Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Southampton
Programme name	MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Occupational therapist
Date of visit	27 – 29 May 2009

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 13 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 approval of the programme. The education provider has until 21 July 2009 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 July 2009. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 17 August 2009. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 22 September 2009.

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, MSc Podiatry (pre-registration), MSc Physiotherapy (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	Claire Brewis (Occupational Therapist) Joanna Goodwin (Occupational Therapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Rachel Greig
Proposed student numbers	50
Initial approval	November 2004
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Rosalynd Jowett (University of Southampton)
Secretary	Sara Dixon (University of Southampton)
Members of the joint panel	Nick Maguire (Internal panel member) Tom Randell (Internal panel member) Carolyn Blundell (Internal panel member Debbie Hearle (College of Occupational Therapists) Jo-Anne Supyk (College of

	Occupational Therapists) Clair Parkin (College of Occupational Therapists)

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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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 60 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 number of recommendations 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 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 Occupational Therapy (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 Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) could not elect to avoid the critical inquiry module and still be awarded the Pg Dip Occupational Therapy. It must be made clear that the award of Pg Dip Occupational Therapy 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'.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the Standards of Proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must include HPC's Standards of conduct, performance and ethics in the learning resources for the appropriate modules.

Reason: The visitors noted that HPC's Standards of conduct, performance and ethics were not included in the learning resources for the modules on the programme. In order to meet standard of proficiency (SOP) 1a Professional autonomy and accountability and so that students are made aware of the HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics it is necessary for this publication to be included in the resource materials for the appropriate modules.

6.7.2 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for awards which do not provide eligibility for inclusion onto the Register not to contain any reference to an HPC protected title in their title.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme specification to clearly articulate which awards provide eligibility to apply to the HPC Register.

Reason: The education provider offers a number of programmes, some of which are exit awards from the occupational therapy programmes (eg Dip HE Allied Health). The visitors noted that in some cases it was not explicitly documented that these awards do not lead to eligibility to apply to the HPC Register. The visitors felt the programme specification should be updated to make it clear when specific programmes do not lead to eligibility to apply to the HPC Register.

Recommendations

3.3 There must be a named programme leader who has overall responsibility for the programme and who should be either on the relevant part of the HPC Register or otherwise appropriately qualified and experienced.

Recommendation: The programme team should revisit the programme documentation to clearly state who the programme leader is.

Reason: Following discussions with the programme team and when reviewing some of the programme documentation it was clear that there was a named programme leader who is appropriately qualified and experienced and the visitors were satisfied with this. However, in some of the documentation submitted by the programme team this information was not clear. The visitors felt that this information should be clearly stated in the programme documentation to avoid any confusion to students or staff.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should continue to develop the system for monitoring and auditing placement settings.

Reason: Since the merging of the school of nursing with other allied health professions a new system for approving and monitoring placements has been put in place. Because this system is in its early stages its effectiveness is yet to be determined. The visitors were satisfied that this approving system was appropriate but wish for the education provider to continue to monitor its effectiveness. By doing this the education provider can ensure that the objectives and strategy of the monitoring system are being met and they will be alerted to any problems that may require attention.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider encouraging more practice placement educators to undertake a recognised clinical educators training programme.

Reason: The visitors recognised that placement staff were being offered and undertaking a clinical educators training programme and were satisfied that an appropriate number of trained placement educator staff existed. The visitors however felt that if the uptake of staff training was greater this would offer benefits to both students and staff.