

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	St George's, University of London
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC register	Physiotherapy
Date of visit	16 to 17 April 2008

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction	2
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence.....	4
Recommended outcome	5
Recommendations	6
Commendations	7

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 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Physiotherapist' or 'Physical 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 at the education provider. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee on 10 June 2008. At this meeting, the Committee confirmed the ongoing approval of the programme. This means 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 major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - curriculum standards and assessment standards. 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 education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and BSc (Hons) Therapeutic Radiography. 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 all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Dr Joanna Jackson (Physiotherapy) Ms Nicola Smith (Physiotherapy)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	73
Initial approval	21 September 1999
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2008
Chair	Professor Sean Hilton (St George's, University of London)
Secretary	Caroline Dacey/Derek Baldwinson (St George's, University of London)
Members of the joint panel	Dr Pamela Bagley (St George's, University of London/Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) Dr Elizabeth Miles (St George's, University of London) Dr Ralph Manly (St George's, University of London) Ms Jenny Carey (St George's, University of London/Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)

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 (e.g. 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 the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors did not set any conditions for the programme. 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 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 two commendations. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Recommendations

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should keep under review the information provided on external sources such as the prospectus and website so that the information provided for students prior to and after admission is consistent.

Reason: The prospectus and website page viewed by the visitors had information that did not match the correct information provided by the education provider for the visitors as evidence for the visit. The visitors felt that such information should be kept under review to ensure clarity.

2.2.2 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider keeping under review the system of obtaining criminal conviction checks to ensure the currency of the criminal record check previously made.

Reason: The programme team explained fully the procedure for dealing with potential criminal convictions that might be presented by an applicant or once a student is enrolled on the programme. The visitors were satisfied with the evidence provided by the education provider; however the visitors wanted the education provider to keep the procedures under review to ensure that all criminal checks are considered fully and equitably.

3.11 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 an enhancement to the attendance policy to make it clearer for staff and students.

Reason: Although evidence was provided to set out the attendance policy was in place and the visitors were satisfied with the policy, the visitors would advise the education provider to enhance the policy to ensure that there could be no misinterpretation by staff or students.

6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Recommendation: The education provider should monitor the changes that have been put in place this year relating to the first year of the programme in addressing the high number of failures in the first sitting of examinations and how this would be monitored.

Reason: The visitors accept and acknowledge that the programme team have responded well in terms of teaching style for the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) assessment change, and would suggest that the team monitor the impact of the new changes on this year's cohort so that the impact of the changes can be reviewed and adjustments can be implemented in time for the new cohort in September 2008.

Commendations

The visitors wish to commend the following aspects of the programme:

Commendation: The visitors commend the programme team on the Peer Assisted Learning System and the use of Level six students to help support the learning of students at Level four.

Reason: Teaming Level six student with Level four students is seen as innovative best practice as using senior students in this way facilitates the junior student learning and provides benefits for both student groups.

Dr Joanna Jackson
Ms Nicola Smith