

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Bangor University
Programme name	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (D.Clin.Psy)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	21 – 22 February 2012

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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 10 May 2012. At the Committee meeting on 10 May 2012 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. The education provider validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. 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 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 education provider and the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Annie Mitchell (Clinical psychologist) Harry Brick (Clinical psychologist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Lewis Roberts
Proposed student numbers	9 per cohort
First approved intake	January 1991
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2012
Chair	David Wright (Bangor University)
Secretary	Karen Chidley (Bangor University)
Members of the joint panel	Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society) Geraldine Kavanagh (British Psychological Society) Mary O'Reilly (British Psychological Society) Steve Davies (British Psychological Society) Ioan Ap Dewi (Internal panel member) James Hardy (Internal panel member) Tony Elliott (Internal panel member)

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	<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 HPC 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 condition is set on the programme, which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 56 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 1 SET.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended 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 recommendation 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

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 assessment regulations to clearly articulate the requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner to be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail concerning the recruitment of external examiners to the programme. The visitors were satisfied with the current external examiner arrangements. However, this standard requires the assessment regulations to clearly articulate the 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. The visitors therefore require evidence that HPC requirements regarding the appointment of external examiner to the programme have been included in the assessment regulations to ensure that this standard continues to be met.

Recommendations

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider consider formulating an appropriate strategic response should any changes occur to the education provider's business plan.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation, discussions with the senior management team, programme team and commissioning representative, the visitors noted the potential implications of the 'Review of Non Medical Healthcare Education Provision in Wales'. The visitors noted that the review has the potential to impact on the education provider's business plan and constitutes a potential threat to the future security of the programme. The visitors noted that a potential outcome of the review could be a recommendation that pre-Registration clinical psychology training in Wales should be delivered by one education provider only.

The visitors were reassured by discussions with the commissioning representative where it was stated that any recommendations from the 'Review of Non Medical Healthcare Education Provision in Wales' would be based on a detailed impact analysis with key stakeholders engaged. The visitors were also reassured by the commissioning representative where it was stated that should any changes occur to provision of pre-Registration clinical psychology training within Wales, funding for all current cohorts would be safeguarded and that an intake for 2012 is assured under current commissioning arrangements. The visitors finally noted from discussions with the senior management team that the education provider has a clear commitment to the future of the programme. The visitors are therefore satisfied that this standard is met.

However, the visitors also noted the potential risks associated with the current national review and recommend that, should any changes occur to the education provider's business plan as a result of the review, an appropriate strategic response should be formulated to mitigate against the potential impact of change.

Annie Mitchell
Harry Brick