![hpc health professions council]

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Edinburgh
Programme name	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	7 – 8 June 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 11 October 2012. At the Committee meeting on 11 October 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 professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered a different programme, Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol) - flexible. 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	Stephen Davies (Clinical psychologist)
	Lynn Dunwoody (Health psychologist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Victoria Adenugba
Proposed student numbers	40 per cohort
First approved intake	January 1995
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2012
Chair	Richard Williams (University of Edinburgh)
Secretary	Emily Gribbin (University of Edinburgh)
Members of the joint panel	Helen Dent (British Psychological Society)
	Rob Jones (British Psychological Society)
	Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society)
	Gundi Kiemle (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 condition is set on the programme, which must be met before the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 56 of the SETs have been met and that a condition should be set on the 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.

Conditions

3.15 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The education provider must put in place a robust system for monitoring trainee attendance and ensure that attendance is communicated between placements providers and the programme team.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted that attendance was monitored using spot checks. During discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that no formal record of attendance was maintained but during the trainees annual review, attendance issues would be discussed. The visitors learnt that this was due to the programme team placing a level of responsibility on trainees to attend all teaching days as it is part of their contract. The visitors also learnt that there were plans to provide a register before each lecture, however this had not happened. During discussions with placement providers the visitors learnt that attendance was monitored at placement by a weekly sign off by supervisors' and that any absence had to be accounted for by trainees by contacting their line manager and supervisor. The visitors also learnt that there is a communication policy in place which stipulated that absences should be communicated between placement providers and the programme team. However some placement providers were unaware of such policy and had concerns that they were not being updated about their trainee's absence from lectures. The visitors were concerned that without a robust system in place to regularly monitor the attendance of trainees the programme team would not be able to take follow-up actions as soon as a trainee's attendance starts to slip. They were also concerned that visiting lecturers would not be able to identify which trainees had missed their lecture and would not be able to pass this information on to the programme team. To ensure this standard is being meet the visitors require a robust mechanism be put in place to monitor trainee's attendance in all programme settings to ensure that absences are communicated between placement providers and the programme team.

Recommendations

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider including admission information regarding the 'Protecting Vulnerable Groups' (PVG) checks, health requirement checks and the required International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score on their website.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met as admissions information is clearly highlighted on the Clearing House website which applicants read before applying, and a weblink is provided on the education provider's website. However to further ensure all applicants receive this information the programme team may want to consider adding information regarding the 'Protecting Vulnerable Groups' (PVG) checks, health requirement checks and the required International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score on their website .

3.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider increasing the opportunities for peer observation and review for both the academic staff and visiting lecturers.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met as a review of the curriculum vitae's supplied as part of the documentation for this visit showed that staff had the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge. The visitors also learnt that there was a strong staff development and appraisal system in place, as well as a strong feedback system which trainees use to comment on teaching sessions. It was also noted that most teaching sessions are facilitated by two members of staff. However the visitors also learnt that the programme team does not frequently peer review and observe teaching sessions for both academic staff and visiting lecturers. To further enhance the learning experience of trainees and the academic staff the visitors suggest the programme team increase their use of the peer observation.

3.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider indexing or referencing all versions of the programme handbook and notify trainees of any changes to the handbook.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met as the programme handbook had the relevant information a trainee would need whilst studying on this programme. However to make the handbook more user-friendly the visitors suggest that an index or referencing system be included within the handbook. During discussions with trainees the visitors also learnt that trainees

are only made aware of changes to the handbook when they need to access particular information. Trainees expressed frustration as it means a search can be time consuming and sometimes unsuccessful. The visitors therefore suggest that the education provider introduces an index or referencing system and notify trainees of changes to the handbook.

3.12 There must be a system of academic and pastoral student support in place.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider clearly articulate to trainees who the relevant contact is for different types of queries or concerns.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met as from a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted within the trainee handbook that trainees are given information on the relevant points of contact for different types of queries or concerns. However during discussions with trainees the visitors learnt that they were still unclear on whom to contact if they had queries or concerns. The visitors learnt that trainees frequently contacted a particular member of the team that they were familiar with and as a result sometimes queries or concerns could end up being passed on several times until it reached the correct member of the team. Trainees also stated that they found it very hard to consult their handbook to access this information as it was hard to follow because it is not indexed or referenced. The visitors therefore suggest that the programme team reviews the current information in place to ensure all trainees are aware of the different types of support available to them and who to contact for different concerns.

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider clearly articulating to trainees the location of the complaints process.

Reason: The visitors were content that this standard was met as there is a complaint process in place. However during discussions with the trainees the visitor learnt that some were unsure if there was such a process whilst others were aware that there must be a complaints process and that it is most likely to be within their handbook but as the handbook is so large and not indexed or referenced they were unsure of its location. The visitors learnt from trainees that they would bring up any complaint with a trusted member of staff if the need ever arose. To make trainees aware of the complaints process the visitors suggest that the programme team clearly sign posts trainees to it by indexing or referencing the programme handbook.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider mapping programme assessments to the academic leaning outcomes to highlight where assessments take place and which learning outcomes are covered within the assessments.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met as the learning outcomes in place ensure that students who successfully complete the

programme meet the standards of proficiency and are able to practise safely and effectively. From reviewing the documentation provided the visitors were able to find information about how the assessment methods employed measure the learning outcomes but noted that this information was not clearly mapped and was not straightforward to follow. To provide clarity to trainees the visitors suggest the programme team should consider mapping programme assessments to the academic leaning outcomes to highlight where assessments take place and which learning outcomes are covered within the assessments.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider assessing and monitoring a trainee's progression between case conceptualisation 1 and 2.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met as assessment regulations are in place which clearly specify the requirements for a trainee's progression and achievement within the programme. However the visitors learnt that the difference between case conceptualisation in year 1 and year 2 is the subject area, which is different in year 1 from year 2. The visitors also noted that trainee's progression in case conceptualisation 1 and 2 was not assessed. The visitors recommend that the programme team may want to assess case conceptualisation in year 2 against year 1. This way trainees as well as the programme team would be able to see their development from a first year to a second year trainee and if there was a regression this could be acted upon.

Stephen Davies
Lynn Dunwoody