

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Leicester
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time
Approval visit date	09 January 2018
Case reference	CAS-12094-Z1P5Z0

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as ‘our standards’). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Ian Hughes	Lay
Anthony Power	Physiotherapist
Kathryn Heathcote	Physiotherapist
Shaista Ahmad	HCPC executive
Tamara Wasylec	HCPC executive (observer)

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Bob Norman	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Leicester
Sergio Gonzalez	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Leicester
Katy Baines	CSP Education Advisor	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Nina Paterson	CSP Education Representative	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Isabella Oyelade	CSP Education Representative	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 October 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 50
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01769

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Not Required. This information is not required because this is a new programme.

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met
Learners	Yes
Senior staff	Yes
Practice education providers and educators	Yes

Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes
Programme team	Yes
Facilities and resources	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 07 March 2018.

2.1 The admissions process 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 ensure that appropriate information about the programme is provided to potential applicants, allowing them to make an informed decision about taking up a place on a programme.

Reason: The visitors noted from the programme documentation that information regarding the entry requirements, selection process, associated costs of studying on the programme, criminal conviction and occupational health checks was available within the course handbook. As this information, was contained within the programme handbook the visitors could not see how applicants would have access to this information prior to securing a place on the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that this information would be contained on the website but the website was still under development during the time of the visit. Therefore, the visitors were unable to access the information that would be contained on the website. As such, the visitors could not determine how applicants to this programme would have all the information they require to make an informed decision about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme. The visitors require further evidence as to what information will be available to applicants and at what points in the process this information will be provided. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine how the education provider ensures that applicants have all the information they require in order to make informed decisions about taking up a place on the programme.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is a process in place to appoint an individual with overall professional responsibility for the programme who is appropriately qualified and experienced.

Reason: The visitors noted from the staff curriculum vitae, that there was an individual appointed who was appropriately qualified and experienced for the role of a programme leader for the Physiotherapy course. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that there is a process in place to appoint a programme leader. As this, was not contained within the documentation the visitors could not see the details of how this process would work in practice. Specifically, the visitors could not determine what criteria would be applied through the process that would ensure that any person hired for the role, would be appropriately qualified, experienced and unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the register. The visitors require further evidence to demonstrate what process is in place to appoint an individual to the role. In this way, the visitors can determine whether there is a robust process in place to appoint an appropriate individual and whether this standard is met.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence to show that the correct information is presented to learners and hence the resources are in place to effectively support the required learning and teaching activities for this programme.

Reason: The visitors noted that there was some inaccurate information contained within the documentation provided regarding HCPC requirements. For example, the documentation indicates that the HCPC require a student to staff ratio of 15:1, however this is not an HCPC requirement. The visitors heard that this was an error in the documentation and the education provider intends to amend it to reflect the correct information. The education provider also acknowledged that they would need to amend any references to the accreditation of programmes by the HCPC to state that the HCPC approves programmes. The visitors also noted that the skills matrix document was incomplete. The education provider noted that this was a printing error and would amend the documentation. Additionally, the visitors noted a reference to the number of hours that the HCPC require for learners to achieve. However, the HCPC does not have any such requirement. Consequently, the visitors require further evidence which demonstrates that the documentation has been amended to reflect the correct information:

- the HCPC approve programmes rather than accredit;
- the HCPC does not stipulate a 15:1 student to staff ratio;
- the skills matrix must accurately reflect all the competencies; and
- the HCPC do not state a requirement for the number of placement hours a learner must achieve.

In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether the resources available to support learning in all settings are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme which are accessible to all learners and educators.

6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the assessment policies regarding progression and achievement are communicated to learners.

Reason: The visitors noted from the programme documentation that information regarding the assessment policies was available within the clinical education placement handbook but the information provided was not accurate. It states on page 24 of this document that learners can claim a “compensatory fail” when a learner scores a mark between 35 and 38 in the professional practice appraisal assessment. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors understood that learners cannot achieve a compensatory pass of the module and must therefore pass the module by achieving 40 per cent in both elements of the placement. However, due to the disparity between what the visitors heard at the visit and what they read in the documentation, the visitors could not determine how learners would be made aware of the accurate information regarding the requirements for progression. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence demonstrating what information will be available to learners regarding the marks they must achieve in order to pass the placement. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether the assessment policies clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Section 5: Visitors’ recommendation

Considering the education provider’s response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 22 March 2018 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC’s decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).