Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Salford
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Prosthetists and Orthotists
Date of visit	8 – 9 October 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 14 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'prosthetist' or 'orthotist' 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 2 February 2010. At the Committee meeting on 2 February 2010, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the conditions 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 - programme admissions, programme management and resources, curriculum, practice placements and assessment. 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 an HPC 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 although both bodies were represented at the visit. Therefore the education provider, 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.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Elaine McCurrach (Prosthetist) Dugald MacInnes (Lay Visitor)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
Proposed student numbers	30
Initial approval	12 January 1998
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	20 September 2010
Chair	Debbie Whittaker (University of Salford)
Secretary	Clare Wolstenholme (University of Salford)
Members of the joint panel	Kay Hack (Internal Panel Member) Steve Mottram (British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists)

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	☒	☐	☐

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 54 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 3 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 have also made a commendation. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

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 submit advertising material, including website material, to demonstrate that current information is supplied to applicants to the programme.

Reason: The visitors received advertising material for the existing programme and therefore were unable to determine that applicants are given appropriate information to make an informed choice about whether to join the revised programme. The visitors felt that in order to fully assess whether the programme meets this standard updated advertising material and information provided to applicants must be submitted.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HPC Register.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the policy for aegrotat awards for the programme. The visitors need to see evidence that this policy is clearly communicated within the documentation, so that it is clear that aegrotat awards would not enable students to be eligible to apply to the Register to ensure that this standard is being met.

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.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that at least one external examiner appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed with the HPC.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail in the external examiner recruitment policy. The visitors were happy with the current external examiner arrangements for the programme but need to see evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of this requirement.

Recommendations

3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Recommendation: The visitors wished to support the planned improvements to the plaster room by the education provider. They also wish to support the planned installation of a CADCAM suite.

Reason: From discussions with the education provider it was clear that there were plans in place to enhance some of the practical facilities on the programme. The visitors wished to support the improvement of the plaster room as a resource to further enhance the student learning experience. The visitors also noted that this facility was appropriate for the current number of students, and would recommend that if the education provider planned to increase student numbers in the future that this facility is reassessed to ensure it continued to be appropriate to student learning.

4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider references the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics in the programme documentation.

Reason: It was evidenced that HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics were both taught and assessed in the programme curriculum. The visitors felt that specific references should be made to this publication throughout the programme documentation in order to enhance the student access to this material.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Recommendation: The visitors wished to support the continued work by the education provider to expand the range of placements on offer to students within the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the work done so far by the education provider in identifying different placement areas in order to provide students with a wider range of experience and access to emerging placements. The visitors wished to recommend that the education provider continues in their efforts to pursue a variety of placement settings to provide students with a greater range of placement experiences.

Commendations

The visitors wish to commend the following aspects of the programme:

Commendation: The visitors wished to commend the education provider for the level of consultation of relevant stakeholders in redesigning the programme.

Reason: The visitors felt that the level and nature of consultation that the education provider entered into so far in advance of the planned date to implement changes to the programme, demonstrated a best practice level of appraisal that the visitors had not seen on the same scale at other institutions. The process behind the programme review was rigorous, involved a broad range of stakeholders and ensured that a comprehensive consultation was obtained and the detail fed into the redesign of the programme.

Elaine McCurrach
Dugald MacInnes