hpc health professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Bristol
Programme name	Doctorate of Educational Psychology (D.Ed.Psy)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Educational psychologist
Date of visit	21 – 22 April 2010

Contents

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 'Educational 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 07 July 2010. At the Committee meeting on 16 September 2011, 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 psychology profession came onto the register in July 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 professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Angela Duxbury (Radiotherapist) Judith Bamford (Practitioner Psychologist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Lewis Roberts
Proposed student numbers	12
Chair	Jan Noyles (University of Bristol)
Secretary	Naomi Williams (University of Bristol)
Members of the joint panel	Sue Rendall (British Psychological Society) Charan Peter Hobbs (British Psychological Society) Simon Gibbs (British Psychological Society) Kath Fingleton (British Psychological Society) Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society) Rupal Nathwani (British Psychological Society)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐
Pre Course details and pre-course selected reading	☒	☐	☐
Annual programme review	☒	☐	☐
Business plan and financial information (2009/2010)	☒	☐	☐
Dissertation handbook	☒	☐	☐
End of year evaluations	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
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 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 49 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 8 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 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 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

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit all programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure that a clear trainee declaration procedure is in place for criminal conviction checks, supported by a clear procedure to manage and document the process. The education provider must also ensure that applicants are clearly aware of the requirement to undertake a criminal conviction check during the admissions procedure.

Reason: From a review of the advertising material the visitors noted that the requirement to undertake a criminal conviction check is not clearly outlined. From a review of the documentation submitted and discussions with the programme team and trainees it was also clear that no formal procedure was in place to ensure that trainees were made aware of the requirement to continually disclose criminal convictions throughout the duration of the programme. The visitors also noted that the education provider did not have a mechanism in place to record any such disclosure or formal procedure in place to deal with an applicant or trainee who declares a criminal conviction. The visitors require the education provider to inform trainees about the policy and their right to confidentiality. The visitors also require the education provider to make it clear within the advertising material that a criminal conviction check is a pre-requisite of entry on to the programme. The visitors therefore require further information to ensure that this standard is met.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must revisit all programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure that accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms are clearly explained and articulated to applicants and trainees.

Reason: From the documentation provided and from discussions with the programme team the visitors could not determine the mechanisms that were in place to inform applicants and trainees of the inclusion mechanisms that the education provider has in place, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning. The visitors could see no evidence of a policy and procedure for agreeing and awarding credits, no indication of how much prior experience and learning the education provider will accept. The visitors therefore require further information to ensure that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that a system is in place for gaining students informed consent before they participate as service users in practical teaching.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not find any evidence of a consent procedure in place to mitigate any risk involved in trainees participating as service users. The visitors require further evidence to show the consent policy in place, how the education provider will collect consent and also how they will inform students about this policy and their right to confidentiality.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and clearly articulate the monitoring mechanism used to ensure that practice placement educators receive current training.

Reason: From the documents submitted and discussions with the programme team it was not made clear that there were sufficient recording and monitoring mechanisms in place to demonstrate that all new practice placement educators are receiving both initial training and regular refresher training. The visitors require clarification on how the education provider records and monitors the training of new practice placement educators. The visitors also require information on how it is determined if a practice placement educator needs refresher training and how this is articulated to the relevant parties. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation clearly articulate the monitoring mechanism used to ensure that practice placement educators are appropriately registered.

Reason: From the documents submitted and discussions with the programme team the visitors could find no evidence that the education provider has mechanisms in place to demonstrate that all practice placement educators are appropriately registered. The visitors require clarification on how the education provider records and monitors the registration status of its practice placement educators. The visitors also require clarification on the process and procedure in place if the education provider chooses to utilise practice placement educators who are not registered with the HPC. The visitors would require details on the mechanism in place to collect information about their experience, qualifications and training relevant to the practice placement. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and clearly articulate the programme assessment regulations, specifying requirements for trainee progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: From the documentation submitted and discussions with trainees it was clear that trainees are not informed of the education providers' general assessment regulations and code of practice for research degree programmes.

The programme documentation states that there is no step-off or exit award for the programme. However within the education providers' general assessment regulations reference is made to a masters, postgraduate diploma and postgraduate certificate in research and professional studies in educational psychology. Step-off or exit awards should be named in a way that makes it clear that they do not lead to the person receiving them being eligible to apply for registration. Any step-off or exit award from an approved programme can not reference the protected title.

The visitors require further information to demonstrate how the education provider decides what prevents a student from progressing and the options that are available to a failing student. The visitors also require information outlining the maximum length of study a trainee could undertake to complete the programme and details of the process used to judge the currency of trainee learning if any form of deferment took place. Therefore the visitors require amendments to be made to the programme documentation to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

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, including assessment regulations, or other relevant policies and clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to the HPC protected title.

Reason: From the documentation submitted the visitors noted that in the education providers' assessment regulations reference is made to a masters, postgraduate diploma and postgraduate certificate in research and professional studies in educational psychology. Step-off or exit awards should be named in a way that makes it clear that they do not lead to the person receiving them being eligible to apply for registration. Any step-off or exit award from an approved programme can not reference the protected title. The visitors require the protected title to be removed from the step-off or exit awards title. In addition the visitors require a clear statement that outlines that exit awards do not lead to eligibility to register with the HPC. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being 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 clearly state within their programme documentation that trainees awarded with an aegrotat award are not eligible to apply for registration for admission to the Register.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors could find no evidence of a policy clearly stating that trainees awarded an aegrotat award are not eligible to apply for registration with the HPC. The visitors could also find no evidence to suggest that a mechanism is in place to communicate this

message to trainees. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

Recommendations

4.9 When there is interprofessional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the education provider should consider readdressing the standards of education and training cross-mapping document to give reference to the areas that are mapped within the standard of proficiency cross-mapping document under 1b.1.

Reason: The visitors noted that in the standards of education and training cross-mapping document presented by the education provider has been mapped as not applicable. The visitors also noted through discussion with the programme team that interprofessional learning was addressed as part of the programme. The visitors noted that no reference was made within the standards of education and training cross-mapping to the mapped areas outlined in the standard of proficiency cross-mapping document under 1b.1. The visitors are happy that this standard is being met but recommend that the standards of education and training cross mapping document is amended to reflect the many opportunities that trainees have to experience and reflect on during this programme, to learn from interprofessional working.

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Angela Duxbury
Judith Bamford

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