

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of the West of England, Bristol
Programme name	Graduate Diploma Physiotherapy
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Physiotherapist
Date of visit	19 – 21 May 2010

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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 15 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 26 August 2010. At the Committee meeting on 26 August 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 - 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 part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes - Graduate Diploma Physiotherapy, BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Imaging, Graduate Diploma Diagnostic Imaging, BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy, Graduate Diploma Radiotherapy, BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy and Graduate Diploma Occupational Therapy.

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	Kathleen Bosworth (Physiotherapist) Kathryn Heathcote (Physiotherapist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ben Potter
Proposed student numbers	70
Initial approval	September 2007
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Richard Eke (University of the West of England, Bristol)
Secretary	Wendy Hopkins (University of the West of England, Bristol)
Members of the joint panel	Helen Millican (Internal Panel Member) Elizabeth Evans (External Panel Member) Nina Thompson (Chartered Society of Physiotherapists) Jacqui Potter (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	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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"/>

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 recommendation for the programme. Recommendations are observations on the programme or education providers which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended 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

2.2 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 revisit all relevant instances in programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure that the English-language entry criteria are clear.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted it was not clear what the English-language requirements were on entry to the programme. It was also not apparent what International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level was applicable on entry to the programme. At the visit, discussions with the programme team indicated that this should be level 7 overall with no less than 6.5 for any area. The visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that the programme documentation clearly states the English-language requirements on entry to the programme, to ensure that this standard is met.

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 include references to the HPC's standards of conduct performance and ethics alongside references to professional body ethical guidance as well as including the HPC Guidance on conduct performance and ethics for students in relevant module reading lists.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation and in discussions with students that standards of conduct, performance and ethics are dealt with in the curriculum. In discussion with the students it was clear that they did not understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. They also noted in the documentation that references to HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics were not prevalent and the HPC's Guidance on conduct performance and ethics for students did not appear in module reading lists. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that the programme documentation includes specific references to HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics especially where the professional body's standards are mentioned. They also require evidence to demonstrate that the student guidance on the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics is included in relevant reading lists to enable students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

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 external examiners 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 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

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

Recommendation: The education provider should continue to review the training provided for practice placement educators.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussions with the practice placement educators and the programme team that practice placement educator training is provided and that practice placement educators undertake appropriate training prior to supervising a student. Therefore the visitors were satisfied this SET was met. However the visitors noted that the practice placement educators indicated they were not entirely satisfied with the Facilitating Learning and Assessing in Practice (FLAP) training. Because of this the visitors recommend that the education provider continues to explore providing an alternative to the FLAP training for physiotherapy practice placement educators such as the full and half day profession specific training which was mentioned in discussion with the programme team.

Kathryn Heathcote
Kathleen Bosworth