

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	Teesside University
<b>Programme name</b>	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy)
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC Register</b>	Practitioner psychologist
<b>Relevant modality / domain</b>	Clinical psychologist
<b>Date of visit</b>	12 – 13 May

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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 'Practitioner psychologist' or 'Clinical psychologist' 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 21 October 2010. At the Committee meeting on 21 October 2010, 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 practitioner psychologist profession came onto the register in 2009 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 part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the 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 the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

## Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Harry Brick (Clinical Psychologist) Alison Nicholls (Dietitian)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ben Potter
Proposed student numbers	15
Initial approval	January 1996
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Jill Morgan (Teesside University)
Secretary	John Holmes (Teesside University) Yvonne Ditchburn (Teesside University)
Members of the joint panel	Jane Johnstone (Internal Panel Member) Fiona Terry (Internal Panel Member) Liz Holey (Internal Panel Member) Susan Cleary (Internal Panel Member) Gordon Mitchell (Internal Panel Member) Allan Winthrop (Internal Panel Member) Alison Guy (Internal Panel Member) Steve Green (Internal Panel Member) Chrissie Blackburn (External Panel Member)

	Myra Cooper (External Panel Member) Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society) Steve Davies (British Psychological Society) Francis Blumenfeld (British Psychological Society) Mary O'Reilly (British Psychological Society) Posy Knights (British Psychological Society)
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## 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 47 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 10 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.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

## Conditions

### **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.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and any advertising material to ensure that the terminology in use is accurate and reflective of the current terminology used in relation to statutory regulation.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, there were instances of out-of-date terminology in reference to HPC 'accrediting' the programme. The HPC does not 'accredit' education programmes instead we 'approve' education programmes. The visitors considered the terminology to be misleading to applicants and students and therefore required the documentation to be reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology throughout.

### **2.3 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to ensure that the procedures relating to selection and entry criteria, particularly the process enacted for checking applicants for criminal convictions, is clearly stated.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team the visitors were satisfied that the education provider had in place clear admissions procedures and entry criteria in relation to the programme, including a clear process for checking applicants for previous criminal convictions. However, the processes as detailed within the documentation did not consistently state that this was to be an 'enhanced' criminal records bureau (CRB) check and the visitors felt this could be misleading for applicants. The visitors therefore required the education provider to revise their documentation to accurately reflect that any CRB check was to be an 'enhanced' check as described by the programme team during the visit.

### **2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to ensure that the procedures relating to selection and entry criteria, particularly selection and entry criteria, regarding compliance with any health requirements, is clearly stated.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team the visitors were satisfied that the education provider had in place clear admissions procedures and entry criteria in relation to the programme, including a clear process for applying health checks. However in discussion with the programme team it was clear that the first document a potential applicant would receive stating the need for them to undergo a health check would be the letter offering them a place on the programme. The visitors felt this could be misleading for applicants as none of

the advertising materials made reference to the need for a health check and it could affect a potential students' decision to apply to the programme. The visitors therefore required the education provider to revise their advertising material and documentation to accurately reflect that applicants need to undergo a health check before successfully taking up a place on the programme

**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.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revise the programme documentation to identify the mandatory attendance requirements and the associated attendance policy for the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that the documentation provided prior to the visit had only one section regarding attendance for the students. The section stated "Trainees who are unable to progress because of less than 56 days attendance in each placement will be required to undertake either the whole or part of the clinical experience again..." and identified that attendance would be monitored, recorded and the professional suitability process would deal with poor attendance (programme handbook p17). There was no further mention of attendance in the documentation. In discussion with students the visitors noted that there was an assumption that there was an informal mandatory attendance level of 80%. This was contradicted in discussion with the programme team who suggested that 100% attendance was expected. The visitors were also unable to identify any courses of action that would take place prior to the instigation of the professional suitability process if this level was not met. This could lead to students assuming a required level which could lead to academic appeals when decisions around attendance are taken. The visitors therefore require revised programme documentation to identify any mandatory attendance requirements and the associated attendance policy for the programme.

**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 education provider must revise and resubmit the HPC Standards of Proficiency (SOP) mapping document of the programme to clearly reference how the learning outcomes of the programme allow students to meet the following standards of proficiency;

- **2b.2 understand therapeutic techniques and processes as applied when working with a range of individuals in distress including those who experience difficulties related to anxiety, mood, adjustment to adverse circumstances or life-events, eating, psychosis, use of substances, and those with somatoform, psychosexual, developmental, personality, cognitive and neurological presentations.**
- **2b.5 be able to maintain records appropriately**
  - **be able to keep accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other information in**



**Reason:** The visitors noted in the programme documentation and in discussions with students that standards of conduct performance and ethics are dealt with in the curriculum. However they also noted in the documentation that references to HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics were not prevalent and the Guidance on conduct and ethics for students did not appear in module reading lists. In discussion with the students it was clear that they did not understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that the programme documentation includes specific references to HPC's standards of conduct performance and ethics especially where the professional body's standards are mentioned. They also require evidence to demonstrate that the student guidance on the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics is included in relevant reading lists to ensure that this standard continues to be met.

### **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 education provider must review the programme documentation to make explicit that where the learning outcomes allow students to meet the following HPC Standards of Proficiency they are adequately assessed;

- **2b.2 understand therapeutic techniques and processes as applied when working with a range of individuals in distress including those who experience difficulties related to anxiety, mood, adjustment to adverse circumstances or life-events, eating, psychosis, use of substances, and those with somatoform, psychosexual, developmental, personality, cognitive and neurological presentations.**
- **2b.5 be able to maintain records appropriately**
  - **be able to keep accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines**
  - **understand the need to use only accepted terminology in making**
- **3a.1 know and understand the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge which are relevant to their profession-specific practice**
  - **understand the structure and function of the human body, relevant to their practice, together with a knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction**
  - **understand psychological models related to a range of presentations including:**
    - **clients with presentations from acute to enduring and mild to severe;**
    - **problems with biological or neuropsychological causation; and**
    - **problems with mainly psychosocial factors including problems of coping, adaptation and resilience to adverse circumstances and life events, including**

**bereavement and other chronic physical and mental health conditions**

- **understand psychological models related to working:**
  - **with individual clients, couples, families, carers, groups and at the organisational and community level; and**
  - **in a variety of settings including in-patient or other residential facilities with high-dependency needs, secondary health care, and community or primary care**
- **understand the impact of psychopharmacological and other clinical interventions on psychological work with clients**

**Reason:** As in SET4.1 the visitors noted that the cross-referencing mapping document of the programme to HPC Standards of Proficiency had errors in the referencing. This affected SOPs 2b.2, 2b.5, and 3a.1 which means that students completing the programme may not meet the relevant standards of proficiency. The visitors require the programme team to demonstrate how the learning outcomes which enable students to meet these SOPs are assessed which in turn ensuring that students meet these SOPs when completing the programme.

**6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that any exit awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HPC Register.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team the visitors were satisfied that anyone achieving an exit award other than the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology would not be eligible to apply for registration with the HPC. However in the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the policy for any exit awards from the programme. Therefore visitors need to see evidence that the policy is clearly articulated and that any exit award would not enable students to be eligible to apply to the Register, to ensure that this standard continues to be met.

**6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HPC Register.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team the visitors were satisfied that aegrotat awards were not awarded to students on this programme. However in the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the policy for aegrotat awards. This could lead to the assumption that the education provider regulations supersede the programme specific regulations and that an aegrotat award may be conferred. Therefore visitors need to see evidence that this policy is clearly communicated within the programme documentation, so that it is clear that aegrotat awards would not enable students

to be eligible to apply to the Register to ensure that this standard continues to be met.

**6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed with the HPC.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail in the external examiner recruitment policy. The visitors were happy with the external examiner arrangements for the programme but need to see evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of this requirement.

## Recommendations

### **3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider providing clearer signposting to the student complaints process.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in the documentation and in discussion with the programme team that there is a comprehensive education provider wide student complaints process. The visitors are therefore satisfied that the SET is met. However the visitors identified in discussion with the students that awareness of the process was not high. To increase awareness of the process the visitors recommend that it is clearly signposted to students rather than the general website link being provided. This could then ensure that students are able to access any required information about the complaints process quickly and easily.

### **5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.**

**Recommendation:** That the education provider should consider monitoring the training undertaken by practice placement educators and consider providing additional encouragement to undertake the refresher training provided.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in discussions with the practice placement providers and programme team that the education provider provides regular training days at the University for practice placement educators. They also noted that all practice placement educators have undergone some form of training prior to supervising a student. The visitors are therefore satisfied that the SET is met. However, to maintain consistency across practice placements, the visitors consider that the efforts to encourage practice placement educators to undertake refresher training should be monitored and additional encouragement could be targeted at those practice placement educators who have not undertaken training recently.

Alison Nicholls  
Harry Brick