

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Glyndwr University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time
Approval visit date	23 - 24 May 2019
Case reference	CAS-14379-N7R4M3

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Carol Rowe	Physiotherapist
Kathryn Campbell	Physiotherapist
Susanne Roff	Lay
Patrick Armsby	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Colin Heron	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Glyndwr University – Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology
Naomi Saunders	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Glyndwr University – Senior Quality Officer
Amy Rattenbury	Internal Assessor	Glyndwr University – Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology

Kelly Smith	Internal Assessor	Glyndwr University – Faculty of Social and Life Sciences
Thomas Hindle	Student Representative on the panel	Glyndwr University – Level 4 BA (Hons) Theatre, Television and Performance
Anne Wallace	External Assessor	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) – Academic Representative, University of Aberdeen
Nina Paterson	External Assessor	CSP – Education Advisor

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
First intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 26
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02066

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Not Required

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	The HCPC panel met with learners on the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy course, which is HCPC approved.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 02 August 2019.

2.1 The admissions process 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 demonstrate that the admissions process suitably informs learners so that they can make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors were able to access the Glyndwr webpage that provided information about the course for potential applicants. The visitors found the information to be limited, and considered that it did not cover all aspects required to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a programme. The visitors also noted from the webpage that applicants were not provided with specific information about the different funding structures and potential additional costs. The documentation confirmed that information regarding funding arrangements and settings of placements would be delivered to applicants at the interview stage. In the programme and senior team meeting, it was confirmed that there would be commissioned and privately funded places on the programme. The senior team stated that commissioned

places would be awarded on a “first come, first served basis”, however the programme team stated that commissioned places were to be awarded based on performance at interview. The programme team also confirmed that the different funding routes would have differing additional costs for learners. The visitors noted that this information had not been provided on the official Glyndwr webpage for prospective learners and could not see the funding broken down in this way within the documentation. The visitors considered this information to be important for potential applicants and could affect their decision to apply or take up a place with the education provider. In order to meet the standard the education provider must ensure the information provided to applicants prior to interview is clear and thorough to allow informed decision-making.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate their commitment to the future of the programme irrespective of external funding, to enable the programme to remain sustainable.

Reason: The visitors noted from the meetings with the senior and programme team that the programme has been driven by the Welsh government which has led to commissioning of some of the learner places on the programme, with the rest of the cohort being made up of privately funded learners. The visitors were confident of the current provision for places and commitment from the relevant stakeholders to ensure the programme will run effectively as things stand. However, the visitors could not see a formal commitment from the university to the future of the programme irrespective of the external funding. This sustainability element of this standard is related to the support from senior management within education providers. The visitors need to view evidence demonstrating that the programme is not solely reliant on external funding and that there is relevant support from senior management irrespective of external stakeholder funding.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that their process for ensuring the availability and capacity of practice-based learning is effective.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors were guided to the practice education handbook, programme validation document and a template of a local level agreement in order to evidence this standard. From these documents the visitors could not determine if the process was effective at ensuring the availability and capacity of practice-based learning. In the meeting with the programme team the visitors were told that the education provider has confirmed practice-based learning placements for 26 learners and had a placement database in place. Similarly, in the practice educators meeting the educators were clear about their capacity to take learners from the programme. The visitors were confident in the communication between the practice education providers and the education provider, however they were not clear on the process for securing practice-based learning for all learners. From the documentation and meetings the visitors understood the process of ensuring the availability and capacity of practiced-based learning to be informal and so could not judge that the process is effective. The education provider must show that the process to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners is effective.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate what effective and formal process is in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing of service users.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were unable to determine the formal process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing of service users. At the visit, the visitors were told there are healthcare organisation whistleblowing policies that would allow learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users. However, the visitors were unable to determine which policies learners would be expected to adhere to and how this will be communicated to them. As such, the visitors were unable to determine whether there is a clear, definitive, formal process which supports and enables learners to raise such concerns. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence that there is an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing of service users.

3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they will make learners and applicants aware of the exit awards, and that exit awards will not lead to eligibility to apply for admission to the Register.

Reason: The visitors observed from the programme validation document that the education provider intends to offer two exit awards: the Certificate of Higher Education in Health Studies and the Diploma of Higher Education in Health Studies. In the same document the education provider stated that completing the full 360 credit BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy programme would mean learners are “able to register with the HCPC”. This wording contradicts the standard as learners are only eligible to apply for admission to the register upon completion of an approved programme. The education provider must ensure that the correct terminology is used throughout their documentation when referring to the HCPC. Furthermore, they must ensure that applicants and learners are made aware of the different awards and how they lead to eligibility to apply for admission to the register or not.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of the formal process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from learners and service users and carers.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitors could see the education provider state there would be a consent process for learners in specific activities, however the visitors were unable to see this process so could not judge its effectiveness. On the visit the programme lead confirmed to the visitors there would be a consent process to ensure learners’ personal circumstances are taken into consideration when completing the course. However, the visitors were not able to view this process and so could not judge that it was effective. The education provider must

show that there is an effective process in place for obtaining consent from learners and service users and carers.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 22 August 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).