

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Portsmouth
Name of programme(s)	Postgraduate Diploma in Forensic Psychology Practice – Full time Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology – Full time
Approval visit date	5 – 6 September 2017
Case reference	CAS-11974-J8D3P4

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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:

Roseann Connolly	Lay
Jacqueline Bates-Gaston	Practitioner psychologist - Forensic psychologist
David Packwood	Practitioner psychologist - Counselling psychologist
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive

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.

Mike Berry	Accreditation visitor	British Psychological Society
Jacqueline Wheatcroft	Accreditation visitor	British Psychological Society
Susan Quinn	Accreditation officer	British Psychological Society

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Postgraduate Diploma in Forensic Psychology Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Practitioner psychologist
Modality	Forensic psychologist
First intake	01 February 2018
Maximum student cohort	Up to 12 (across both programmes)
Intakes per year	2
Assessment reference	APP01739

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.

Programme name	Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology	
Mode of study	FT (Full time)	
Profession	Practitioner psychologist	
Modality	Forensic psychologist	
First intake	01 February 2018	
Maximum student cohort	Up to 12 (across both programmes)	
Intakes per year	2	
Assessment reference	APP01740	

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	Reason(s) for non-submission
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 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 16 October 2017.

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 programme documentation that has been revised in line with any changes made to meet the conditions set as a result of this approval visit.

Reason: Through discussion at the visit, and from the final conclusions of the external visiting panel from the British Psychological Society (BPS), it was clear that revisions

will be made to programme documentation to meet conditions set by the external panel. The visitors consider the programme documentation that learner routinely refer to as an important resource to support learners. In particular, the conditions set by internal panel referred to amendments to module descriptors, the programme specification document and the learner handbook. To ensure the programme meets this standard the visitors need to review revised documentation to ensure the resources to support learners are effectively used. Therefore, the visitors require the education provider to submit the revised programme documentation the learners routinely refer to.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence of the formal protocols to obtain consent from learners when they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching and for managing situations when learners decline from participating.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the SETs mapping document (SET 4.10) submitted by the education provider stated that the process for obtaining appropriate consent from learners was contained in the placement handbook. In review of this documentation, the visitors were unable to locate the information relating to this standard in relation to learners. As such, the visitors did not see evidence of the formal protocols to obtain consent from learners when they participate as service users, or for managing situations when learners decline from participating as service users in practical sessions. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require evidence of the formal protocols for obtaining consent from learners before they participate as a service user in practical and clinical teaching. They also require evidence that demonstrates how learners are informed about the requirement for them to participate, and how records are maintained to indicate consent had been obtained. In particular, the visitors require evidence to show what alternative learning arrangements will be put in place so there would be no impact on their learning where learners decline participation.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Condition: The programme team must demonstrate how they ensure that practice educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures practice educators undertake regular training appropriate to their role, learner's needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme. During programme team meeting, the visitors learnt that there are practice educator training options that are offered to practice educators including 'a three hour training session'. The visitors acknowledged that there are training opportunities provided by the education provider for practice educators but were unable to see how each individual placement educator's training is monitored, or how the requirements for training feeds into partnership agreements with the providers. The visitors were also unclear about the steps taken by the education provider to ensure that suitably trained placement educators were in place for learners. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to clearly articulate the

training requirements for placement educators and the processes in place for ensuring these requirements are met and monitored in practice placement setting.

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 18 January 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](#).