

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Birmingham
Programme name	Applied Educational and Child Psychology (D.Ed.Psy)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Educational psychologist
Date of visit	29-30 April 2010

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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 'Educational 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 approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 7 July 2010. At the Committee meeting on 7 July 2010, the programme was approved. 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 X profession came onto the register in 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 where the professional body also 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	Trevor Holme (Educational psychologist) Claire Brewis (Occupational therapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Brendon Edmonds
Proposed student numbers	12
Initial approval	1 January 2005
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	David Stephenson (University of Birmingham)
Secretary	Beverley Burke (University of Birmingham)
Members of the joint panel	Jackie Lown (The British Psychological Society) Julia Hardy (The British Psychological Society) Pat Bennett (The British Psychological Society) Rupal Nathwani (The 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	<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 number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

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.

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 resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that the successful completion of the programme leads to eligibility to apply to the HPC register.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme documentation contained little reference to the role of the HPC. In particular the visitors noted the programme documentation did not advise applicants or potential applicants that the successful completion of the programme leads to eligibility to apply to the HPC register as an Educational psychologist.

The visitors considered the absence of this information could be potentially misleading to applicants or potential applicants to the programme. The visitors require the programme documentation be redrafted to include, where appropriate, information addressing the requirements of this condition.

2.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation to more clearly articulate the standard English requirements applied as part of the admissions process.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation and through meeting with the programme team, standard English requirements were applied as part of the admissions process. In particular, the documentation specified any applicant must evidence a level of English 'significantly in excess of standard English requirements'. The visitors were unclear as to the level of English an applicant was required to meet to be admitted to the programme.

The visitors consider the lack of clarity regarding the level of English to be demonstrated by applicants upon admission to the programme to be potentially misleading. The visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation to clearly articulate the standard of English required to be demonstrated by applicants when applying to the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation to clearly articulate the health requirements which are applied prior to admission to the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation the absence of any clear health requirements to be met for applicants being admitted to the programme, other than university wide regulations. In the meeting with the programme team, the visitors noted the admissions process requires applicants to complete a health declaration. The visitors were not provided with a process which considers how any health issues raised through the completion of a declaration are dealt with.

The visitors were not satisfied the health requirements and process for dealing with any issues were clearly articulated within the programme documentation for potential applicants to the programme. The visitors require the programme documentation be reviewed to clearly articulate the requirement for applicants to complete a health check. Furthermore, any information should also clearly advise applicants of how any issues identified in the health declaration are dealt with as part of the admissions process.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation to clearly articulate the criteria applicants must meet to be granted accreditation of prior learning (APEL) upon admission to the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation the absence of any clear APEL policy applicable to the programme, other than university wide regulations. However, in the meeting with the programme team, the visitors noted there were specific circumstances under which APEL may be granted to an applicant to the programme.

The visitors consider the absence of this information within the programme documentation could be potentially misleading to applicants. The visitors require the education provider redraft the programme documentation to clearly articulate the criteria applicants must meet to be granted accreditation of prior learning (APEL) upon admission to the programme

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 redraft the programme documentation to clearly articulate the process for gaining informed consent from students, including a mechanism used to formally record this.

Reason: Through the documentation and various meetings at the visit, the visitors noted students were required to participate as service users in practical and clinical sessions on the programme. The programme team acknowledged there was no documented or formalised process for gaining informed consent from students. However the programme team advised that students are made aware of the requirement to participate as a service user at the beginning of the programme and before any practical session.

The visitors considered the lack of information outlining the expectations for participation, and the need for obtaining informed consent, could be potentially misleading to students. Furthermore, the visitors considered the current system did include appropriate protocols to ensure a formal record of informed consent was obtained from each student. Therefore the visitors require the education provider redraft the programme documentation to clearly articulate the clearly articulate the process for gaining informed consent from students, including a mechanism used to formally record this.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft the 'Psychology in Professional Practice' module handbook to make reference to the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: The visitors noted in the 'Psychology in Professional Practice' module handbook, the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics were not referred to as a source of information. The visitors consider the absence of this reference from the module did not provide students with the information needed to understand the implications of these standards on their professional practice.

In order to be satisfied this SET is met, the visitors require the module handbook be redrafted to include reference to the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics as a source of information.

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 redraft the programme documentation to advise students and applicants no aegrotat award is available for the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme documentation did not advise students or applicants that no aegrotat award was available for the programme. The programme team confirmed an aegrotat award was not available and acknowledged this was not stated within the documentation.

In order to be satisfied this SET is met, the visitors require the education provider redraft the programme documentation to clearly articulate no aegrotat award is available for the programme.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider referencing the HPC's 'Guidance for health and character' and 'A disabled persons guide to becoming a health professional' in any system for conducting health checks during admissions.

Reason: The visitors noted the requirement for applicants to complete a health declaration as part of the admissions process for the programme. Furthermore the visitors also noted the documentation did not detail this requirement and the system used for managing any health issues raised. Accordingly the visitors placed a condition relating to this SET requiring the education provider to revise the programme documentation to articulate the system for conducting health checks.

To further assist the development of this system, the visitors recommend the education provider reference the HPC's 'Guidance for health and character' and 'A disabled persons guide to becoming a health professional' as a source of information.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revisiting the programme documentation to more clearly articulate the programme is designed to ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation the learning outcomes for the programme, where they were being delivered and how they related to the standards of proficiency. However, the visitors could find no information advising students and applicants of how the design of the programme ensures those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register

Although satisfied this SET is met, the visitors recommend the education provider review the programme documentation to more clearly articulate the link between the learning outcomes of the programme and the HPC standards of proficiency.

5.12 Learning, teaching and supervision must encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the programme documentation to enhance the awareness of the HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics in relation to issues of professional conduct on placement.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation the implementation of a 'Code of Ethics' for students to adhere to whilst on the programme. This code has been developed using the HPC standards of conduct performance and ethics, and the BPS and AEP code of ethics. The visitors also noted the 'Psychology in Professional Practice' module handbook did not make reference to the HPC standards.

Although satisfied this SET is met, the visitors' recommend the education provider review the programme documentation to further enhance the awareness of the HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics in relation to issues of professional conduct on placement.

Trevor Holme
Claire Brewis