

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Plymouth
Programme name	Post Graduate Diploma Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time Part time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Occupational therapist
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 'Occupational therapist' 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 – BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, DipHE Operating Department Practice and MSc 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	Jennifer Caldwell (Occupational therapist) Angela Ariu (Occupational therapist)
HCPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
HCPC observer	Nicola Baker
Proposed student numbers	6 per cohort once a 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	Clair Parkin (College of Occupational Therapy) Chris McKenna (College of Occupational Therapy) Christine Craik (College of Occupational Therapy) Claire Brewis (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 as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

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 BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, 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 52 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 5 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 did not make any recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must implement formal protocols to obtain informed consent for when students participate as service users and for managing situations when students decline from participating as service users, in practical and clinical teaching.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation provided, through discussion with the students and during the meeting with programme team, that there were no formal protocols for obtaining informed consent from students before they participated as a service user in practical and clinical teaching. During discussion with the students it was clear that informed consent was not obtained, although the students felt they could opt-out from participating with no impact on their learning. The visitors noted the programme used a range of teaching methods including role plays, practising techniques with equipment for the profession. The visitors were concerned that without consent protocols in place there would be nothing to mitigate any risk involved in students participating as service users. The visitors could not determine how records were maintained to indicate consent had been obtained or how situations where students declined from participation were managed with alternative learning arrangements so there would be no impact on their learning. The visitors have noted the other programmes being reviewed at this visit used consent procedures which could be adapted for this programme. The visitors therefore require evidence that the programme team implement formal protocols for obtaining informed consent from students (such as a consent form to be signed prior to commencing the programme or annually) and for managing situations where students decline from participating in practical and clinical teaching.

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 identify where on the programme students' attendance is mandatory and how the attendance mechanisms are effectively communicated and monitored.

Reason: The visitors noted that, in the documentation provided, there was no explicit reference to where and when attendance is mandatory for students on the programme. In discussion with the students it was highlighted that there is an attendance policy and that students are aware of when attendance is mandatory. The visitors also discussed the attendance policy with the programme team who highlighted that an attendance policy for this programmes was available. However, the visitors were unsure how students starting the programme would be informed of the attendance policy, how it would be enforced and what, if any, repercussions there may be for students who fail to attend. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the attendance policy, what parts of the programme are mandatory and how this is communicated to students. They also require further evidence to demonstrate how students were made aware of what

effect contravening this policy may have on their ability to progress through the programme.

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 detail of how the formal procedure in place to deal with any concerns about students' profession related conduct is effectively communicated to the workplace mentors.

Reason: Documentation at the visit provided the education provider's fitness to practise policy. There was a website link in the programme handbook to the education providers' regulations which included all regulations and the fitness to practise policy. However, during meeting with the workplace mentors it was noted that workplace mentors did not have adequate information about the fitness to practise policy. The visitors clarified to the workplace mentors that workplace mentors should know the formal procedure in place to deal with any concerns about students' profession related conduct. The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise programme documentation to ensure that the formal procedure in place to deal with any concerns about students' profession related conduct is effectively communicated to the workplace mentors.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to remove instances of incorrect information about student progression.

Reason: In reviewing the programme documentation the visitors noted some variability in the terminology to describe student progression within the programme. For example, in the programme handbook (p 15) there are references to the achievement of a minimum passing mark of 40%, in the same handbook (p88 module descriptors) there are also references to the achievement of a minimum passing mark 50%. In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that programme documentation has inconsistent information associated with student progression. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team ensure the information provided to students clearly specifies the criteria for student progression.

6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HCPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate which awards confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register and those exit awards which do not.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team the visitors were satisfied that anyone successfully completing the programme would be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC. However, in the documentation submitted by the education provider, the visitors noted there was a lack of clarity when considering the exit awards for the programme. The programme handbook does not clearly state that only Post Graduate Diploma Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration) will lead to eligibility to apply for HCPC registration (p14). The visitors could not determine how students were informed about the various awards and their impact on the eligibility of a student to apply for the Register. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students understand which awards confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register and which do not.

Jennifer Caldwell
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