Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Salford
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
Mode of delivery	Full time and Part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Occupational therapist
Date of visit	4–5 February 2010

Contents

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 'Occupational 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 7 July 2010. At the Committee meeting on 7 July 2010, 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 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 part of a joint event. 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Jane Grant (Occupational Therapist) Margaret Foster (Occupational Therapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
HPC observer	Brendon Edmonds
Proposed student numbers	56 Full time 20 Part time
Initial approval	9 January 2003
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	21 September 2010
Chair	Liz Coldridge (University of Salford)
Secretary	Clare Wolstenholme (University of Salford)
Members of the joint panel	Clair Parkin (College of Occupational Therapists) Jennifer Caldwell (College of Occupational Therapists) Jill Jepson (College of Occupational Therapists)

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	☒	☐	☐
Supporting placement information	☒	☐	☐
Supporting strategic and operational reports	☒	☐	☐
Supporting education provider policy documents	☒	☐	☐

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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 45 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 12 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 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 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 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 update the admissions documentation and all programme documentation to ensure there is specific reference to the programme leading to eligibility to apply for registration, including the implications of registration, and to ensure the language used throughout reflects HPC terminology.

Reason: The admissions material provided for this programme did not highlight the fact that the programme leads to eligibility to apply to our Register and the implications of registration. The documentation provided also refers to the programme leading to a "licence to practise". The visitors considered the omission and the incorrect terminology meant potential applicants were not receiving enough information to be able to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on the programme and students were been given wrong information. The visitors therefore require the education provider to update all programme documentation including admissions materials to ensure this standard is met.

2.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must update the admissions documentation to ensure the English level requirement on entry to the programme is clearly specified consistently across all materials.

Reason: The admissions documents provided made clear reference to the English level requirement in some places but not in all of the programme documentation. The visitors felt this was potentially confusing for applicants and therefore require the education provider to ensure the English level requirements are consistently referenced throughout the programme documentation.

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 revise the documentation to ensure the correct standard is referred to when stating the consent procedures are an HPC requirement.

Reason: The documentation provided made clear references to the requirement of a consent procedure. The HPC standard which the education provider linked to this requirement was incorrect. The visitors require this to be corrected to avoid confusion for students and programme staff. Therefore the visitors require the documentation to be updated.

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

Condition: The education provider must amend the programme documentation to ensure specific reference to the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics are used and are correct in its reference wherever it is appropriate.

Reason: The documentation provided by the education provider made no explicit reference to the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics in the module descriptors. The programme documentation made it evident that conduct was an integral aspect of the taught curriculum but the specific HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics were not referred to in the reading lists or module learning outcomes. The programme documentation did state that the HPC requires students to demonstrate developing professionalism so as to comply with our "Professional Code of Conduct". The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to make specific references to the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics and to ensure the correct title is also used wherever it is appropriate.

5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The education provider must provide additional evidence of the process for approving and monitoring overseas placements.

Reason: Through discussions at the visit it became clear that there were processes in place for approving and monitoring overseas placements which were not detailed in the documentation provided. The visitors felt it was important that the placements abroad be effectively approved and monitored to ensure that the overseas placement environments are suitable for students. In particular the visitors were aware that the final PP6 placement module could be taken abroad and being the final placement for consideration of fitness to practice this could pose problems with equality issues, supervisor experience, the quality of supervision, opportunities for the student to demonstrate fitness to practise alongside potential language difficulties. The visitors therefore require evidence of the full approval processes and how they are monitored.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure equality and diversity policies are implemented and monitored within overseas practice placements.

Reason: Through discussions at the visit it became clear that there were processes in place for any overseas placements which were not detailed in the documentation provided. The visitors felt it was important that the placements abroad have equality and diversity policies which ensure that the overseas placement environments are suitable for students. The visitors therefore require

evidence of how the education provider makes sure the overseas placements have equality and diversity policies and are implemented and monitored.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff within overseas practice placements.

Reason: Through discussions at the visit it became clear that there were processes in place for any overseas placements which were not detailed in the documentation provided. The visitors felt it was important that the placements abroad have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff which ensures the overseas placement environments are suitable for students. The visitors therefore require evidence of how the education provider makes sure the overseas placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience within overseas practice placements.

Reason: Through discussions at the visit it became clear that there were processes in place for the overseas placements which were not detailed in the documentation provided. The visitors felt it was important the practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience which ensure the overseas placement environments are suitable for students. The visitors therefore require evidence of how the education provider makes sure the overseas practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate practice placement educator training within non-traditional overseas practice placements.

Reason: Through discussions at the visit it became clear that there were processes for approving and monitoring overseas placements which were not detailed in the documentation provided. The visitors expect the practice placement educators to have undertaken the appropriate training to ensure the quality of supervision given and therefore ensuring overseas placement environments are suitable for students. The visitors therefore require evidence of how the education provider makes sure the overseas practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate practice placement educator training.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the requirement to have appropriately registered practice placement educators, unless other arrangements are agreed, is included within the practice placement documentation.

Reason: The practice placement handbook provided had a statement to the effect that students would be "supervised by a registered occupational therapist." The visitors deemed this was not explicit enough to ensure this SET is met. The visitors require it to be made clearer for the students that the practice placement educators will be registered with the HPC or have agreed other arrangements.

6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of the mechanisms in place for the effective monitoring and evaluations which ensure there are appropriate standards in the assessment within overseas placements.

Reason: Through documentation provided and discussions at the visit it was evident there were processes in place for the effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment but it was not clear how the overseas placement assessments were similarly monitored and evaluated. The visitors expect the assessments of the placements abroad be monitored and evaluated to ensure the assessments are appropriate to ensure fitness to practise at the end of the final 10 week placement (PP6). Therefore the visitors require the education provider to submit evidence of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place for the overseas placements.

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 clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register or propose alternative arrangements.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail in the external examiner recruitment policy for the programme visited. 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 firm commitment made by the senior staff to keep to the current renovation plans and have the new teaching room ready for the start of the next academic year by 31 August 2010.

Reason: From discussions with the students and the tour of facilities there was some concern around the current limitations of the room currently used. The students in particular described the room as being of "dire" condition and this was confirmed during the tour. The renovation plans as described by the senior team set a firm date by which the room would be ready for students. In later discussions with the programme team they seemed unaware of this date. The visitors were satisfied that currently the resources to support student learning meet the threshold level for this standard. Therefore the visitors wish to support the commitment made for the renovation plans at all education provider levels.

Jane Grant
Margaret Foster