

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Cumbria
Programme name	MSc Physiotherapy (Accelerated route)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC register	Physiotherapy
Date of visit	15 and 16 January 2008

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction	2
Visit details	2
Sources of evidence.....	4
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions	6
Recommendations	6

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 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Physiotherapist' or 'Physical 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. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee on 26 March 2008. At the Education and Training Committee's meeting on 29 May 2008, 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 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Professor Valerie Maehle (Physiotherapist) Mr Anthony Power (Physiotherapist)
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HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
HPC observer	Paula Lescott
Proposed student numbers	10
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2008
Chair	Dr Hugh Cutler University of Cumbria
Secretary	Caron Jackson University of Cumbria
Members of the joint panel	<p>Dr Pam Bagley University of Cumbria External Panel Member/ Chartered Society of Physiotherapists</p> <p>Tim Barry, University of Cumbria Internal Panel Member</p> <p>Dr Joanna Jackson, University of Cumbria External Panel Member/ Chartered Society of Physiotherapists</p> <p>Lois Mansfield, University of Cumbria Internal Panel Member</p> <p>Nina Thompson, Quality Assurance Officer for Chartered Society of Physiotherapists</p>

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	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiner reports prior to the visit as the education provider did not submit them as the programme being reviewed was 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	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators/mentors	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy programme, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

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.

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 60 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 3 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.

Conditions

- 2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make, or take up a place on a programme.**

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation removing all reference to “Licence to Practice”.

Reason: Currently there is reference to “Licence to Practice” in several of the documents provided by the education provider and there is no such title available to registrants with the HPC.

- 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 redraft and resubmit documentation to clearly articulate how students from a non physiotherapy background will meet the required level of practical skills to meet Standard of Proficiency 3a.1 “know and understand the key concepts of bodies of knowledge which are relevant to their profession-specific practice”.

Reason: It was unclear to the visitors from the documentation provided how the students entering the programme with a non physiotherapy background would be able to gain the skills necessary to meet the standard of proficiency 3a.1 within the proposed time allocation.

- 4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.**

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit documentation to make reference HPC’s Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: Currently the documentation makes reference to the professional body documentation relating to conduct performance and ethics but there was no reference to the HPC publication. Students need to read this documentation in order to know what will be expected of them once they have graduated and attained registration with the HPC.

Recommendations

- 3.4 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff in place to deliver an effective programme.**

Recommendation: The education provider should continue to monitor the workload of staff to meet the increased demand on staff time when the MSc programme commences.

Reason: Once the new MSc programme comes on line there will be different demands on staff time in terms of student demands and teaching

load and this will need constant monitoring to meet staff and student needs.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider widening the range of non traditional physiotherapy placement areas.

Reason: The visitors felt that there was a good opportunity for the programme team to investigate the possibility of non traditional physiotherapy placements within the Carlisle area.

Professor Valerie Maehle
Mr Anthony Power