

Visitors' report – amended approval process for independent prescribing programmes

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Section one: Programme details

Name of education provider	University of Essex
Programme name	A Conversion Programme to Prepare Physiotherapist and Podiatrist Supplementary Prescribers as Independent Prescribers
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant entitlements	Independent prescribing Supplementary prescribing
Name and role of HCPC visitors	Glyn Harding (Paramedic) Michael Minns (Independent prescriber)
HCPC executive	Alex Urquhart
Date of submission to the HCPC	13 November 2014

Section two: Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve education programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us.

As well as approving educational programmes for individuals who want to join the Register, the HCPC approve programmes for those already on the Register.

Along with several other entitlements, we currently approve programmes to allow:

- chiropodists / podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists to have their registration record annotated with supplementary prescribing; and
- chiropodists / podiatrists and physiotherapists to have their registration record annotated with independent prescribing.

We have previously ensured that a currently running supplementary prescribing programme at this education provider has met the standards of education and training (SETs). As this new or amended programme is based on an existing HCPC approved supplementary prescribing programme, we can be satisfied that it meets some of the standards for prescribing, which are based on the SETs. However, we have identified some standards where we will need to make a judgement about how the introduction or modification of elements of the programme impact on the way it meets these standards.

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets the standards for education providers part of the standards for prescribing, and that those who complete the programme demonstrate an ability to meet the standards for all prescribers (along with the additional standards for independent prescribers where required).

Section three: Submission details

The following required documents were provided as part of the submission:

- Information for applicants (eg advertising materials, admissions / entry criteria)
- Programme specification
- Student handbook
- Information about programme and management team structure, including staff CVs
- Module descriptors
- Extracts from practice placement documents
- Extracts from assessment regulations relating to student progression and external examiners
- Standards for prescribing mapping document

Section four: Additional documentation

- The visitors agreed that no further documentation was required in order to make a recommendation.
- The visitors agreed that additional documentation was required in order to make a recommendation. The standards for which additional documentation is requested are listed below with reasons for the request.

B.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff, experienced and, where required, registered staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: The visitors noted that they would like to see some evidence that prescribing in the professional context of physiotherapy and podiatry in the teaching and staff expertise.

Suggested documentation: Staff Curriculum vitae that clearly indicate which members of the teaching team currently hold either a SP or SPIP qualification.

E.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards for independent and / or supplementary prescribers.

Reason: The visitors noted how the curriculum and assessment supports individuals to understand the role of a supplementary and independent prescriber within the context of their own professional scope of practice. However, the visitors could not find any information about the respective difference between the Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE's) of physiotherapists and podiatrists. In particular, the visitors could not ascertain how the OSCES will address the profession specific learning needs of each profession. The visitors therefore require further information to be satisfied this standard is met.

Suggestion documentation: OSCE examination marking grids for physiotherapists and podiatrists, clearly indicating differences and similarities, and how these specifically address the prescribing contexts of each profession.

Section five: Recommendation of the visitors

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:

- There is sufficient evidence to show the programme meets the standards for education providers part of the standards for prescribing, and therefore that the programme be approved
- There is insufficient evidence to determine if or how the programme meets the standards for education providers part of the standards for prescribing. Therefore, a visit is recommended to gather more evidence, and if required place conditions on approval of the programme