

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Southampton
Programme name	MSc Podiatry (Pre-registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Chiropodist / Podiatrist
Relevant modality	Podiatry
Date of visit	27 – 29 May 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 'Podiatrist' or 'Chiropodist' 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 approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 22 September 2009. At the Committee meeting on 22 September 2009, 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 HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC 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 part of a joint event. The education provider validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Podiatry, BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, BSc (Hons) Podiatry, MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration), MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration), Pg Dip Podiatry (pre-registration), Pg Dip Physiotherapy (pre-registration) and Pg Dip Occupational Therapy (pre-registration). 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 all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Paul Frowen (Podiatrist) Brian Ellis (Podiatrist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	Between 5 and 10
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2009
Chair	Rosalynd Jowett (University of Southampton) Carolyn Blundell Chair for Podiatry meetings (University of Southampton)
Secretary	Sara Dixon (University of Southampton)
Members of the joint panel	Wilfred Foxxe (Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists) Alison Hart (Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists) Nicola McLarnon (Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists)

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	<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 HPC did not review external examiners reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

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	<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"/>
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"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Podiatry, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 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 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 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 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 redraft and resubmit admissions documentation to clarify the circumstances in which a student will be awarded the Pg Dip Podiatry (pre-registration) with eligibility to apply for registration with the HPC.

Reason: The visitors would like to receive revised documentation that clearly indicates that students on the MSc Podiatry (pre-registration) could not elect to avoid the critical inquiry module and still be awarded the Pg Dip Podiatry. It must be made clear that the award of Pg Dip Podiatry is a fallback award only. This will therefore provide applicants with the correct information and allow them to make an informed choice about whether or not to join the programme.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 redraft and resubmit programme documentation and advertising materials to follow the guidance provided in the HPC 'Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers'.

Reason: From the documentation submitted it was clear that the programme documentation and advertising materials for the programme did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. Currently there is reference to the term 'licence to practice' in several documents. This term does not reflect the independence of the HPC or its role as a regulatory body which functions by protecting professional titles. Therefore, in order to provide applicants with the correct information to make an informed choice about whether to join the programme, the visitors felt the text used in programme documentation and advertising must be amended.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 redraft and resubmit programme documentation to clearly state the relationship between graduating from the programme and eligibility to apply to the HPC Register.

Reason: From the documentation submitted it was clear that the advertising materials for the programme did not fully comply with the advertising guidelines issued by HPC. Specifically, the advertising materials stated that graduates were eligible to register with the HPC. The visitors felt this implied that upon successful completion of the programme graduates could automatically gain

registration with the HPC; which is not the case. To enable applicants to make an informed choice about the programme, the visitors' felt the advertising materials must be updated to show that successful completion of an approved programme leads to 'eligibility to apply for registration with the HPC'.

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

Condition: The education provider must revise the admissions information regarding appropriate academic and or appropriate professional entry standards to the programme.

Reason: In the documentation received by the visitors prior to the visit it was unclear what the entry requirements for mature students to the programme were. The visitors pointed out to the programme team that any student wishing to apply to the programme who held a first degree would be by definition mature. The programme team indicated at the meeting with the visitors that mature students may come from within a clinical setting (eg as an assistant practitioner) and this is why the entry criteria had been set out so as not to preclude such applicants from applying to the programme. In order for any potential applicant to make an application to the programme the visitors would like to receive revised admissions documentation that clearly sets out the appropriate academic and or appropriate professional entry standards to the programme.

Recommendations

5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider formalising the recording of the attendance of practice placement educators at the development sessions.

Reason: The visitors were happy that the training of the practice placement educators took place and recognised that the education provider had a database of practice placement educators who had attended the development sessions. However the database currently did not record the date of attendance. The visitors recommended that this date was recorded to enhance the value of the database.

Paul Frowen
Brian Ellis