hpc health professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Manchester
Programme name	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (ClinPsyD)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	17 – 18 May 2011

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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Practitioner psychologist' or 'Clinical psychologist' 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 6 December 2011. At the Committee meeting on 6 December 2011, 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 as the practitioner psychology profession came onto the register in July 2009 and a decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing programmes from this profession. 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 as the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. 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 the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Ruth Baker (Clinical psychologist) Sabiha Azmi (Clinical psychologist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Lewis Roberts
Proposed student numbers	24
First approved intake	1 January 1992
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	1 September 2011
Chair	Philip Keeley (University of Manchester)
Secretary	Ryan Hurst (University of Manchester)
Members of the joint panel	Gillian Hardy (British Psychological Society) Chris McCusker (British Psychological Society) Renee Rickard (British Psychological Society) Ally Chenery (British Psychological Society) Molly Ross (British Psychological Society)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

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 50 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 7 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 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 the programme documentation and advertising materials to ensure that the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning policy is clearly articulated to applicants to the programme.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it was clear that no accreditation of prior (experiential) learning would be offered to applicants to, or students on, the programme. However the visitors could not identify where in the programme documentation or advertising materials that the programme team clearly states this. This is to ensure that applicants have the information they need to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. Therefore the programme team must revisit the programme documentation and advertising materials to clearly articulate that the programme does not give credit for applicants' or students' prior (experiential) learning.

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 the programme documentation and advertising materials to ensure that applicants to the programme are made aware that formal consent to participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching will be required as a condition of entry to the programme.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors note that the education provider asks successful applicants to sign a formal consent form before they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching. The visitor's note that successful applicants are asked to sign this consent form before they take up an offer of a place on the programme and is therefore a condition of employment.

The visitors note that in the 'Letter to entrants' within appendix 2.4, the education provider clearly states that 'the offer is subject to three conditions', of which one is 'HPC consent to participate'. The visitors could not find any reference within the documentation outlining this as an entry requirement. The visitors require the education provider to revisit the programme documentation and advertising materials to ensure that applicants to the programme are made aware that formal consent to participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching will be required as a condition of entry to the programme. The visitors also require the education provider to clearly specify that any consent protocols in place are those designed and implemented by the education provider and not the HPC.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and outline the process for approving and monitoring practice placements to ensure they are safe and supportive.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors could not find evidence of formal mechanisms in place to check the quality of practice placements before they are used. The visitors noted that the 'guidance for trainee health and safety induction' and the 'health and safety on placement' documents address some of the health and safety issues related to practice placements. However, the visitors were concerned that these documents were retrospective in nature and that no formal mechanism was in place to ensure that practice placement settings are safe and supportive before students go on placement. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the auditing process and the guidelines in place to ensure that the education provider can make a judgement on whether practice placements provide safe and supportive environments. The education provider must also produce guidelines that articulate what they constitute as a safe and supportive practice placement environment.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of a thorough and effective system in place for approving and monitoring practice placements.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors could not find evidence of formal mechanisms in place to check the quality of practice placements before they are used. The visitors noted the 'guidance for trainee health and safety induction' and the 'health and safety on placement' documents, as well as discussions with the programme team outlining the informal mechanisms and minimum standards in place for approving practice placements. However, the visitors were concerned that these documents were retrospective in nature and that no formal mechanism was in place to ensure that practice placement are approved before they are used. From discussions with the programme team the visitors note that the programme currently utilises well established practice placements from within the NHS, however note that it is likely that in the future they will need to utilise new placements from within the NHS as well as placements outside of the NHS. The visitors therefore require clear written protocols that outline the systems in place to ensure that practice placements are approved and monitored in a thorough and effective way, including clear criteria that outline the minimum threshold standards for placement approval.

5.13 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of service users and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the learning and teaching methods in place to ensure that students gain appropriate consent from service users before writing up case reviews

Reason: The visitors noted discussions with the students in which the students stated that they always gained informed consent from service users before writing up case reviews. However, the visitors were concerned that in a number of instances the only evidence of this informed consent was from case notes taken during the practice placement. The visitors also noted in discussions with the programme team that different Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) have different policies in place for gaining informed consent from service users. The programme team finally discussed the fact that written consent should be obtained from service users where possible and represents good practice. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revisit the learning and teaching methods that are in place to ensure that students are well informed about good practice for gaining informed consent from service users.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the assessment strategy and design to ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the following standard of proficiency:

- **1a.3 - understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality**
- **1a.4 - understand the importance of and be able to obtain informed consent**

Reason: From discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that students are able to pass an assessment despite breaching confidentiality within the assessment. The visitors were concerned that the current assessment criteria relating to confidentiality and informed consent may not ensure students understand the importance of confidentiality and the importance of obtaining informed consent and therefore demonstrate that they meet standard of proficiency 1a.3 and 1a.4. The visitors noted that the current system allows students who breech confidentiality to pass with anonymity corrections with work been given back to students to make corrections. The visitors require the education provider to demonstrate how the assessment strategy and design ensures that students who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency 1a.3 and 1a.4.

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 could therefore not 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 there is a clear statement included in the programme

documentation regarding aegrotat awards and that this is clearly accessible to students.

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 one external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail concerning the recruitment of external examiners to the programme. The visitors were happy that the current external examiner meets the requirement of the HPC. However this standard requires that the assessment regulations of the programme must state that at least one external examiner appointed to the programme needs to be appropriately registered or that suitable alternative arrangements should be agreed. Therefore the visitors require evidence that HPC requirements regarding the appointment of external examiners to the programme have been included in the documentation, specifically in the programme regulations, to ensure that this standard is met.

Recommendations

2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revisiting the programme documentation to enhance the information about what reasonable adjustments can be made and what support services are available to individuals with certain health requirements.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team the visitors are satisfied that this standard has been met. The visitors noted that in the discussions with the programme team that they gave a number of examples where reasonable adjustments had been made to support students on the programme. The visitors did, however, note an apparent discrepancy between the discussions with the programme team and students and the information made available within the programme documentation. The visitors felt that information on reasonable adjustments and support mechanisms that the programme team were operating could be made more explicit in the programme documentation to ensure that the options and services available to individuals with health requirements are more clearly and consistently highlighted.

2.7 The admissions procedures must ensure that the education provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider taking a more strategic approach in the monitoring and implementation of its equality and diversity policies.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team the visitors are satisfied that this standard has been met. The visitors noted that the programme team monitors the admissions data that it receives from the Clearing House. The visitors also noted that the education provider gave an example of engagement work with local schools through which they were attempting to raise the profile of clinical psychology to currently under-represented groups. The visitors recommend that the programme team should consider taking a more strategic approach to the way it monitors and implements its equality and diversity policies. The visitors would like the education provider to consider formulating an equality and diversity strategy at a programme level to ensure that the work currently being undertaken around equality and diversity is conducted in a consistent, transparent and measured way.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the protocols in place for gaining students informed consent to participate as service

users in practical and clinical teaching and consider moving the point at which the programme team gains consent.

Reason: The visitors note that the education provider asks successful applicants to sign a formal consent form before they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching. The visitors are therefore satisfied that a system is in place for gaining students' informed consent and this standard is met. However, the visitor's note those successful applicants are asked to sign this consent form before they take up an offer of a place on the programme and is therefore a condition of employment.

The visitors highlighted that gaining consent from successful applicants before the programme begins may not allow them to have sufficient information about the nature of the practical and clinical teaching that they are expected to be involved in, and therefore they may not be able to make a fully informed choice about whether to consent. The visitors also highlighted that applicants may feel as though they had to give their consent despite not being fully informed as they had not yet secured a place on the programme.

From discussions with students the visitors noted that they had all signed the consent form, but also in addition, that the programme team had made students aware that they could opt out of some sessions if they caused particular emotional distress and that they could discuss any concerns with a member of the programme team before the session. The visitors finally noted the 'Guidance for managing emotional distress within teaching' document within appendix 3.14.

The visitors strongly recommend that the programme team consider gaining students consent for participation in practical and clinical teaching after they have been accepted and have taken up a place on the programme. The visitors suggest that the education provider may want to consider utilising the 'Guidance for managing emotional distress within teaching' document as well as the 'Consent for teaching' form as part of a formal session during the programme induction to ensure that all students are well informed about their options and are able to discuss any concerns with a member of the programme team.

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider adding an equality and diversity check into the audit and placement induction documentation.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team the visitors are satisfied that placement providers have equality and diversity policies in relation to students and that this standard has been met. However, the visitors noted in discussions with the programme team that the main assurance that this was the case was that all placements were subject to the equality and diversity policies of the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) where the specific practice placements were based. The programme team also stated that equality and diversity policies were covered during the placement inductions. However the visitors recommend adding a formal equality and

diversity check into the audit and placement induction documentation. This is to ensure that the policies in place are being implemented.

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider continues to think creatively about how they involve practice placement educators and heads of service in the formal collaborative structures within the programme.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and a review of the programme documentation the visitors were satisfied that this standard was met. However the visitors also noted that difficulties had arisen which had led to some practice placement educators and heads of service not being involved in formal collaborative structures such as the annual programme review and the placement forum. The visitors suggest that the education provider continues to think creatively about how they involve practice placement educators and heads of service in the formal collaborative structures within the programme to ensure that practice placement providers continue to value the positives of collaborative work and have on going 'buy-in' to the programme.

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Sabiha Azmi
Ruth Baker

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