

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Plymouth
Programme name	Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	2 – 3 March 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 14 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 20 May 2010. At the Committee meeting on 7 July 2010, 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 psychologist 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 reviewed 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	Robert Munro (Biomedical scientist) Laura Golding (Clinical psychologist)
HPC executive officer	Ruth Wood
HPC observer	Ben Potter
Proposed student numbers	14
Initial approval	July 2009
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Mick Fuller (University of Plymouth)
Secretary	Lisa Lamb (University of Plymouth)
Members of the joint panel	Tim Auburn (University of Plymouth) Mel Joyner (University of Plymouth) Claire Knapman (University of Plymouth) Stephen Melliush (University of Leicester) Joe Miller (Devon Partnership) Lyn Westcott (University of Plymouth) Eve Knight (British Psychological Society) Theresa Powell (British Psychological Society) Carol Martin (British Psychological Society) Rupal Nathwani (British Psychological Society) Jo Daniels (British Psychological Society) Lucy Kerry (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.

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.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

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 programme documentation and any advertising material to ensure that the terminology in use is accurate and reflective of the current terminology used in relation to statutory regulation.

Reason: The programme documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, there were instances of out-of-date terminology in reference to HPC 'accrediting' the programme. The HPC does not 'accredit' education programmes instead we 'approve' education programmes. The visitors considered the terminology to be misleading to applicants and students and therefore require the documentation to be reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology throughout.

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 the student's eligibility to register with the HPC alongside the instances where the student's eligibility to apply for chartered status with the British Psychological Society (BPS), appears in the programme documentation.

Reason: Within the programme documentation the visitors noted that there are several instances when the eligibility of a student to apply for chartered status with the BPS is made clear. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team review the documentation to include the student's eligibility to register with the HPC alongside these. This would then help to ensure that the eligibility to apply for registration with the HPC and the differences between the regulatory body and the professional body are embedded within a student's learning.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider continues to utilise the Service Receiver and Carer Consultative Group to build on the clear strengths gained from including them in the design and delivery of the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team, students and the service users, that the involvement of the Service Receiver and Carer Consultative Group was beneficial in developing areas of the programme such as admissions, inductions, research, teaching, problem based learning and assessment. The visitors wish to support the programme team in maintaining the involvement of the Service Receiver and Carer Consultative Group with this recommendation, to build on the impressive work they have done so far in enhancing the effective management of the programme.

3.10 The learning resources, including IT facilities, must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider the continued monitoring of IT provision for the students when they are on practice placements.

Reason: The visitors noted that there were concerns raised about access to IT provision on practice placements within the annual programme monitoring documentation. The visitors also noted the provision of IT facilities available to the programme, both on site and at the university library. In the meeting with student representatives, concerns were raised about the some periodic lack of access to IT provision whilst on placement. The visitors were satisfied the standard was met however recommend the programme team continue to monitor

the current provision of IT services to ensure that students' learning continues to be fully supported while on practice placements.

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revising programme documentation to highlight the mandatory attendance requirement for students on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted that within the programme documentation there were some instances where the mandatory attendance requirement was set at 90% and other instances where it was set at 80%. In discussion with the programme team this was clarified as 80%. As such the visitors are satisfied the standard is met however recommend the programme team review the documentation to avoid any confusion for students and staff about the mandatory attendance requirements.

Robert Munro
Laura Golding