

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Lincoln
<b>Programme name</b>	Post Graduate Diploma Interprofessional Practice (Approved Mental Health Professional)
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Work based learning
<b>Type of programme</b>	Approved mental health professional
<b>Date of visit</b>	13 – 14 November 2014

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## Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using a protected title must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

As well as approving educational programmes for people who want to join the Register or have an annotation on their Registration record, the HCPC also approve a small number of programmes which are not linked to HCPC Registration. These programmes are for the profession of approved mental health practitioners (AMHPs) (for social workers, mental health and learning disabilities nurses, occupational therapists and practitioner psychologists).

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 (Committee) on 14 May 2015. At the Committee meeting, 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 approval criteria 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

When the regulation of social workers in England transferred from the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to ourselves, we took responsibility for approving AMHP programmes in England. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gives us powers to set criteria for approving AMHP programmes. A decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing AMHP programmes. This visit is to assess the programmes against the criteria for approving AMHP programmes and professionals who complete it will be able to achieve the criteria for approved mental health professionals

This visit was an HCPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Social Work, full and part time. The education provider and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. A separate report exists for the other programme. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the criteria for approving approved mental health professional (AMHP) programmes.

## Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and visitor role	Andrew Nash (Approved mental health professional) Christine Stogdon (Approved mental health professional) Louise Whittle (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Tracey Samuel-Smith
HCPC observer	Alex Urquhart
Proposed student numbers	12 per cohort once a year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2015
Chair	Linsey Woodcock (University of Lincoln)
Secretary	Sapphira Kingfisher (University of Lincoln) – day 1 Bethany Robinson-Benstead (University of Lincoln) – day 2

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC 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 criteria for approving AMHP programmes	<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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admissions materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service user and carer materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not review two years of external examiner reports prior to the visit as the education provider submitted the previous year only.

During the visit the HCPC 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"/>
Student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service users and carers	<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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as the nature of the post-registration qualification does not require any specialist laboratories or teaching rooms.

The visitors met with one student during the visit. Attempts were made to speak to another student via telephone but this was not possible due to technical issues.

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the criteria for approving AMHP programmes and professionals who complete it will be able to achieve the criteria for approved mental health professionals

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 28 of the criterion have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 22 criterion.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can have its ongoing approval reconfirmed. Conditions are set when certain criteria have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the criterion being met.

The visitors did not make any recommendations for the programme.

## Conditions

### **A.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 ensure that the admissions materials are clear and provide applicants with the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

**Reason:** From the documentation submitted the visitors were unclear about the admissions requirements and noted that clarification should be provided around some of the entry requirements. From the student and programme team meetings, the visitors learnt that the majority of students were nominated, and their course fees paid for, by their employer. They also learned of a self-funding student who had recently completed the programme. However, the visitors could not locate information about the costs associated with the programme within the admission documentation submitted.

In addition, the visitors were provided with a copy of the university's Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) policy. They noted there was no reference to this policy within the programme specific admissions information on the website. In discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt the policy would only be used in very specific circumstances due to the design of the programme, for example, for an applicant who had previously started, but not completed, a different AMHP programme. From the student meeting, the visitors noted a lack of awareness of this policy.

The visitors considered the admissions materials should enable applicants to make an informed decision about whether to undertake the programme and therefore should include further information about the costs associated with the programme and the APL policy. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revisit the admissions materials to ensure they are clear and provide applicants with the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

### **A.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and professional entry standards**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide further clarification about their requirement for applicants to have prior mental health experience.

**Reason:** From the documentation provided, the visitors noted applicants were required to have "Substantial and relevant mental health experience" (website print out) upon application to the programme. The programme team confirmed they had previously required applicants to have two years' experience within a mental health environment. This requirement had been changed to allow "...more flexibility to judge each case on merit" (page 9, AMHP Programme Handbook). The visitors were unaware of any further guidance which articulated the type of experience which would be considered relevant to the programme or how long the duration needed to be.

As applicants to the programme could be from one of four professions and therefore may have very different backgrounds, the visitors considered it important for guidance

to be available for applicants when reaching a decision about the programme. The visitors also considered it important that there was guidance available as part of the admissions process so the education provider could ensure consistency and transparency across the process. For use by applicants and as part of the admissions process, the visitors require further information which clearly outlines the how decisions will be made about the relevance of applicants' mental health experience, and how this will be communicated to potential applicants.

#### **A.4 The admissions procedures must ensure that the education provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how their equality and diversity policies are implemented and monitored.

**Reason:** From the documentation, the visitors noted the Corporate and Diversity report 2013 and Senior Management Team Equality and Diversity Statement. However, the visitors did not receive any information about how the education provider's equality and diversity policies translated to and were implemented by the programme. From the mapping document, the visitors learnt "The small sample sizes of cohorts of AMHP students mean that it is inappropriate to draw any meaningful conclusions about equality and/or diversity from a single year". The visitors considered that while the small numbers of students per cohort could make it difficult, it is possible to determine appropriate and meaningful conclusions by monitoring equality and diversity policies in other ways, for example across the cohorts. The visitors therefore require further information to demonstrate how the equality and diversity policies are implemented and monitored.

#### **B.2 The programme must be effectively managed**

**Condition:** The education provider must clearly outline the management structure of the programme, including the lines of responsibility and formal links to the practice placement providers.

**Reason:** From the documentation submitted, the visitors learnt about recent changes to the programme management structure and the ongoing recruitment within Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust (LPFT) for a Principal Social Worker to work closely with the education provider in running the AMHP programme (Contextual statement). Previously the liaison between the education provider and practice placement settings had been managed through a joint Senior Lecturer / Professional Social Worker Lead role which meant there was clear and regular communications between the two organisations. The programme team recognise that with the ending of this arrangement, formal policies and procedures need to be put in place to replicate / replace the previous arrangements. To ensure the Principal Social Worker and education provider are clear about the responsibilities of all involved and the communication channels, the visitors noted that it was important to clearly document the relationship between the two organisations.

The visitors also noted from the programme documentation that the programme leader role is shared between Robert Geomans and Jim Rogers. From the programme team discussions, the visitors learnt that both taught specific elements of the programme and were personal tutors to the students. The programme team confirmed the lines of

responsibility for the joint roles had not been formalised. The visitors considered it important that the lines of responsibility were clearly outlined so students and practice placement providers / placement supervisors know who to contact in particular circumstances.

To ensure the programme is effectively managed, the visitors require further evidence of the management structure, including the lines of responsibility of the programme leaders and formal links to the practice placement providers.

**B.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 an appropriate professional register**

**Condition:** The education provider must identify who has overall professional responsibility for the programme.

**Reason:** From the documentation, the visitors noted the programme leader role was shared between Robert Geomans and Jim Rogers. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that both programme leaders taught specific elements of the programme and were personal tutors to the students. The programme team confirmed the lines of responsibility for the joint roles had not been formalised. The visitors considered it was not made clear in discussions with the programme team who had overall professional responsibility for the programme. The visitors therefore require further information detailing who this is, and require the programme documentation to reflect this. In this way the visitors can determine that the programme leader is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, is on the relevant part of an appropriate professional register.

**B.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver an effective programme.

**Reason:** Prior to the visit, the visitors received a number of Curriculum Vitae of individuals teaching on the programme. The visitors noted in the documentation, that there were also additional teaching staff, for example visiting / sessional lecturers. However the visitors did not receive information about their qualifications or experience to determine whether they were appropriately qualified. To ensure the staff teaching on programme are appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver an effective programme, the visitors require further information about the additional teaching staff, including visiting / sessional lecturers.

**B.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that subject areas are taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.



**Reason:** Prior to the visit, the visitors received a number of Curriculum Vitae of individuals teaching on the programme. The visitors noted in the documentation, that there were also additional teaching staff, for example visiting / sessional lecturers. However the visitors did not receive information about their qualifications or experience to determine whether they had the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge to deliver the appropriate subject area. To ensure that subject areas are taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge, the visitors require further information about the additional teaching staff on the programme, including visiting / sessional lecturers.

#### **B.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the programme documentation accurately reflects the current landscape of regulation for AMHP programmes.

**Reason:** The visitors noted several instances of incorrect terminology associated with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) within the programme documentation. For example, page four of the programme specification states that the “Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body Accreditation” for the programme is the General Social Care Council (GSCC). In addition, the four module specifications, say they meet the GSCC (2006) Post Qualifying Framework for Social Work Education and Training and the GSCC (2007) Specialist standards and requirements for post qualifying education and training.

The visitors also noted on page six of the programme handbook “Whilst the regulatory bodies insist on the AMHP programme being nested within a post graduate diploma...”. The HCPC does not require AMHP programmes to be offered at a particular qualification level, rather we require that all programmes meet the criteria outlined in Section 1 and 2 of the Approval criteria for AMHP programmes. The decision about the qualification level to deliver the programme at is a decision for the education provider.

It is important students are equipped with accurate information, and the visitors considered it to be important the programme documentation accurately reflects the HCPC’s role in the regulation of AMHP training. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revise the programme documentation to correct all instances of inconsistent and incorrect terminology, to ensure that students are not unintentionally misinformed either about the HCPC or the current landscape of regulation of AMHP training. In this way the visitors can determine how the resources to support student learning are being effectively used.

#### **B.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the programme documentation accurately reflects the duration of the practice placements.

**Reason:** From the documentation provided, the visitors noted the duration of the practice placement differed between documents. For example, page 3 of the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook states “the programme requirement is a minimum 40-day supervised mental health placement plus 6 study days”. It also states

“The Mental Health Placement period is an approximate estimate: it needs to cover: 35 Placement Days, 6 Study Day, 1 Day (recall)”. The practice placement providers confirmed the placement requirement was 35 days, however, from discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt the requirement was 40 days. To ensure the resources are used effectively, it is important for students and placement supervisors are equipped with accurate information about the duration of the programme. As such, the visitors require the programme documentation must to be updated.

#### **B.15 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure service users and carers receive appropriate documentation to support their involvement in the programme.

**Reason:** From the service user and carer meeting, the visitors learnt about the range of activities that service user and carers are involved in, for example admissions, assessment and teaching. The service user and carer representatives said they were supported and felt valued by the programme team. Within the documentation, the visitors received a Handbook for service user/patient and carer involvement. The visitors noted that this handbook had been developed for use by the Social Work programmes but it “... has been drafted with the intention of adoption by Nursing and Health and Social Care courses”. To ensure service users and carers are effectively supported in the roles they undertake for this programme, the visitors considered that it was important for them to receive appropriate programme specific information relating to their roles. This information should include the support mechanisms available to them during their interactions with the programme. In this way, the visitors can be satisfied that the service user and carer involvement is effective to support the delivery of the programme. The visitors therefore require further information to demonstrate this criterion is met.

#### **C.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HCPC’s standards of conduct, performance and ethics and / or the NMC’s code: standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives on their practice as an AMHP**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how students understand the implications of the HCPC’s standards of conduct, performance and ethics and / or the NMC’s code: standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives on their practice as an AMHP.

**Reason:** From the documentation submitted, the visitors were referred to the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook. From this, the visitors noted references to HCPC’s standards of conduct, performance and ethics within the “Procedures for interruption, suspension and termination of AMHP practice placements including concerns”. The visitors noted the education provider refers to the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, and that they work alongside their own internal code of practice to help determine whether a student’s placement should be suspended or terminated, and in discussions when serious concerns are raised about a student’s practice learning and development.

The programme team confirmed the HCPC and / or NMC standards were covered within the Theory and Interventions in Mental Health Practice module. However, from the module descriptor and reading list, the visitors could see no references to the

standards of conduct, performance and ethics and / or the NMC's code: standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives. The visitors were unsure about how the programme team ensures the students understand the implications of the relevant document on their practice as an AMHP. The visitors therefore require further information to demonstrate this criterion is met.

### **D.1 Practice placements are integral to the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure practice placements.

**Reason:** Within the documentation provided, the visitors received a copy of a Memorandum of Co-operation (MOC) with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC). The visitors noted the MOC primarily reflected the relationship between the two organisations in terms of the social work programmes run by the education provider. The programme team confirmed the requirements for the AMHP programme were outlined in the section "CPD opportunities for qualified social workers through Post Qualifying training". Within this section, while it was stated that LCC will arrange for suitably qualified employees to act as mentors for students on placement, the visitors were unable to clearly identify a requirement for LCC to provide practice placements for the AMHP programme.

From the contextual statement and discussions with the practice placement providers and programme team, the visitors recognised that the majority of practice placements are undertaken with Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust (LPFT) which delivers mental health social care on behalf of LCC. The visitors did not receive any documentary evidence to illustrate how practice placements are secured within LPFT. The programme team confirmed they are in negotiations with LPFT about an agreement which will secure practice placements for the AMHP programme.

As practice placements are an integral part of programme and to ensure the security of the placements, the visitors require further information which demonstrates how the education provider ensures practice placements are available to the students.

### **D.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the health and safety policies of practice placements ensure a safe and supportive environment.

**Reason:** Within the documentation, the visitors noted the draft Practice Placement Agency Profile form which asks the Agency to declare whether they have health and safety policies in place, which "can be made available to the education provider on request". The visitors did not receive any further information to explain how or when the Practice Placement Agency Profile would be used, including the circumstances leading to when the policies would be requested or how the education provider would assess these. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that the Practice Placement Agency Profile will be implemented over the "next few months".

The visitors considered it was important the education provider checked the quality of the placements, to ensure they provide a safe and supportive environment for students. The visitors therefore require further information which demonstrates how

the education provider ensures practice placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment.

#### **D.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements**

**Condition:** The education provider must implement a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements, together with an outline of when and how this will be implemented.

**Reason:** Within the documentation, the visitors received a copy of the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook. Page 11 of this document outlines the education provider's responsibilities in relation to placements, including "To verify and audit placements regularly and to ensure that an agreed placement is suitable to meet the learning outcomes for this role and to meet the requirements for AMHP practice".

The visitors also received a draft copy of the Practice Placement Agency Profile form, which is intended as an audit tool for placements. The programme team explained that until recently, the quality of placements had been managed informally as previously there was a joint Senior Lecturer / Professional Social Worker Lead role which ensured regular communication between the education provider and placement providers. This meant the education provider had regular links to the placement settings. As students are starting to use placements which are outside the region or not as well known to the education provider, the audit tool is being implemented over the "next few months". The visitors considered it was important for the education provider to assess the quality of all practice placements before students undertake the placement, and have a mechanism to monitor placements when they are being undertaken. As such the visitors require the education provider to implement a thorough and effective process for approving and monitoring all placements. In order to determine how this criterion is met, the visitors require further information about this process, including an outline of how and when it will be implemented.

#### **D.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure placement providers have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these are implemented and monitored.

**Reason:** Within the documentation, the visitors received a draft copy of the Practice Placement Agency Profile form which asks agencies to declare whether they have equality and diversity policies in place, which "can be made available to the education provider on request" (page 2). The visitors did not receive any further information to explain how or when the Practice Placement Agency Profile form would be used, including the circumstances leading to when the policies would be requested. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that the Practice Placement Agency Profile will be implemented over the "next few months". To ensure equality and diversity policies are in place, and determine how practice placement providers implement and monitor these policies, the visitors require further information which demonstrates how this criterion is met.

#### **D.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced placement supervisors at the practice placements.

**Reason:** From the practice placement provider and student meetings, the visitors noted there were opportunities for students to directly observe individuals who were not their direct placement supervisor, for example, if they needed to gain experience of a different aspect of AMHP practice in order to meet the required competences. The visitors were unclear about how the education provider ensured there was a sufficient number of individuals at the placement setting for students to do this and that these individuals were appropriately qualified and experienced.

Within the documentation, the visitors were referred to the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook. Page 5 of this document outlines that “Each student will be under the direct supervision of a pre-agreed AMHP who is currently warranted and practising as an AMHP...”. Also within the documentation, the visitors received a draft copy of the Practice Placement Agency Profile form. The profile asks for the name, contact details and practice educator qualifications of two placement supervisors. The visitors did not receive any further information to explain how or when the Practice Placement Agency Profile form would be used. The programme team confirmed that the Practice Placement Agency Profile will be implemented over the “next few months”.

To ensure practice placements provide an appropriate learning environment for students, the visitors considered it was important for the education provider to check the level of supervision available to the student and the qualifications and experience of placement supervisors before the placement commences. The visitors therefore require further information about how the education provider ensures practice placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced placement educators.

#### **D.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure placement supervisors are appropriately trained.

**Reason:** From the documentation provided, the visitors learnt about the recommendation that placement supervisors hold a current practice educator qualification, though it is not mandatory. Page 7 of the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook provides information about the possible qualifications this could include. The visitors were unsure about how the education provider ensured placement supervisors held such a qualification and what the implications were for the student and / or supervisor, if the supervisor did not hold an appropriate practice educator qualification.

The visitors noted it was important for all new placement supervisors to receive training and existing placement supervisors to receive regular refresher training about programme specific knowledge. This knowledge would particularly be about the learning outcomes required from the placement, and how the placement supervisor assessed these outcomes to ensure the minimum requirement was met and therefore there was consistency across the placement settings. The programme team confirmed they had previously required placement supervisors to attend programme specific training sessions, however, due to the low number of placement supervisors, this was changed so these discussions occurred during the mid-point visit to the placement. The visitors recognised there were many different ways to ensure placement supervisors had the knowledge they needed about the programme. However, the visitors were concerned this mid-point visit was half way through the placement and that learning outcomes were being met and assessed throughout the whole duration of the placement. To ensure consistency in delivery and assessment of the learning outcomes across the placement settings, the visitors considered it was important for appropriate programme specific training to be provided to all placement supervisors so they were prepared before students arrived.

The education provider must therefore provide information to demonstrate how they ensure practice placement educators are appropriately trained.

#### **D.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure placement supervisors are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

**Reason:** From discussions the practice placement provider and student meeting, the visitors noted there were opportunities for students to directly observe individuals who were not their direct supervisor, for example, if they needed to gain experience of a different aspect of AMHP practice in order to meet the required competences. The visitors were unclear about how the education provider ensured these placement supervisors were appropriately registered with either the HCPC or the NMC, or, if required, agreed other arrangements with ourselves.

Within the documentation, the visitors were referred to the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook. Page 5 of this document outlines that “Each student will be under the direct supervision of a pre-agreed AMHP who is currently warranted and practising as an AMHP...”. Also within the documentation, the visitors were referred to a copy of the draft Practice Placement Agency Profile form. The visitors could not determine from this form, how the education provider receives information about the registration status of a placement supervisor.

The visitors considered it was important for placement supervisors to be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements had been agreed with the HCPC, to ensure students were being supervised by an individual with the appropriate experience, qualifications and training to the particular placement. The visitors therefore require further information to demonstrate how the education provider ensures placement supervisors are appropriately registered, or agree other arrangements with ourselves if appropriate.

#### **D.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate there is regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.

**Reason:** From the documentation submitted, the visitors learnt about recent changes to the programme management structure and the ongoing recruitment within the main practice placement setting (LPFT). The recruitment was for a Principal Social Worker to work closely with the education provider in running the AMHP programme (Contextual statement). Previously this relationship had been managed through a joint Senior Lecturer / Professional Social Worker Lead role which meant regular and clear communications were occurring between the two organisations. The programme team recognise that with the ending of this arrangement, formal policies and procedures need to be put in place to replicate / replace the previous arrangements.

The visitors also recognise that while the majority of practice placements occur within LPFT, some placements do take place outside of Lincolnshire. It is important for there to be an ongoing partnership with all placements. This ensures that all students benefit from regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice placement provider, irrespective of where they are undertaking their practice placement.

The visitors therefore require further information about the collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers to allow them to determine whether this criterion is met.

#### **E.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the assessment methods used within the placement setting ensure that students who successfully complete the programme can meet the relevant learning outcomes.

**Reason:** Within the documentation, the visitors were referred to the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook and the Mental Health Practice Portfolio. From these and discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt about the assessment process to be undertaken within the placement setting. Students are required to achieve 33 competences which they need to discuss with, and gain approval from, their placement supervisor before completing a 30 word summary of each competence within their portfolio. Subsequently the placement supervisor signs each competence as met.

From the programme team meeting, the visitors learnt that students were required to observe / undertake a particular activity as many times as was necessary in order for the placement supervisor to sign the competence as met. The visitors could find no further guidance which outlined the education provider's expectation of the minimum standard to be demonstrated by a student in order for them to meet the learning outcomes either in terms of frequency and / or level of competence to be demonstrated. Under the current arrangements, the visitors therefore considered there was a possibility a student could demonstrate how they met a competence on the first attempt and this would mean there would be no further assessment of the

competence. If a student was directly involved in one mental health assessment or Community Treatment Order, the visitors were unclear about how the education provider ensured this was adequate practice experience to demonstrate the associated learning outcomes. The visitors were therefore concerned about the robustness of the process in ensuring students had demonstrated the learning outcomes at the appropriate level for a student to practise safely and effectively. They therefore require the education provider to provide further information about how the assessment methods ensure students can successfully meet the learning outcomes.

#### **E.5 The measurement of student performance must be objective and ensure safe and effective practice as an AMHP**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how the measurement of student performance ensures safe and effective practice as an AMHP.

**Reason:** Within the documentation, the visitors were referred to the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook and the Mental Health Practice Portfolio. From these and discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt about the assessment process to be undertaken within the placement setting. Students are required to achieve 33 competences which they need to discuss with, and gain approval from, their placement supervisor before completing a 30 word summary of each competence within their portfolio. Subsequently the placement supervisor signs each competence as met.

For the majority of these competences students were not required to submit further evidence to the education provider which demonstrated how the competence was met. The visitors were unable to determine how the education provider therefore moderated how students met these competences. The visitors considered there was a possibility that placement supervisors could therefore assess how a student meets these competences differently. It is important for the education provider to outline their expectations of the assessment methods, train placement supervisors accordingly and have in place mechanisms to ensure consistency and objectivity in assessment, to ensure an individual is safe and effective to practice as an AMHP. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence of how this SET is met.

#### **E.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure there are effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment of the practice portfolio.

**Reason:** Within the documentation, the visitors were referred to the Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook and the Mental Health Practice Portfolio. From these and discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt about the assessment process to be undertaken within the placement setting. Students were required to achieve 33 competences which they need to discuss with, and gain approval from, their placement supervisor before completing a 30 word summary of the competence within their portfolio. Subsequently the placement supervisor signs the competence as met.



In addition, students were required to submit detailed evidence to the education provider regarding five key competences and their direct participation in a formal mental health community admission or supervised community treatment. The assessment of these aspects of the practice portfolio were undertaken by the education provider and subject to internal and external moderation.

However, for the majority of the 33 competences outlined within the programme documentation, students were not required to submit further evidence to the education provider to demonstrate how the competence was met. The assessment of whether a competence was met, was the "...sole responsibility on Supervisors to authenticate the legitimate achievement of each individual AMHP competence" (page 7, Mental Health Practice Placement Handbook). The visitors considered there was a possibility that placement supervisors could therefore assess how a student meets the competences differently. To ensure students meet the knowledge, skills and experience outlined in Section 2 of the Approval criteria for approved mental health professionals (AMHP) programmes, the visitors considered it was important for assessments across the placement settings to be undertaken in a transparent and consistent manner. This would allow internal and external moderation of all aspects of the portfolio to be undertaken.

The visitors therefore require further information about how the education provider ensures there are effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

**E.10 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 an appropriate professional register**

**Condition:** The education provider must include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of an appropriate professional register.

**Reason:** From the documentation the visitors learnt of the requirement for the programme to have an external examiner in place which is approved and appointed by the Academic Board (page 24, Taught Postgraduate Regulations 2013/14). The visitors were unable to locate where in the programme documentation it stated the external examiner needed to be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of an appropriate register. In order to determine this criterion is met, the visitors need to see evidence of the HCPC requirements regarding external examiners within the programme documentation.

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