![hpc health professions council]

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Salford
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of delivery	Full time Part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Physiotherapy
Date of visit	5 - 6 March 2009

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Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Physiotherapist' or 'Physical Therapist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health 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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 20 May 2009. At the Committee meeting on 20 May 2009, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) 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

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that 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 reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Kathleen Bosworth (Physiotherapist) Anthony Power (Physiotherapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Brendon Edmonds
HPC observer	Osama Ammar
Proposed student numbers	53 Full time 34 Part time
Initial approval	29 April 1999
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	21 September 2009
Chair	Helen Matthews (University of Salford)
Secretary	Emma Williams (University of Salford)
Members of the joint panel	Debbie Whittaker (Internal Panel Member) Jill Wickham (Chartered Society of Physiotherapists) Nina Thomson (Chartered Society of Physiotherapists)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐
Clinical Educators Programme	☒	☐	☐
Clinical Evaluation Forms	☒	☐	☐
Periodic Programme Review	☒	☐	☐
Supporting Documents further addressing SETS	☒	☐	☐

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing 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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 61 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 2 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing 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 number of 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 ongoing 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.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must revisit all the programme documentation to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, HPC 'approves' educational programmes. We do not 'accredit' or 'validate' programmes. In the submitted documentation, there were instances of out-of-date terminology in reference to the registered status of individuals such as "state registered" or "professional registration". It should also be made clear throughout all documentation that HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for those who complete the programme but rather to 'eligibility to apply for HPC registration'. The visitors considered the terminology could be misleading to applicants and students and therefore require the documentation to be thoroughly reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology.

2.2.4 The admission procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to ensure consistency of entry requirements across all documentation.

Reason: Across the programme documentation (including programme brochures) there was inconsistency in the stated academic entry standards required for admission on to the programme. The visitors noted the academic entry standard was appropriate for the programme but felt that the documentation required updating to remove the potential for confusion to applicants.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider continuing to monitor staffing levels within the programme to ensure that there continues to be an adequate number of experienced staff delivering the programme.

Reason: The Annual Programme Review 06/07 and the Annual Programme Monitoring & Enhancement Report 07/08 both indicated that there were concerns about the staffing levels in place to deliver core aspects of the programme. The programme team also highlighted that there were concerns about the implementation of new processes within the programme and the effects these new processes had on the time staff had to focus on programme delivery. However, it was also noted that these concerns have since been alleviated and also that recent recruitment had addressed any concerns about staffing levels within the programme. The visitors recommend that staffing levels should continue to be carefully monitored to ensure that the number of staff remains at an appropriate level.

6.4   The measurement of student performance and progression must be an integral part of the wider process of monitoring and evaluation, and use objective criteria.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider continuing to monitor degree classifications to ensure that placement assessments continue to be marked at an appropriate level which does not unduly affect the degree classes.

Reason: Concerns had been raised regarding the high number of first class degree classifications as a result of the affects of practice placement assessments. However it was noted that this issue, which was first highlighted approximately 2 years ago, had since been addressed specifically through consultation with both students and practice placements educators. As a result, the education provider is now satisfied that degree classifications are at an appropriate level. The visitors recommend that degree classifications should continue to be carefully monitored to ensure placement assessments continue to be marked at an appropriate level which does not unduly affect the degree classes.

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Kathleen Bosworth
Anthony Power

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