

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Salford
Programme name	MSc Podiatry
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Chiropodist / podiatrist
Relevant entitlements	Local anaesthetic Prescription only medicine
Date of visit	9 – 10 June 2015

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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. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'chiropodist' 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 27 August 2015. At the Committee meeting, the programme was approved. 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 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 an HCPC 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. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Gordon Burrow (Chiropodist / podiatrist) Christine Morgan (Lay visitor) Sharon Wiener-Ogilvie (Chiropodist / podiatrist)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
Proposed student numbers	10 per cohort, one cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2015
Chair	Debbie Whittaker (University of Salford)
Secretary	Julie Evans (University of Salford)

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 the programme is new and there is currently no external examiner. However, visitors did review external examiners' reports for BSc (Hons) Podiatry programme.

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"/>
Service users and carers	<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"/>

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be satisfied 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 the relevant 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 53 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining five SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. 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 can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

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 revisit admissions documentation to ensure consistency and accuracy in the information made available to applicants including appropriate and / or professional entry standards.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to the programme's specification to evidence this standard. The visitors noted instances of inconsistent information. For example, the programme specification section 17 entrance requirements states "A Bachelor's degree with Honours, normally a 2:2 degree or above", however the course finder document in section entry requirements states "specific/subject-specific requirement: Health related subject". In addition, the visitors noted that the minimum average score of 6 or above (and for each component 5.5 or above) from the Cambridge / British Council English Language Testing Service (IELTS) was a requirements for students whose first language is not English. During the programme team meeting, the visitors learnt that the programme team will revisit the admission criteria to increase the required IELTS score to 7 with no elements below 6.5 and update this section. The visitors noted that the inconsistent information could be misleading to potential applicants for the programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to show that all information available to applicants is accurate and consistent to enable an applicant to make an informed choice on whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

3.17 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence regarding the plans for continued service user and carer involvement within the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine the exact nature of the service users and carers' involvement in the programme. The programme documentation suggested service users and carers will be involved in many aspects of the programme. Also, during discussions at the visit, it was indicated service users and carers may be involved in the interview process. However, from the discussions with the programme team it was clear that formal future plans have yet to be finalised to involve service users in the programme throughout. It was indicated by the service users and carers that there are plans for their further involvement in the programme, but the programme team provided limited details about how this will work. The visitors were unable to determine from the discussion and the documentation provided that a plan is in place for how service users and carers will continue to be involved in the programme. In order to determine that this standard is met the visitors require further evidence demonstrating the plans for future service user and carer involvement.

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 relevant entitlements.

Reason: From the documentation the visitors were satisfied that anyone successfully completing this programme would be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC. The visitors noted in the programme specification section 20 that “This non-standard programme will provide students with a master’s level academic qualification together with a professional practice qualification, which is a pre-requisite for eligibility to apply for registration to the Health and Care Professions Council”. However, the visitors were unable to see where in the documentation students were explicitly informed that anyone who receive this award will also be eligible to apply to get the entitlements of local anaesthetic and prescription only medicine. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students understand which awards confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register and the relevant entitlements.

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 state that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the Register.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine where in the assessment regulations there was a clear statement regarding aegrotat awards. Discussion with the programme team indicated aegrotat awards would only be awarded in exceptional circumstances on a case by case basis. The visitors could not determine how the programme team ensured that students understood that aegrotat awards would not enable them to be eligible to apply to the Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that there is a clear statement included in the programme documentation regarding the aegrotat award.

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 include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of the Register. In discussion with the programme team it was indicated the programme team would take account of this standard and update programme documents. In order to determine this standard is met, the visitors need to

see evidence of the HCPC requirements regarding external examiners within the programme documentation.

Gordon Burrow
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Sharon Wiener-Ogilvie