
Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Plymouth
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Operating department practitioner
Date of visit	15 – 17 January 2013

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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. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Operating department practitioner' 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.

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 9 May 2013. At the Committee meeting on 9 May 2013, the programme was approved. This means the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures 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 HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC 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 visit also considered the following programmes – DipHE Operating Department Practice, MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration) and Post Graduate Diploma Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration). The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Penny Joyce (Operating department practitioner) Tony Scripps (Operating department practitioner)
HCPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
HCPC observer	Nicola Baker
Proposed student numbers	30 per cohort once per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2013
Chair	Will Diver (University of Plymouth)
Secretary	Jo Melhuish (University of Plymouth) Kahila Smith (University of Plymouth) Cirstie Rennie (University of Plymouth) Claire Ellis (University of Plymouth)
Members of the joint panel	Lloyd Howell (College of Operating Department Practice) Mike Donnellon (External Panel member) Beth Gompertz (Internal Panel member) Val Heath (Internal Panel member)

	Mel Joyner (Internal Panel member) Sharon Wilkinson (Internal Panel member)
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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 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit, this programme is a new programme and therefore this documentation does not exist.

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"/>
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"/>

The HCPC met with students from the DipHE Operating Department Practice, 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.

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 46 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 11 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 recommendation 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 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 revisit the advertising materials for the programme to ensure they are providing all the information potential applicants require for them to make an informed choice about the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the online information and the advertising leaflet for the programme. They noted there was some information not included that they considered important for applicants to be able to make informed choices about the programme. This information included details about the award to be gained and mandatory admissions procedures (the occupational health check and enhanced CRB check). In order that the programme meets this standard the visitors require the education provider to revisit the advertising materials to ensure this information is included.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must submit information that confirms whether this programme will be commissioned to run or not for the planned September 2013 commencement date.

Reason: At the time of the visit the programme was yet to receive confirmation this programme would be commissioned to run. Discussion at the visit indicated if this programme was commissioned then the DipHE Operating Department Practice programme would close and be replaced with this programme. It was confirmed that the number of students was anticipated to be the same for both programmes. It was also confirmed that arrangements have been made so only one of the programmes would be running at the same time. The visitors require further evidence that demonstrates whether the programme will be commissioned to run or not for the planned September 2013 commencement date to be able to ensure this programme has a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must submit information that includes details of how the programme team intend to effectively manage the practice placements in regards to module the ODP 302 Surgical First Assistant.

Reason: The visitors noted the ODP 302 Surgical First Assistant module included techniques for the students to undertake which were not included in the existing DipHE Operating Department Practice programme. The module expects students to be able to undertake advanced clinical skills in line with the role of Surgical First Assistant. The visitors are aware that the advanced skills the students need to undertake can be problematic for the placement providers to be able to provide a suitably experienced person to work with the student undertaking the skillset the module requires. Discussion indicated the programme team had begun talking about this with the practice

placements to ensure that the experience could be gained, however there was no firm outcomes from any discussions and the visitors were unable to determine that the module was fully supported by the placement providers. The visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the programme team intends to work with the placement providers to effectively manage the practice placements in regards to module the ODP 302 Surgical First Assistant.

3.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Condition: The education provider must submit information that includes details of the module leaders for this programme.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included programme team staff CV's and descriptions of the modules. The documentation did not have details of who would be the module leaders. Discussion at the visit indicated that if the programme gained commissioning, resources to recruit additional staff would be in place. Additionally they had already considered the module leads but not included details as they may change as more staff was recruited. The visitors were therefore unable to determine that subject areas would be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge. In order to determine this standard is met the visitors require information that demonstrates the indicative module leaders and where new staff may be used.

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 amend programme documentation to remove references to the HCPC having a statutory attendance requirement for students.

Reason: Within the documentation provided there were references to the HCPC having statutory attendance requirements. "This is to ensure compliance with the statutory attendance requirements of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)" (Practice Competency Assessment BSc (Hons) year 1, P11). The HCPC enforces no statutory requirements for attendance of students for academic learning or practice placement learning. The visitors require these references to be amended throughout the documentation. The visitors also noted other inaccuracies through the documentation which need to be corrected. For example, in the programme handbook p39, there is a reference to appendix 3 for module descriptors however appendix 3 is the end of placement feedback form and on p61 there is a reference to appendix 2 which is also incorrect. The visitors require all inaccuracies and incorrect references to be corrected within the documentation.

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 submit finalised descriptions of the modules for this programme.

Reason: During the visit discussion indicated revisions would be made to the module descriptors concerning some learning outcomes and general amendments. The visitors will need to determine the learning outcomes of the revised module descriptors will ensure those who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register. Therefore the visitors require the education provider submit revised module descriptors for review.

5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate they have immediate access to details regarding the mentors working with students from this programme.

Reason: Documentation provided for this visit stated “a ‘live’ mentor database is kept of all staff that mentor ODP students” (SETs mapping document, SET 5.6). At the visit the visitors viewed the database and were informed it was a voluntary database into which information was populated by members from the individual practice placement areas. The visitors were concerned this could mean it was difficult for the programme team to be able to know who was working with their students at any given time and to be able to ensure those mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced. Upon raising this concern with the programme team it was stated the information collected from the placements audits included details about the mentors and this was inputted onto the system, it was also described that individual placement areas maintained lists of where students were placed and the programme team could ask for access to these lists. The visitors were satisfied the information was available however were concerned the programme team did not have direct access to information about who students were located with. The visitors additionally have not seen the evidence that the information collected through the audit process is being inputted onto a system accessible to the programme team. The visitors therefore require evidence that the programme team have immediate access to information regarding who their students are working with at any time and information to be able to ensure that those mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate they have immediate access to details regarding the training undertaken by mentors working with students from this programme.

Reason: Documentation provided for this visit stated “a ‘live’ mentor database is kept of all staff that mentor ODP students” (SETs mapping document, SET 5.6). At the visit the visitors viewed the database and were informed it was a voluntary database into which information was populated by members from the individual practice placement areas. The visitors were concerned this could mean it was difficult for the programme team to be able to know who was working with their students at any given time and to be able to ensure those mentors had been appropriately trained. Upon raising this concern with the programme team it was stated the information collected from the placement audits

included these details about the mentors and this was inputted onto their system. The visitors were satisfied the information was available from the audits however have not seen the evidence that the information collected through the audit process is being inputted onto a system accessible to the programme team. The visitors therefore require evidence the programme team have immediate access to information regarding who their students are working with at any given time and are able to ensure those mentors are appropriately trained.

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 submit the practice placement documentation for levels 5 and 6 (years 2 and 3) of the programme.

Reason: With the documentation submitted prior to the visit the education provider included some of the practice placement documentation for level 4, however did not provide the documentation for levels 5 and 6 of the programme. In order to determine the education provider is providing all the information that students and practice mentors need in order to be fully prepared for placement the visitors require the education provider to submit this documentation.

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 submit further information that demonstrates how the programme team intends to work with placement providers to ensure the practice mentors are fully prepared for the placement that corresponds to module ODP 302 Surgical First Assistant, including ensuring appropriate support is provided for practice mentors and ensuring parity of placement experience for students.

Reason: The visitors noted the ODP 302 Surgical First Assistant module included techniques for the students to undertake which were not included in the existing DipHE Operating Department Practice programme. The module expects students to be able to undertake advanced clinical skills in line with the role of Surgical First Assistant. The

visitors are aware that the advanced skills the students need to undertake can be problematic for the placement providers to be able to provide a suitably experienced person to work with the student undertaking the skillset the module requires. The visitors were also aware that work would need to be undertaken to ensure the practice mentors were fully supported in undertaking this module with students and to ensure that all students were receiving the same experience through their practice placements to be able to meet the requirements of the module. Discussion indicated work would be undertaken to ensure the practice mentors would be suitably prepared for this role and supported in undertaking this however no details of how this would be carried out were provided. The visitors therefore require further evidence that demonstrates how the education provider intends to ensure that the practice mentors are fully prepared to work with students undertaking this module.

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.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the rights and needs of service users are respected throughout practice placement.

Reason: The visitors noted the ODP 302 Surgical First Assistant module included techniques for the students to undertake which were not included in the existing DipHE Operating Department Practice programme. The module expects students to be able to undertake advanced clinical skills in line with the role of Surgical First Assistant. The visitors are aware that service user consent to be treated by a student is taken as part of the students practice learning and through adherence to the professional body Student Standards of Professional Behaviour. When looking at this module in particular the visitors need reassurance that service users are being fully informed that they will be treated by a student.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must submit finalised descriptions of the modules for this programme.

Reason: During the visit discussion indicated revisions would be made to the module descriptors concerning some learning outcomes and general amendments. The visitors will need to determine the assessment of the learning outcomes in the revised module descriptors will ensure those who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register. Therefore the visitors require the education provider submit revised module descriptors for review.

Recommendations

6.11 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 the Register.

Recommendation: When the education provider's appointed external examiner reaches the end of their term, the HCPC may need to be informed through the major change process.

Reason: Through the documentation the visitors noted it was anticipated the external examiner for the existing DipHE Operating Department Practice programme would also become the external examiner for this programme. The visitors additionally noted this person would be due to reach the end of their term in this position in the next year or so. The visitors wished the education provider to note that the programme must have at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the register and if the new person to take up this role was not from the relevant part of the Register, the HCPC would need to be informed through the major change process.

Penny Joyce
Tony Scripps