

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Hull
Programme name	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (ClinPsyD)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	20 - 21 January 2011

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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 16 February 2011. At the Committee meeting on 9 June 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	Sabiha Azmi (Clinical psychologist) Ruth Baker (Clinical psychologist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
Proposed student numbers	15 per cohort once a year
Initial approval	1 January 1992
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	26 September 2011
Chair	Dina Lewis (University of Hull)
Secretary	Beverley Leak (University of Hull)
Members of the joint panel	Helen Dent (British Psychological Society) Ian Fleming (British Psychological Society) Eve Knight (British Psychological Society) Robert Knight (British Psychological Society) Molly Ross (British Psychological Society) Nikos Zygouris (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	<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"/>
Programme documentation produced for visit	<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.

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

Conditions

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 programme documentation to clearly identify the minimum attendance requirements for time on placements and the associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Reason: The programme documentation submitted prior to the visit did not clearly specify the minimum attendance requirements or the associated monitoring mechanisms in place for trainees at placement. Discussions with the trainees indicated they knew the procedures to follow when absences were necessary however did not know the minimum requirement for their time on placement. Discussions with the programme team indicated there was a minimum requirement for time on placement but they could not confirm of the specific amount.

From the evidence received the visitors were not satisfied the minimum requirements were being fully communicated to the trainees, placement providers and teaching staff or were being monitored in a formal way. The visitors also noted that if all parties involved on placement were not aware of the threshold requirement, it would be difficult for the education provider to monitor and step in to take action to ensure absence does not affect a trainee's learning and development on placement. The visitors were concerned that this could affect the meeting of the learning outcomes and therefore the standards of proficiency,

The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be revised to communicate to trainees, placement staff and programme staff, the minimum attendance requirements for time on placements and the associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The education provider must provide further documentation which clearly outlines how all placement supervisors are fully prepared for each individual placement.

Reason: The placement documentation submitted prior to the visit described the necessary meetings for trainees at placement as the 'initial placement

contracting' meeting, a Mid-Placement Review (MPR) and an End of Placement Review (EPR). The 'initial placement contracting' meeting is used to draw up and sign a contract between the clinical supervisor and the trainee using the trainee's Placement Planning and Assessment Pack (PPAP) to identify goals and developmental needs to be addressed at the placement. The MPR are meetings halfway through the placement where the PPAP is reviewed by the trainee, clinical supervisor and clinical tutor to ensure the learning outcomes and developmental needs are being addressed fully. The EPR is where the placement is discussed between the trainee and clinical supervisor, the PPAP is then used to record placement outcomes and learning outcomes, goals and developmental needs to be addressed at the future placement. The trainee then takes their PPAP to their new placement clinical supervisor. Copies of the PPAP after the EPR and 'initial placement contracting' meeting are taken and sent to the clinical tutor but it falls solely to the trainee to take the PPAP information forward with their new placement supervisor.

Discussions with the trainees and placement supervisors confirmed the programme team did not become involved with the setting of the developmental goals at the initial stage of commencing the placements. It was the trainees responsibility to disclose information regarding their development at the 'initial placement contracting' meeting. Discussions with the trainees also highlighted that the PPAP was used in varying ways and sometimes not at all. Discussions with the trainees and placements supervisors additionally highlighted that it was only if there was a serious concern or incident in the previous placement would information be passed forward to alert the new placement at an early stage.

The visitors noted that there was a risk of trainees failing to alert placement supervisors to their developmental needs and in these circumstances it would only be at the MPR that significant areas which needed attention would be highlighted by the education provider. The visitors considered that to ensure all learning outcomes are addressed fully and in order for the trainee and clinical supervisor to be fully prepared for placements, the education provider must evidence how they are monitoring and ensuring that all learning outcomes are addressed at placements, throughout the placement period and from one placement experience to another.

The visitors therefore require further evidence which clearly articulates how the education provider will ensure each placement supervisor is fully prepared for each individual placement.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- the learning outcomes to be achieved;
- the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;
- expectations of professional conduct;
- the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and
- communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider must revise documentation to clearly communicate the assessment of practice placements.

Reason: Documentation submitted prior to the visit described assessment of the practice placement in terms of the trainee's Placement Planning and Assessment Pack (PPAP) and the Clinical Practice Evaluation (CPE). The documents were unclear as to how the assessment of the PPAP influences the overall assessments of placements. This is described as a formative assessment but it also states that it contributes "to the supervisors' judgement about trainee progress, which results in their (summative) decision to pass or fail the placement" (p58 The Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Handbook). Additionally the visitors noted that if there are two failed placements as a result of the PPAP the trainee is removed from the programme (p37, C12 - Supervisors Handbook). From this the visitors felt the documents were indicating that the PPAP outcome directly affects the trainee's status with the programme and as such it could not be considered a formative assessment. Discussions with the trainees and placement providers indicated that they were also unclear how the PPAP was linked to the overall assessment for as they felt the PPAP assessment was summative.

Discussions with the programme team clarified the purpose of the PPAP and how the assessments of both the PPAP and the CPE related to the overall assessment of clinical placements for the trainee. It was confirmed that the PPAP is a developmental tool and therefore has no grading system, rather the 'pass / fail' criteria are the markers for clinical supervisors to use to show the development of the trainee and are to always be used with the formative descriptions of the trainee's practice. The CPE is completely separate from the PPAP and is the summative assessment of the trainee's practice. In cases where the PPAP is marked as a 'fail', the outcomes of both the CPE and the PPAP are taken into consideration by a process which includes an external examiner being brought in to assess the situation on a case by case basis. This process is only used when the marks for the CPE and the PPAP differ.

The visitors were satisfied with the discussions and the processes described however were not satisfied this information was being communicated clearly for the trainees and clinical supervisors. Therefore the visitors require the programme team to revise all relevant placement documentation to clearly show the relationship between the assessments of the CPE and PPAP and the processes which link them to the overall assessment of the trainee.

Recommendations

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.

Recommendation: The programme team may wish to consider furthering their engagement with the admissions procedures for the undergraduate programmes that this doctorate programme recruits from in order to encourage a diverse range of students on the programme.

Reason: The programme detailed its admissions procedures and stated that it only recruits trainees from the clinical psychology undergraduate programmes currently running at the University of Hull and the University of York. The trainees are selected whilst still on these undergraduate programmes and start immediately on this doctorate programme when they have completed the undergraduate programme. The visitors realise that with such a recruitment procedure it can be difficult to encourage a diverse range of persons for this programme as the 'selection pool' is limited by the undergraduate programmes. The visitors wish to recommend the programme team consider engaging further (such as informing potential applicants to the possibilities for this doctorate programme at open days or selection days) with the recruitment procedures for the undergraduate programmes to encourage as wide a 'selection pool' as possible for this programme.

3.4 There must be a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme who must be appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be on the relevant part of the Register.

Recommendation: The programme team may wish to consider formally implementing contingency procedures to support themselves in case the Course Director position is not recruited at the next round of appointments.

Reason: At the time of the visit the Course Director was planning to retire, although was remaining in post whilst a replacement was found. Discussions at the visit indicated the Course Director position was open to recruitment procedures and the programme team had plans in place for when they recruited the position in order to support the new Course Director. There was also discussion surrounding the plans if the Course Director was not recruited and acting-up positions would need to be created. The visitors were happy with the verbalised arrangements but would recommend the programme team formalise the arrangements to minimise disruption to the programme team if they are unable to recruit at this next stage. The visitors also wish to highlight to the programme team that when they do recruit a new Course Director the HPC will need to be informed appropriately.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend the programme team continues in their efforts to use service users in the development of the programme.

Reason: During discussion at the visit the programme team gave details of where in the programme service users are utilised. Service users were used at placements in direct work with trainees and also through teaching on the programme in modules. The programme team indicated they were looking to increase the use of service users to also inform the improvement and development of the programme. The visitors noted that to keep the curriculum relevant to current practice, service users were a useful tool and wish to support the programme team in their efforts to make more use of the service users to develop their programme.

5.13 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of service users and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Recommendation: The programme team may wish to consider expanding the consent protocols used with service users at placement.

Reason: The documentation and discussions at the visit detailed consent protocols that are currently used at placements for informing service users' that trainees will be practising. The visitors wished to recommend that, along with obtaining consent for trainees to practice, the programme team also include obtaining consent for the service user experiences to be used during writing up of case studies in academic work. The visitors were happy that the information is made anonymous but felt service users could also be informed that they may be used as (anonymous) case studies in academic work. The visitors suggest this could be done in a variety of ways such as including it on a form to be completed and signed by the consenting service user or by including it in any discussion about consent between trainee and service user.

6.10 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for a procedure for the right of appeal for students.

Recommendation: The programme team may wish to consider how they disseminate information regarding academic appeal procedures for all cohorts on the programme.

Reason: Documentation provided prior to the visit indicated the programme documentation did mention the academic appeals process in the form of a weblink to the process. Discussions with the trainees indicated that they were aware of the appeals process when it had affected someone in their cohort. They all were certain they would be able to find the information but were unsure where to look for it. In light of the fact that across the three years of the programme there were varying levels of knowledge about the appeals process the visitors

recommend the programme team consider further disseminating information about the appeals process throughout the programme (such as during inductions each year, adding further information to student documents or through regular updates).

Sabiha Azmi
Ruth Baker