

Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	Birmingham City University
<b>Validating body / Awarding body</b>	N/A
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time Part time
<b>Relevant part of HPC Register</b>	Speech and Language Therapist
<b>Date of visit</b>	22-23 September 2009

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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 14 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Speech and language therapist' or 'Speech 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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 25 November 2009. At the Committee meeting on 25 November 2009, 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 to consider issues raised by the previous year's annual monitoring process. The issues raised by annual monitoring affected the following standards - programme admissions, programme management and resources, curriculum, practice placements and assessment. The programme was already approved by the HPC 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 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

## Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Aileen Patterson (Speech and language therapist) Gillian Stevenson (Speech and language therapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Brendon Edmonds
Proposed student numbers	101
Initial approval	12 October 2002
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Stuart Brand (Birmingham City University)
Secretary	Tessa Clarke (Birmingham City University)
Members of the joint panel	Tony Whittle (Birmingham City University) Tracey Marsh (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists) Rubana Hussein (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists)

## 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"/>
Cohort progression statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Induction materials	<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 66 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the 1 remaining SET.

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 have also made a commendation. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

## Conditions

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

**Condition:** The education provider must implement formal written protocols to obtain consent when students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in the documentation and through meetings with the programme team and students, consent was obtained verbally from students when participating as service users in clinical and practical teaching. However, there was no indication of the protocols in place which govern this process, the frequency with which it is applied, and how records are maintained to indicate consent had been obtained. In light of this, the visitors were not satisfied the current system in place gained informed consent from students.

The visitors require the education provider to implement formal protocols for obtaining consent from students. In particular any formal protocols must include obtaining written consent from students when they are participating as service users in practical and clinical teaching. Also any formal protocols must also inform students of the opportunity to withdraw from any such activities which require them to participate as service users.

## Recommendations

### **3.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider filling the vacant positions on the programme team with appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

**Reason:** The visitors noted in meeting with the programme team there are vacant positions on the team which are yet to be filled. The visitors were satisfied there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. However, the visitors recommend the vacant positions be filled as soon as possible to ensure any potential staffing changes in the future do not affect the delivery of the programme.

### **4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider revising the programme specification benchmarks to include reference to the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

**Reason:** The visitors noted on page 2 of the programme specification the programme benchmarks did not reference the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Although the visitors were satisfied this standard is met, they recommend the programme team revise the programme specification benchmarks to include the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

### **5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should continue to carefully monitor independent practice placement providers to ensure practitioners are appropriately registered.

**Reason:** The visitors noted the programme relied on practice placement educators in independent practice settings as part of placement provision for the programme.

Although the visitors were satisfied the SET has been met, they recommend the programme team continue to apply appropriate monitoring procedures to ensure these placements continue to provide placement educators who are appropriately registered.

## Commendations

**Commendation:** The programme team are commended on the development and successful implementation of speech and language clinic simulation software to the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors noted the simulation software which was successfully developed and integrated into the curriculum. This software provided students with a rich learning experience of the clinical settings and the decision making process speech and language therapists would typically be presented with on a regular basis.

The visitors agreed this software was of best practice and innovation in the education of speech and language therapists and other education providers would benefit students by integrating this software into their own curriculum.

Information about this can be found by contacting Claire Hartley, the Head of Department Speech and Language Therapy, Birmingham City University.

Aileen Patterson  
Gillian Stevenson