

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Plymouth
Programme name	DipHE Operating Department Practice
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Operating department practitioner
Date of visit	15 – 17 January 2013

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Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Operating department practitioner' must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care 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 9 May 2013. At the Committee meeting on 9 May 2013, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures 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 HCPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme admissions, programme management and resources, curriculum, practice placements and assessment. The programme was already approved by the HCPC 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 education provider validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration) and Post Graduate Diploma Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration). The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Penny Joyce (Operating department practitioner) Tony Scripps (Operating department practitioner)
HCPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
HCPC observer	Nicola Baker
Proposed student numbers	30 per cohort once per year
First approved intake	September 2003
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2013
Chair	Will Diver (University of Plymouth)
Secretary	Jo Melhuish (University of Plymouth) Kahila Smith (University of Plymouth) Cirstie Rennie (University of Plymouth) Claire Ellis (University of Plymouth)
Members of the joint panel	Lloyd Howell (College of Operating Department Practice) Mike Donnellon (External Panel member) Beth Gompertz (Internal Panel member)

	Val Heath (Internal Panel member) Mel Joyner (Internal Panel member) Sharon Wilkinson (Internal Panel member)
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Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC 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 HCPC 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 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

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 advertising materials for the programme to ensure they are providing all the information potential applicants require for them to make an informed choice about the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the online information and the advertising leaflet for the programme. They noted there was some information not included that they considered important for applicants to be able to make informed choices about the programme. This information included details about the award to be gained and mandatory admissions procedures (the occupational health check and enhanced CRB check). In order that the programme meets this standard the visitors require the education provider to revisit the advertising materials to ensure this information is included.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit information that includes details about the module leaders for this programme.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included programme team staff CV's and descriptions of the modules. The visitors noted the documentation did not have details of who the module leaders are. The visitors were therefore unable to determine that subject areas are being taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge. In order to determine this standard is met the visitors require information that demonstrates who the module leaders are for each module.

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 amend programme documentation to remove references to the HCPC having a statutory attendance requirement for students and to amend inaccuracies.

Reason: The visitors noted within the documentation provided, there were references to the HCPC having a statutory attendance requirements, "This is to ensure compliance with the statutory attendance requirements of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)" (Practice Competency Assessment – year one, P11). The HCPC enforces no statutory requirements for attendance of students for academic learning or practice placement learning. For accuracy the visitors require these references to be amended throughout the documentation. The visitors also noted other inaccuracies through the documentation which need to be corrected. For example, in the programme handbook p39, there is a reference to appendix 3 for module descriptors however appendix 3 is the end of placement feedback form and on p61 there is a reference to appendix 2

which is also incorrect. The visitors require all inaccuracies and incorrect references to be corrected within the documentation.

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.

Condition: The education provider must submit finalised descriptions of the modules for this programme.

Reason: During the visit discussion indicated revisions would be made to the module descriptors concerning some learning outcomes and general amendments. The visitors will need to determine the learning outcomes of the revised module descriptors will ensure those who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register. Therefore the visitors require the education provider submit revised module descriptors for review.

5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate they have immediate access to details regarding the mentors working with students from this programme.

Reason: Documentation provided for this visit stated “a ‘live’ mentor database is kept of all staff that mentor ODP students” (SETs mapping document, SET 5.6). At the visit the visitors viewed the database and were informed it was a voluntary database into which information was populated by members from the individual practice placement areas. The visitors were concerned this could mean it was difficult for the programme team to be able to know who was working with their students at any given time and to be able to ensure those mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced. Upon raising this concern with the programme team it was stated the information collected from the placements audits included details about the mentors and this was inputted onto the system, it was also described that individual placement areas maintained lists of where students were placed and the programme team could ask for access to these lists. The visitors were satisfied the information was available however were concerned the programme team did not have direct access to information about who students were located with. The visitors additionally have not seen the evidence that the information collected through the audit process is being inputted onto a system accessible to the programme team. The visitors therefore require evidence that the programme team have immediate access to information regarding who their students are working with at any time and information to be able to ensure that those mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate they have immediate access to details regarding the training undertaken by mentors working with students from this programme.

Reason: Documentation provided for this visit stated “a ‘live’ mentor database is kept of all staff that mentor ODP students” (SETs mapping document, SET 5.6). At the visit the visitors viewed the database and were informed it was a voluntary database into which information was populated by members from the individual practice placement areas. The visitors were concerned this could mean it was difficult for the programme team to be able to know who was working with their students at any given time and to be able to ensure those mentors had been appropriately trained. Upon raising this concern with the programme team it was stated the information collected from the placement audits included these details about the mentors and this was inputted onto their system. The visitors were satisfied the information was available from the audits however have not seen the evidence that the information collected through the audit process is being inputted onto a system accessible to the programme team. The visitors therefore require evidence the programme team have immediate access to information regarding who their students are working with at any given time and are able to ensure those mentors are appropriately trained.

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 submit finalised descriptions of the modules for this programme.

Reason: During the visit discussion indicated revisions would be made to the module descriptors concerning some learning outcomes and general amendments. The visitors will need to determine the assessment of the learning outcomes in the revised module descriptors will ensure those who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register. Therefore the visitors require the education provider submit revised module descriptors for review.

Recommendations

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.

Recommendation: When the education provider's appointed external examiner reaches the end of their term, the HCPC may need to be informed through the major change process.

Reason: Through the documentation the visitors noted it was anticipated the external examiner for the programme would be due to reach the end of their term in this position in the next year or so. The visitors wished the education provider to note that the programme must have at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the register and if the new person to take up this role was not from the relevant part of the Register, the HCPC would need to be informed through the major change process.

Penny Joyce
Tony Scripps