were content with other criteria in section D although this condition relates to some criteria in section D. The visitors require further evidence of how the new system will be used for this programme to ensure the education provider maintains overall responsibility for the approval and monitoring of placements.

Recommendations

B.15 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme

Recommendation: The visitors recommend the programme team monitors the involvement of service users and carers within the programme.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that service users and carers are involved in the programme and are therefore satisfied that this standard is met at a threshold level. However, during discussions with the programme team, it was indicated that there are planned future developments with service user and carer involvement in different aspects of the programme, such as service users and carers' involvement in admissions and delivery of the programme curriculum. However, the programme team provided limited detail about how this would be done, or how this involvement will directly impact this programme. The visitors feel that the current involvement of service users and carers is at a threshold level, although the education provider have mentioned further plans there was no evidence of their involvement. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team monitor the involvement of service users and carers. The visitors suggest that a more robust service user and carer involvement will allow a greater depth to students' learning and other aspects of the programme.

Christine Stogdon
Kathleen Taylor
Sheila Skelton