

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Coventry
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Leicester)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Physiotherapist
Date of visit	28 – 30 May 2013

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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. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Physiotherapist' 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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 22 August 2013. At the Committee meeting, 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 HCPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme admissions, programme management and resources, curriculum, practice placements and assessment. The programme was already approved by the HCPC 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 - Diploma of Higher Education Operating Department Practice, Diploma Professional Development in Paramedic Practice, Foundation Degree in Paramedic Science, BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy and BSc (Hons) Dietetics. The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC 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 HCPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Kathryn Heathcote (Physiotherapist) Sara Smith (Dietitian) Mark Nevins (Paramedic)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
HCPC observer	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	130
First approved intake	September 1997
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2013
Chair	Beverley Steventon (Coventry University)
Secretary	Sally Sykes (Coventry University)
Members of the joint panel	Tim Tabor (Internal Panel Member) Heather Hunter (External Panel Member) Fiona Roberts (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) Nina Thomson (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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"/>
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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 51 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 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 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 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.

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 programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure potential applicants and students are made aware of changes to the fee structure and information about changes to the bursary arrangements.

Reason: In the documentation provided, the visitors noted information regarding fees and bursaries. During discussion with the programme team the visitors noted the education provider will recruit self-funded students to the programme. The visitors highlighted that from September 2013 bursary arrangements for physiotherapy students in UK are changing. The visitors were unable to determine from the documentation that information about changes to the fee structure, the bursaries and the self-funded route will be communicated to potential applicants and students. The visitors consider this to be essential information. Therefore they require the education provider to provide further evidence, including advertising materials, to ensure that potential applicants and students are made aware of the above information.

3.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation to ensure the terminology used is accurate and reflects the language associated with statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted the documentation submitted by the education provider prior to the visit contained some incorrect statements and terminology. The programme specification states the programme is “accredited by Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and by Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)” (page 4). The HCPC use the term ‘approval’ for programmes and not ‘accreditation’. The programme specification also states “All modules must be passed at level 3 and no fails may be carried towards the Physiotherapy Licence to Practice award” (Section 13.3). Approved programmes provide eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC; the programme does not automatically give a license to practice. The visitors also noted the Student Course Handbook refers to a different programme “this is a facility for every student who is studying psychology” (page 27). The visitors noted other instances such as these throughout the documentation and feel that incorrect and inaccurate statements may mislead students and provide an incorrect impression of the HCPC as a statutory regulator. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation and ensure the terminology used is accurate, reflects the language associated with statutory regulation and avoids any potential confusion for students.

4.9 When there is interprofessional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Condition: The education provider must submit information about the revised collaborative curriculum for the programme.

Reason: Documentation provided for the visit included information about the collaborative curriculum for interprofessional learning that students will undertake as part of this programme. The visitors noted in discussion at the visit that the programme team will amend the collaborative curriculum, as presented, to the requirements of the education provider. As such the visitors did not see the finalised version of the collaborative curriculum and how profession specific skills and knowledge will be addressed as part of this interprofessional learning. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence about the revised collaborative curriculum for the programme. In this way the, the visitors will be able to review the revised collaborative curriculum to ensure that when there is interprofessional learning in the programme the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group are adequately addressed.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence of how they ensure all practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included the procedures for approving and monitoring practice placement providers. The visitors reviewed this information but were unable to determine from this how the education provider ensures the practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place in relation to students. Discussions with the programme team indicated they are currently reviewing their placement audit process and in the future would ensure practice placement provider equality and diversity policies are in place. In order to determine how the programme could continue to meet this standard the visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place.

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. The visitors were unable to 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 the assessment regulations clearly state that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the Register.

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 HCPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed. The visitors were satisfied with the current external examiner for the programme. However, the visitors need to see evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate that this standard continues to be met.

Kathryn Heathcote
Sara Smith
Mark Nevins