

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)
Programme name	Certificate of Competence (Degree containing the Registration Training Portfolio)
Mode of delivery	Flexible
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	24 – 25 November 2009

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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 'Biomedical scientist' or 'Medical laboratory technician' 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. The education provider has until 12 February 2010 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 10 March 2010. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 12 February 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 10 March 2010.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was an approved programme which had been brought over on the formation of the HPC and had not been subject to a visit. 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	David Houlston (Biomedical Scientist) Pradeep Agrawal (Biomedical Scientist) Gordon Burrow (Podiatrist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
HPC observer	Osama Ammar
Proposed student numbers	300
Initial approval	9 July 2003
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Eddie Welch (EQA Assessment Manager, Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) Ltd (CPA))
Secretary	Christian Burt (Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS))

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>
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External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Criteria for accreditation and re-accreditation of BSc (Hons) degrees in Biomedical Science	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specification for pre-registration education and training of biomedical scientists	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clinical laboratory standards for pre and post registration training of biomedical scientists	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Registration Training Portfolio	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laboratory guidance for external verifiers visit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard letters and forms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review the following documents prior to the visit as

- module descriptors do not exist in relation to the Certificate of Competence.
- a programme specification has not been created for this award type.
- there is currently no external examiner for this programme.
- the standards of proficiency were appropriately mapped via the Registration Training Portfolio.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not see any specialist teaching accommodation or learning resources as training is delivered in the NHS Trust laboratories where students are employed or within the academic component taught at the accredited universities.

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 61 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 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 did not make any 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

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must submit formalised standard operating procedures to ensure that the programme is managed effectively.

Reason: The visitors did not receive any formalised standard operating procedures in the documentation prior to the visit. However, during the meetings with the senior team and the programme team, verbal descriptions were given as to how the programme was managed in terms of the routes to achieve the award.

The descriptions provided included the following area that had not been stated in the documentation provided to the visitors prior to the visit.

- Delegation of relevant authority from the IBMS Education and Development Committee to the relevant individuals and articulation of a process for decision making in terms of assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio.
- Procedures for ensuring that individuals have completed all necessary components and pre-requisites of the route to the final award, including criminal records checks and occupational health checks.

In order for the visitors to be assured that the programme is managed effectively they require documentation that formalises the standard operating procedures.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must submit formalised standard operating procedures to ensure consistency of assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio and associated laboratory self-assessment forms.

Reason: The visitors did not receive any formalised standard operating processes in the documentation prior to the visit. However, during the meetings with the senior team and the programme team, verbal descriptions were given as to how the programme was managed in terms of the routes to the award and quality assurance of verifiers' reports and laboratory self-assessment forms by the IBMS.

The descriptions provided included the following areas that had not been stated in the documentation provided to the visitors prior to the visit.

- Procedures for reviewing and updating verifiers' reports for the attainment of the Certificate of Competence.
- Procedures for the receipt and assessment of the verifiers report following the assessment of a Registration Training Portfolio.
- Procedures for the receipt and assessment of laboratory self-assessment forms.

In order to be assured that this standard is met the visitors require documentation that formalises all the standard operating procedures that ensure consistency of

assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio and associated laboratory self-assessment forms.

3.3 The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Condition: The education provider must submit formalised standard operating procedures to describe the processes for annual monitoring and the management of changes to IBMS accredited programmes.

Reason: During the visit the education provider provided sample copies of annual monitoring reports received from programmes accredited by the IBMS but it was not documented how these submissions were reviewed or how changes to programmes were managed. In the meeting with the programme team the visitors asked if there was any formal assessment of the content contained within the report. The programme team responded that the reports were reviewed to ensure that the programmes were not moving away from the IBMS accreditation process and that the programmes were following the action plans set out within the reports.

The programme team also reported that changes to the programmes were received and were reviewed in a similar way to the annual monitoring reports. These forms were reviewed in terms of how the change would impact on the programme's ability to meet the accreditation process of the IBMS. Any significant changes were reported to the Education and Development Committee at the IBMS.

In order to be assured that the education provider has regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place, the visitors require formalised procedures for assessing and reviewing annual monitoring reports and any changes to IBMS accredited programmes.

3.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there are appropriate and regular training updates for the Registration Training Portfolio verifiers.

Reason: From the documentation the visitors could not determine whether the verifiers of the Registration Training Portfolio received appropriate and regular training.

During meetings with the programme team and the practice placement providers the visitors were informed that the Registration Training Portfolio verifiers received one day's training to be verifiers. Any updates made to the guidance or the verification process itself was passed on to the verifiers by letter or email. There was no further training after the initial day. There were update meetings at the IBMS Congress, held bi-annually and although these were reported to be well attended there was no formal requirement for attendance at this meeting.

The verifiers who also attended the practice placement educators/training managers meeting discussed with the visitors that the visits they carried out to the laboratories was considered to be part of their continued training as verifiers.

The visitors considered that in order for this standard to be met the education provider must provide documentation that demonstrates that there are appropriate and regular training updates for Registration Training Portfolio verifiers.

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Condition: The education provider must advertise the complaints process more widely within the rebuild of the education provider's new website, which is currently happening.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors received the new complaints process put into place by the education provider. During the meeting with the programme team it was noted that this had been included in letters to students. However it was not widely advertised on the website and students might have difficulty obtaining access to the process, if they are not in current correspondence with the IBMS.

From discussions with the students it was apparent that, owing to the IBMS website upgrade, various documents including the complaints document were not readily available for viewing.

Therefore the visitors require further documentation that details the availability of the complaints process on the IBMS website following completion of the upgrade.

5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The education provider must resubmit the document "Laboratory guidance for an external verifier" provided to verifiers of the Registration Training Portfolio to clearly articulate that the information given to verifiers and laboratories is consistent.

Reason: In the documentation received prior to the visit the visitors noted that one set of guidelines regarding approval for the laboratories made reference to the CPA guidelines for laboratory approval. However the "Laboratory guidance for an external verifier" does not and this evidence was therefore conflicting.

The verifiers who attended the practice placement educators meeting understood they were expected to determine whether the laboratory they attended for a Registration Training Portfolio examination had CPA accreditation even though the documentation they received did not state this.

As the verifiers are approving and monitoring the laboratories through the Registration Training Portfolio assessment process on behalf of the IBMS, the visitors considered that the guidelines they followed should be complementary to all documentation related to laboratory approval.

Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that provides consistent information to verifiers and laboratories to ensure that the monitoring and approval of laboratories is thorough and effective.

6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The education provider must submit an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure that the appropriate standards are in place in the assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit did not indicate that there was any external evaluation of the Registration Training Portfolio outside of the appointed verifier. It was clear from discussion that the only monitoring of the Registration Training Portfolio was made by internal employees of the IBMS when a report was received at the IBMS offices.

In order for this standard to be met the visitors would like to receive revised documentation to demonstrate that there would be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure that the Registration Training Portfolio assessment process is monitored and evaluated by an external party.

David Houliston
Pradeep Agrawal
Gordon Burrow

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)
Programme name	Certificate of Competence (Degree followed by Registration Training Portfolio)
Mode of delivery	Flexible
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	24 – 25 November 2009

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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 'Biomedical scientist' or 'Medical laboratory technician' 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.

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The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 12 February 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 10 March 2010.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was an approved programme which had been brought over on the formation of the HPC and had not been subject to a visit. 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	David Houlston (Biomedical Scientist) Pradeep Agrawal (Biomedical Scientist) Gordon Burrow (Podiatrist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
HPC observer	Osama Ammar
Proposed student numbers	250
Initial approval	9 July 2003
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Eddie Welch (EQA Assessment Manager, Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) Ltd (CPA))
Secretary	Christian Burt (Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS))

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Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

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- module descriptors do not exist in relation to the Certificate of Competence.
- a programme specification has not been created for this award type.
- there is currently no external examiner for this programme.
- the standards of proficiency were appropriately mapped via the Registration Training Portfolio.

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
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The HPC did not see any specialist teaching accommodation or learning resources as training is delivered in the NHS Trust laboratories where students are employed or within the academic component taught at the accredited universities.

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 61 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 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 did not make any 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.

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- Delegation of relevant authority from the IBMS Education and Development Committee to the relevant individuals and articulation of a process for decision making in terms of assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio.
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assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio and associated laboratory self-assessment forms.

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David Houliston
Pradeep Agrawal
Gordon Burrow

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)
Programme name	Certificate of Competence (Non-accredited degree followed by Registration Training Portfolio)
Mode of delivery	Flexible
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	24 – 25 November 2009

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HPC observer	Osama Ammar
Proposed student numbers	150
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Chair	Eddie Welch (EQA Assessment Manager, Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) Ltd (CPA))
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Laboratory guidance for external verifiers visit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard letters and forms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review the following documents prior to the visit as

- module descriptors do not exist in relation to the Certificate of Competence.
- a programme specification has not been created for this award type.
- there is currently no external examiner for this programme.
- the standards of proficiency were appropriately mapped via the Registration Training Portfolio.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not see any specialist teaching accommodation or learning resources as training is delivered in the NHS Trust laboratories where students are employed or within the academic component taught at the accredited universities.

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 62 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 5 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 did not make any 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

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must submit formalised standard operating procedures to ensure that the programme is managed effectively.

Reason: The visitors did not receive any formalised standard operating procedures in the documentation prior to the visit. However, during the meetings with the senior team and the programme team, verbal descriptions were given as to how the programme was managed in terms of the routes to achieve the award.

The descriptions provided included the following areas that had not been stated in the documentation provided to the visitors prior to the visit.

- Delegation of relevant authority from the IBMS Education and Development Committee to the relevant individuals and articulation of a process for decision making in terms of assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio.
- Delegation of relevant authority from the IBMS Education and Development Committee to the relevant individuals and articulation of a process for decision making in terms of assessment of applicants who do not hold accredited degrees and require additional study.
- Procedures for ensuring that individuals have completed all necessary components and pre-requisites of the route to the final award, including criminal records checks and occupational health checks.

In order for the visitors to be assured that the programme is managed effectively they require documentation that formalises the standard operating procedures.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must submit formalised standard operating procedures to ensure consistency of assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio and associated laboratory self-assessment forms.

Reason: The visitors did not receive any formalised standard operating processes in the documentation prior to the visit. However, during the meetings with the senior team and the programme team, verbal descriptions were given as to how the programme was managed in terms of the routes to the award and quality assurance of verifiers' reports and laboratory self-assessment forms by the IBMS.

The descriptions provided included the following areas that had not been stated in the documentation provided to the visitors prior to the visit.

- Procedures for reviewing and updating verifiers' reports for the attainment of the Certificate of Competence.
- Procedures for the receipt and assessment of the verifiers report following the assessment of a Registration Training Portfolio.
- Procedures for the receipt and assessment of laboratory self-assessment forms.

In order to be assured that this standard is met the visitors require documentation that formalises all the standard operating procedures that ensure consistency of assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio and associated laboratory self-assessment forms.

3.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there are appropriate and regular training updates for the Registration Training Portfolio verifiers.

Reason: From the documentation the visitors could not determine whether the verifiers of the Registration Training Portfolio received appropriate and regular training.

During meetings with the programme team and the practice placement providers the visitors were informed that the Registration Training Portfolio verifiers received one day's training to be verifiers. Any updates made to the guidance or the verification process itself was passed on to the verifiers by letter or email. There was no further training after the initial day. There were update meetings at the IBMS Congress, held bi-annually and although these were reported to be well attended there was no formal requirement for attendance at this meeting.

The verifiers who also attended the practice placement educators/training managers meeting discussed with the visitors that the visits they carried out to the laboratories was considered to be part of their continued training as verifiers.

The visitors considered that in order for this standard to be met the education provider must provide documentation that demonstrates that there are appropriate and regular training updates for Registration Training Portfolio verifiers.

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Condition: The education provider must advertise the complaints process more widely within the rebuild of the education provider's new website, which is currently happening.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors received the new complaints process put into place by the education provider. During the meeting with the programme team it was noted that this had been included in letters to students. However it was not widely advertised on the website and students might have difficulty obtaining access to the process, if they are not in current correspondence with the IBMS.

From discussions with the students it was apparent that, owing to the IBMS website upgrade, various documents including the complaints document were not readily available for viewing.

Therefore the visitors require further documentation that details the availability of the complaints process on the IBMS website following completion of the upgrade.

5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The education provider must resubmit the document “Laboratory guidance for an external verifier” provided to verifiers of the Registration Training Portfolio to clearly articulate that the information given to verifiers and laboratories is consistent.

Reason: In the documentation received prior to the visit the visitors noted that one set of guidelines regarding approval for the laboratories made reference to the CPA guidelines for laboratory approval. However the “Laboratory guidance for an external verifier” does not and this evidence was therefore conflicting.

The verifiers who attended the practice placement educators meeting understood they were expected to determine whether the laboratory they attended for a Registration Training Portfolio examination had CPA accreditation even though the documentation they received did not state this.

As the verifiers are approving and monitoring the laboratories through the Registration Training Portfolio assessment process on behalf of the IBMS, the visitors considered that the guidelines they followed should be complementary to all documentation related to laboratory approval.

Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that provides consistent information to verifiers and laboratories to ensure that the monitoring and approval of laboratories is thorough and effective.

6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The education provider must submit an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure that the appropriate standards are in place in the assessment of the Registration Training Portfolio.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit did not indicate that there was any external evaluation of the Registration Training Portfolio outside of the appointed verifier. It was clear from discussion that the only monitoring of the Registration Training Portfolio was made by internal employees of the IBMS when a report was received at the IBMS offices.

In order for this standard to be met the visitors would like to receive revised documentation to demonstrate that there would be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure that the Registration Training Portfolio assessment process is monitored and evaluated by an external party.

David Houliston
Pradeep Agrawal
Gordon Burrow

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Nottingham
Programme name	Top Up Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Forensic psychologist
Date of visit	12 – 13 January 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 'Forensic 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 approval of the programme. The education provider has until 22 February 2010 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 10 March 2010. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 5 March 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 20 May 2010.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC approval for the first time. 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: Top Up Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology. 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. A separate report exists for the other programme. 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 programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Emcee Chekwas (Forensic psychologist) George Delafield (Forensic/Occupational psychologist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
HPC observer	Ruth Wood
Proposed student numbers	5
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2010
Chair	Thomas Schroder (University of Nottingham)
Secretary	Sheila Templer (University of Nottingham)
Members of the joint panel	Molly Ross (British Psychological Society) Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society) Deepak Anand (British Psychological Society) Liz Gilchrist (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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review External examiners' reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

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"/>

The HPC met with students from MSc and PhD Health and Occupational psychology programmes, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 47 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 10 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 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 review the programme documentation and advertising materials for the programme (including website information) to follow the guidance provided in the HPC “Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers”.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, HPC ‘approves’ educational programmes; we do not ‘accredit’ programmes. It should also be made clear throughout all documentation that HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for those who complete the programme but rather to ‘eligibility to apply for HPC registration’. Finally, there was some confusion in the programme documentation in relation to the roles and terminology attributed to the regulator and professional body. The education provider must ensure that references to the roles and requirements of professional bodies and regulatory bodies are accurate and up-to-date.

In order to provide students with the correct information to make an informed choice about whether to join the programme and to prevent confusion for students on the programme the programme documentation must be amended.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must provide the policy on student consent and ensure that the participation required in the programme and the protocols used to gain consent for this participation is clearly articulated to students.

Reason: From the documentation submitted the policy for obtaining consent from students was unclear. Following discussions with the programme team it was apparent that students would be expected to participate in group and role play activities in the programme. The visitors need to receive further evidence in the form of a consent policy, the method of obtaining consent (such as a consent form), and details of how students are informed of the participation requirements in the programme to ensure that this standard is being met.

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 documentation which clearly articulates how the learning outcomes of the programme are linked with the

standards of proficiency to demonstrate how students who successfully complete the programme meet these standards.

Reason: From the documentation submitted it was not always clear how the learning outcomes demonstrated that standards of proficiency were being met in the programme, and how this information was clearly communicated to students, practice placement educators and the education provider. Within the programme documentation learning outcomes had been linked to the BPS key roles and in some cases the standards of proficiency, but this was not consistent throughout the documentation. Therefore it was not always clear that meeting the standards of proficiency was a requirement for successful completion of the programme. This was reflected in practice placement assessment documentation that did not consistently reference HPC standards. The visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation to include reference to HPC's Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: In the documentation submitted there were various references to HPC codes or standards but the correct title of HPC's Standards of conduct, performance and ethics was not listed. In addition to this there were instances in the documentation where references were made to the codes of conduct of the British Psychological Society and the education provider, but not to the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Therefore the visitors require the programme documentation to be corrected to name the correct HPC document. Additionally the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics should be referenced where applicable to conduct and ethics matters in the programme in order to direct students to the standards that HPC expects of them once they have joined the profession.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the mechanisms utilised to ensure that practice placement educators receive appropriate programme specific training.

Reason: From the documentation submitted and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that there were plans to finalise the arrangements for preparing practice placement educators for supervising students on the programme once the visit had taken place. These plans included training the supervisors on the programme requirements and finalising the documentation to be utilised by supervisors.

The visitors require further evidence that demonstrate the plans for delivering programme specific training to supervisors, the details of the commencement

date of this training and the content of the planned training. Finalised placement documentation must be submitted that demonstrates clear guidelines for supervisors to follow, and details the education providers' plans to ensure continued support for the supervisors after training. Finally, the visitors require the education provider to clearly articulate the mechanisms they plan to use to ensure consistency in assessments amongst practice placement educators.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation which clearly articulates how the learning outcomes of the programme are linked with the standards of proficiency, and demonstrates how students and practice placement educators are fully prepared on the requirements of the placements in the programme.

Reason: From the documentation submitted and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that there were plans to finalise the placement documentation once the visit had taken place. The visitors noted that within the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was not always clear how the learning outcomes demonstrated that standards of proficiency were being met in the programme, and therefore did not clearly communicate these requirements to students, practice placement educators and the education provider. The learning outcomes had been linked to the BPS key roles and in some cases the standards of proficiency, but this was not consistent throughout the documentation. This was reflected in practice placement assessment documentation that did not consistently reference HPC standards. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

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 documentation which clearly articulates how the learning outcomes assessed on the programme are linked with the standards of proficiency to demonstrate how students who successfully complete the programme meet these standards.

Reason: From the documentation submitted it was not always clear how the learning outcomes assessed demonstrated that the standards of proficiency were being met in the programme, and how this information was clearly communicated to students, practice placement educators and the education provider. Within the

programme documentation learning outcomes had been linked to the BPS key roles and in some cases the standards of proficiency but this was not consistent throughout the documentation. Therefore it was not always clear that meeting the standards of proficiency was a requirement for successful completion of the programme. This was reflected in practice placement assessment documentation that did not consistently reference HPC standards. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly show throughout that the exit award from the programme does not contain references to an HPC protected title.

Reason: From the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was apparent that the exit award for the programme contained a HPC protected title for this profession. Following discussions with the programme team prior to the visit it was agreed that the exit award title should change. The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to update the exit award title to demonstrate that this standard is met.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the policy on aegrotat awards to state that they do not provide eligibility for inclusion onto the Register, and demonstrate how this information is clearly communicated to the students.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors found it difficult to determine the assessment regulations for the programme and how these are conveyed to students so that it is clear that aegrotat awards would not enable students to be eligible to apply to the Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed with the HPC.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail in the external examiner recruitment policy. The visitors were

happy with the planned external examiner arrangements for the programme but need to see evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of this requirement.

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 visitors recommend that the education provider includes information regarding criminal convictions checks and health requirements in all of the programme advertising material.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that overall the information provided to applicants of the programme was clear. They felt that applicants would benefit from additional information in the programme advertisement material around the criminal convictions checks and health requirements for the programme.

2.7 The admissions procedures must ensure that the education provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider includes references regarding equality and diversity policies in the programme advertising material.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that overall the information provided to applicants of the programme was clear. They felt that applicants would benefit from additional information in the programme advertisement material around the equality and diversity policies followed by the education provider, and the provision of links for applicants to gain further information on this area.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider reviews the placement management systems as the number of placements and associated organisations increase on the programme.

Reason: From the documentation submitted and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that there was a clear structure and management system in place for dealing with the placement organisations and ensuring the continued relationship between the education provider and practice placements. The visitors recommend that the education provider continues the ongoing commitment to active management of the placement organisations by reviewing these arrangements periodically to ensure their continued effectiveness. The visitors felt that this review would be useful once the number of placements increased, to ensure that the process remained appropriate.

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 visitors recommend that the education provider should consider revising the course handbook detail around programme attendance to clearly articulate the requirements and prevent potential confusion for the students.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the attendance requirements for the programme were clearly articulated. There was one area in the course handbook that the visitors felt could potentially cause confusion in relation to the attendance of the Doctorate component of the course. In discussions with the programme team, it became apparent that the optional attendance of teaching offered by the Graduate School would not impact on compulsory block teaching, or the content of the programme. The visitors felt that this section of the handbook could be made clearer to avoid potential confusion for students.

George Delafield
Emcee Chekwas

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Nottingham
Programme name	Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Forensic psychologist
Date of visit	12 – 13 January 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 'Forensic 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 approval of the programme. The education provider has until 22 February 2010 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 10 March 2010. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 5 March 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 20 May 2010.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC approval for the first time. 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: Top Up Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology. 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. A separate report exists for the other programme. 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 programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Emcee Chekwas (Forensic psychologist) George Delafield (Forensic/Occupational psychologist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
HPC observer	Ruth Wood
Proposed student numbers	10
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2010
Chair	Thomas Schroder (University of Nottingham)
Secretary	Sheila Templer (University of Nottingham)
Members of the joint panel	Molly Ross (British Psychological Society) Lucy Kerry (British Psychological Society) Deepak Anand (British Psychological Society) Liz Gilchrist (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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review External examiners' reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

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"/>

The HPC met with students from MSc and PhD Health and Occupational psychology programmes, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 47 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 10 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 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 review the programme documentation and advertising materials for the programme (including website information) to follow the guidance provided in the HPC “Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers”.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, HPC ‘approves’ educational programmes; we do not ‘accredit’ programmes. It should also be made clear throughout all documentation that HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for those who complete the programme but rather to ‘eligibility to apply for HPC registration’. Finally, there was some confusion in the programme documentation in relation to the roles and terminology attributed to the regulator and professional body. The education provider must ensure that references to the roles and requirements of professional bodies and regulatory bodies are accurate and up-to-date.

In order to provide students with the correct information to make an informed choice about whether to join the programme and to prevent confusion for students on the programme the programme documentation must be amended.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must provide the policy on student consent and ensure that the participation required in the programme and the protocols used to gain consent for this participation is clearly articulated to students.

Reason: From the documentation submitted the policy for obtaining consent from students was unclear. Following discussions with the programme team it was apparent that students would be expected to participate in group and role play activities in the programme. The visitors need to receive further evidence in the form of a consent policy, the method of obtaining consent (such as a consent form), and details of how students are informed of the participation requirements in the programme to ensure that this standard is being met.

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 documentation which clearly articulates how the learning outcomes of the programme are linked with the

standards of proficiency to demonstrate how students who successfully complete the programme meet these standards.

Reason: From the documentation submitted it was not always clear how the learning outcomes demonstrated that standards of proficiency were being met in the programme, and how this information was clearly communicated to students, practice placement educators and the education provider. Within the programme documentation learning outcomes had been linked to the BPS key roles and in some cases the standards of proficiency, but this was not consistent throughout the documentation. Therefore it was not always clear that meeting the standards of proficiency was a requirement for successful completion of the programme. This was reflected in practice placement assessment documentation that did not consistently reference HPC standards. The visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation to include reference to HPC's Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: In the documentation submitted there were various references to HPC codes or standards but the correct title of HPC's Standards of conduct, performance and ethics was not listed. In addition to this there were instances in the documentation where references were made to the codes of conduct of the British Psychological Society and the education provider, but not to the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Therefore the visitors require the programme documentation to be corrected to name the correct HPC document. Additionally the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics should be referenced where applicable to conduct and ethics matters in the programme in order to direct students to the standards that HPC expects of them once they have joined the profession.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the mechanisms utilised to ensure that practice placement educators receive appropriate programme specific training.

Reason: From the documentation submitted and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that there were plans to finalise the arrangements for preparing practice placement educators for supervising students on the programme once the visit had taken place. These plans included training the supervisors on the programme requirements and finalising the documentation to be utilised by supervisors.

The visitors require further evidence that demonstrate the plans for delivering programme specific training to supervisors, the details of the commencement

date of this training and the content of the planned training. Finalised placement documentation must be submitted that demonstrates clear guidelines for supervisors to follow, and details the education providers' plans to ensure continued support for the supervisors after training. Finally, the visitors require the education provider to clearly articulate the mechanisms they plan to use to ensure consistency in assessments amongst practice placement educators.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation which clearly articulates how the learning outcomes of the programme are linked with the standards of proficiency, and demonstrates how students and practice placement educators are fully prepared on the requirements of the placements in the programme.

Reason: From the documentation submitted and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that there were plans to finalise the placement documentation once the visit had taken place. The visitors noted that within the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was not always clear how the learning outcomes demonstrated that standards of proficiency were being met in the programme, and therefore did not clearly communicate these requirements to students, practice placement educators and the education provider. The learning outcomes had been linked to the BPS key roles and in some cases the standards of proficiency, but this was not consistent throughout the documentation. This was reflected in practice placement assessment documentation that did not consistently reference HPC standards. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

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 documentation which clearly articulates how the learning outcomes assessed on the programme are linked with the standards of proficiency to demonstrate how students who successfully complete the programme meet these standards.

Reason: From the documentation submitted it was not always clear how the learning outcomes assessed demonstrated that the standards of proficiency were being met in the programme, and how this information was clearly communicated to students, practice placement educators and the education provider. Within the

programme documentation learning outcomes had been linked to the BPS key roles and in some cases the standards of proficiency but this was not consistent throughout the documentation. Therefore it was not always clear that meeting the standards of proficiency was a requirement for successful completion of the programme. This was reflected in practice placement assessment documentation that did not consistently reference HPC standards. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly show throughout that the exit award from the programme does not contain references to an HPC protected title.

Reason: From the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was apparent that the exit award for the programme contained a HPC protected title for this profession. Following discussions with the programme team prior to the visit it was agreed that the exit award title should change. The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to update the exit award title to demonstrate that this standard is met.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the policy on aegrotat awards to state that they do not provide eligibility for inclusion onto the Register, and demonstrate how this information is clearly communicated to the students.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors found it difficult to determine the assessment regulations for the programme and how these are conveyed to students so that it is clear that aegrotat awards would not enable students to be eligible to apply to the Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed with the HPC.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail in the external examiner recruitment policy. The visitors were

happy with the planned external examiner arrangements for the programme but need to see evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of this requirement.

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 visitors recommend that the education provider includes information regarding criminal convictions checks and health requirements in all of the programme advertising material.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that overall the information provided to applicants of the programme was clear. They felt that applicants would benefit from additional information in the programme advertisement material around the criminal convictions checks and health requirements for the programme.

2.7 The admissions procedures must ensure that the education provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider includes references regarding equality and diversity policies in the programme advertising material.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that overall the information provided to applicants of the programme was clear. They felt that applicants would benefit from additional information in the programme advertisement material around the equality and diversity policies followed by the education provider, and the provision of links for applicants to gain further information on this area.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider reviews the placement management systems as the number of placements and associated organisations increase on the programme.

Reason: From the documentation submitted and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that there was a clear structure and management system in place for dealing with the placement organisations and ensuring the continued relationship between the education provider and practice placements. The visitors recommend that the education provider continues the ongoing commitment to active management of the placement organisations by reviewing these arrangements periodically to ensure their continued effectiveness. The visitors felt that this review would be useful once the number of placements increased, to ensure that the process remained appropriate.

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 visitors recommend that the education provider should consider revising the course handbook detail around programme attendance to clearly articulate the requirements and prevent potential confusion for the students.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the attendance requirements for the programme were clearly articulated. There was one area in the course handbook that the visitors felt could potentially cause confusion in relation to the attendance of the Doctorate component of the course. In discussions with the programme team, it became apparent that the optional attendance of teaching offered by the Graduate School would not impact on compulsory block teaching, or the content of the programme. The visitors felt that this section of the handbook could be made clearer to avoid potential confusion for students.

George Delafield
Emcee Chekwas

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	St George's, University of London
Programme name	Post-Graduate Practice Certificate in Supplementary Prescribing Health Professions Council (HPC) Members Level 7
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Chiropodist / Podiatrist Physiotherapist Radiographer
Relevant entitlement(s)	Supplementary prescribing
Date of visit	9 December 2009

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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. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

As well as approving educational programmes for people who want to join the Register, the HPC also approve a small number of programmes for those already on the Register. The post-registration programmes we currently approve are supplementary prescribing programmes (for chiropodists / podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists) and programmes in local anaesthetics and prescription-only medicine (for chiropodists / podiatrists).

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 8 February 2010 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 10 March 2010. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 9 February 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 10 March 2010.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC approval for the first time. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standard of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) 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 NMC, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	James Pickard (Podiatrist) Emma Supple (Podiatrist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
HPC observer	Richard Houghton
Proposed student numbers	75 with two intakes per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	April 2010
Chair	Peter McCrorie (St George's, University of London)
Secretary	Derek Baldwinson (St George's, University of London)
Members of the joint panel	Judith Ibison (Internal Panel Member) Alison Hogg (Nursing and Midwifery Council)

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review the practice placement handbook prior to the visit as a separate practice placement handbook has not been produced. The information is included in the portfolio documentation.

The HPC did not review the external examiners reports as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new provision for AHP's.

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"/>

The HPC met with a student from the nurse prescribing programme, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 standard of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 54 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining three SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 did not make any 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 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 revise the admissions documentation to clarify the supplementary prescribing status permissible within the current legislative framework for chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists.

Reason: The documentation received prior to the visit clearly stated the title Post graduate practice certificate in Independent and/or Supplementary Prescribing (Health Professions Council (HPC)) Members.

At the meeting with the programme team the visitors pointed out that under the current prescribing legislative framework, chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists are only able to supplementary prescribe and not independently prescribe. The visitors felt that this was misleading to potential applicants. The programme team thanked the visitors for pointing this out and said it would remove the reference to independent prescribing in all documentation relating to HPC registrants.

Therefore the visitors considered that for an applicant to make an informed decision to take up a place on the programme they would like to receive revised admissions documentation. This must clearly state the supplementary prescribing status permissible within the current legislative framework for chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists.

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 redraft and resubmit all admissions documentation to clarify the academic level for the programme for HPC registrants.

Reason: The documentation received prior to the visit stated that the programme could be studied at level 6 or level 7 in one section, however in the pages specifically related to the HPC registrants it states that the assessments will be marked using level 7 criteria. Therefore the visitors were unclear as to how the applicant selected the academic level of study.

During the meeting with the programme team the visitors discussed that the references to the level of study at either level 6 or level 7 was confusing. The programme team explained that if students wanted to achieve the 60 credits at Masters level the programme would have to be assessed at level 7.

In order for the admissions procedures to be clear for applicants to allow them to make an informed choice to take up a place on the programme, the visitors would

like to receive revised documentation that articulates at what level of study HPC registrants will be taking throughout the duration of the programme.

5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation that clearly demonstrates how the education provider maintains a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: During the meeting with the practice placement educators and the programme team, the visitors were informed that designated medical practitioners (DMPs) and the associated placement sites, were monitored for suitability with regards to the quality of education and training and as a safe environment for placement teaching. The process also ensured that the assessment process for the portfolio was equitable for all students. The visit to the DMP or trust site was made by the university staff.

The visitors did not receive any documentation that demonstrated how this process was achieved prior to the visit. In order for the visitors to be assured that the education provider is monitoring and approving placements effectively this documentation should be attached to the final documentation for approval.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation that articulates how and when practice placement educator training for the DMPs takes place.

Reason: At the meeting with the programme team, the team explained that it was difficult to organise training sessions with the DMPs due to their workload. However it was the team's intention to set up a workshop to train the DMPs in all aspects of the programme including assessment to ensure that there was standardisation in the assessment process. There will be an information pack put together to provide to the DMPs, which will be made available if the DMP was unable to attend the workshop. Also where a DMP is unavailable to attend the workshop, a member of staff will visit the DMP and give the workshop on site. By taking this action the education provider stated that all DMPs would receive the appropriate practice placement educator training.

The visitors did not receive any documentation regarding how the DMPs were trained prior to the visit. Therefore in order for the visitors to be assured that training for DMPs takes place, they would like to receive documentation that articulates how and when the training that will be provided, and the strategy that will be put into place to train a DMP who is unable to attend the training workshop.

James Pickard
Emma Supple

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	St George's, University of London
Programme name	Practice Certificate in Supplementary Prescribing for Health Professions Council (HPC) Members Level 6
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Chiropodist / Podiatrist Physiotherapist Radiographer
Relevant entitlement(s)	Supplementary prescribing
Date of visit	9 December 2009

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Executive summary

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At the meeting with the programme team the visitors pointed out that under the current prescribing legislative framework, chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists are only able to supplementary prescribe and not independently prescribe. The visitors felt that this was misleading to potential applicants. The programme team thanked the visitors for pointing this out and said it would remove the reference to independent prescribing in all documentation relating to HPC registrants.

Therefore the visitors considered that for an applicant to make an informed decision to take up a place on the programme they would like to receive revised admissions documentation. This must clearly state the supplementary prescribing status permissible within the current legislative framework for chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists.

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In order for the admissions procedures to be clear for applicants to allow them to make an informed choice to take up a place on the programme, the visitors would

like to receive revised documentation that articulates at what level of study HPC registrants will be taking throughout the duration of the programme.

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Condition: The education provider must submit documentation that clearly demonstrates how the education provider maintains a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

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The visitors did not receive any documentation that demonstrated how this process was achieved prior to the visit. In order for the visitors to be assured that the education provider is monitoring and approving placements effectively this documentation should be attached to the final documentation for approval.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation that articulates how and when practice placement educator training for the DMPs takes place.

Reason: At the meeting with the programme team, the team explained that it was difficult to organise training sessions with the DMPs due to their workload. However it was the team's intention to set up a workshop to train the DMPs in all aspects of the programme including assessment to ensure that there was standardisation in the assessment process. There will be an information pack put together to provide to the DMPs, which will be made available if the DMP was unable to attend the workshop. Also where a DMP is unavailable to attend the workshop, a member of staff will visit the DMP and give the workshop on site. By taking this action the education provider stated that all DMPs would receive the appropriate practice placement educator training.

The visitors did not receive any documentation regarding how the DMPs were trained prior to the visit. Therefore in order for the visitors to be assured that training for DMPs takes place, they would like to receive documentation that articulates how and when the training that will be provided, and the strategy that will be put into place to train a DMP who is unable to attend the training workshop.

James Pickard
Emma Supple

