

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Leeds Beckett University
Name of programme(s)	MSc Speech and Language Therapy, FT (Full Time) MSc Speech and Language Therapy, PT (Part time)
Approval visit date	27-28 November 2018
Case reference	CAS-13300-R3N4K1

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Caroline Sykes	Speech and language therapist
Lucy Myers	Speech and language therapist
Ismini Tsikaderi	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Chris Hudson	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Leeds Beckett University
Dominic Ramsden	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Leeds Beckett University
Jennie Vitkovitch	Academic external panel member	University of East Anglia
Kate Shobbrook	Professional body representative	Royal College of Speech and Language Therapy

Angela Murphy	School of Clinical and Applied Sciences reviewer	Leeds Beckett University
Natalia Gerodetti	School of Social Sciences reviewer	Leeds Beckett University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Speech and Language Therapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Speech and language therapist
First intake	01/09/2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01955

Programme name	MSc Speech and Language Therapy
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Profession	Speech and language therapist
First intake	01/09/2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01956

We undertook this assessment of two new programmes proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programmes meet our standards for the first time. These new programmes will be delivered in addition to an existing speech and language therapy programme (BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy (full time)) at the education provider, which was not assessed as part of this process.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted	Reason(s) for non-submission
Programme specification	Yes	
Module descriptor(s)	Yes	
Handbook for learners	Yes	
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes	
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	

Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes	
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes	
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes	As the assessed programme is new, these reports related to the existing HCPC approved programme BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy (Full time)

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As the assessed programme is new, we met learners from the existing HCPC approved programme BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy (Full time)
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 25 January 2019.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate their commitment to future staffing plans, to enable the programme to remain sustainable.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted from the business plan that the education provider intends to source additional staff resources. The visitors also heard about the education provider being confident in providing the amount of staff resources according to the programme needs. However, the visitors were unable to see how the education provider would ensure that there would be appropriate staffing for the programme as the programme recruits each cohort of learners. From conversations, the visitors noted that they would expect to see an increase of staff resources to deliver the programme, to ensure that the programme will remain sustainable. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence on future arrangements that the education provider would be committed to their business plan in regards to staffing.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how there will be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice education providers.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitors noted that practice educators coordinate annually through a placement steering group. During discussions at the visit the visitors heard that this placement steering group is a coordination mechanism for the professions across the region having representatives from different trusts attending the group. Both at the senior and programme team meetings, the visitors also noted that there are strategic meetings taking place every 6 to 8 weeks between the school director, the placement director and deans from another two schools within the education provider. The education provider provided verbal reassurances that these senior management meetings coordinate plans around programme development, staffing and practice-based learning. However, the visitors were unclear how formal these meetings were, or what the terms of reference for these meetings is, and therefore whether they ensure regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers. As such, the visitors require further evidence which demonstrates how regular and effective collaboration is achieved between the education provider and practice education providers.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: This condition links to the condition for SET 3.1. From the documentation, the visitors noted that the education provider has plans to increase staffing by recruiting one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) member of staff for the 2020-21 academic year. From discussions held at the visit, the visitors noted that this was due to an increase in overall learner numbers as future cohorts are recruited. However, the visitors were unclear from the information provided how formal the education provider's future plans are, to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately and qualified staff to deliver an effective programme. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of the education provider's plans in this area, which ensures that the programme is adequately staffed as it progresses.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how their approach to inter-professional learning ensures that learners will learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the education provider intends that learners will learn from professionals and learners via an inter-professional learning (IPL) programme within the delivery of the programme. In the documentation it is noted that there is a dedicated conference and a workshop day in each year of study, together with learners on pre-registration courses. Learning at this event occurs through interaction with skilled service users and through simulation and is facilitated by a cross-section of professionally registered staff. From discussions at the visit, the visitors understood that the delivery of the IPL programme constitutes of IPL days. The education provider clarified information in regards to which schools attend IPL days and that assessment is managed at the end of these days. In particular, dietetic, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and social work learners work together during the IPL day. However, from their review of the documentation and based on these discussions, the visitors were unclear of the content of the IPL days and therefore how they contribute to learners learning with and from other learners. From conversations, it also seemed that learners would work with other professions in practice-based learning settings. However, the visitors were unclear how the education provider would ensure that these interactions were formalised to ensure learners learn from these professionals. Therefore, the visitors require evidence which demonstrates how the education provider's approach to IPL will ensure learners are able to learn with professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The education provider must ensure there is an effective process in place for obtaining consent form from learners.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitors noted that the process for obtaining consent from learners during practical sessions crosses over with the process for recording attendance. The education provider stated that during practical sessions a register is kept which also serves to record the learners' consent. From the discussions at the visit, the visitors understood that the education provider would require learners to register at each session in order to obtain their consent. However, the visitors were unclear what learners understood of this consent protocol, and therefore whether it will ensure an effective process for obtaining appropriate consent from learners in order to meet this standard. Therefore, the visitors require that the education provider demonstrates the process for obtaining consent from learners is explicit.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that speech and language therapist practice educators are HCPC registered.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitors noted that the placement handbook for the programme states that all practice educators in Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) services are “asked to be HCPC registered as a health and care professional”. Although the HCPC does not require that all practice educators are registered within the profession, this seemed like a reasonable approach for this programme. At the visit, the programme team showed the visitors what a practice educator’s profile looks like on the Practice Placement Quality Assurance (PPQA) online tool on the Healthcare Placement Website. However, from this viewing, the visitors were not clear how the education provider monitors the ongoing HCPC registration status of the SLT practice educators. The visitors therefore require that the education provider demonstrates how they monitor HCPC registration status of SLT practice educators, and that their requirement for SLT practice educators to be HCPC registered is clearly reflected across relevant documentation.

Section 5: Visitors’ recommendation

Considering the education provider’s response to the conditions set out in section 4 the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 06 March 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC’s decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).