

Major change visitors' report

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Section one: Programme details

Name of education provider	Southampton University
Programme title	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Hearing aid dispenser
Date of submission to the HCPC	16 June 2014
Name and profession of the HCPC visitors	Elizabeth Ross (Hearing aid dispenser) Richard Skyes (Hearing aid dispenser)
HCPC executive	Amal Hussein

Section two: Submission details

Summary of change

SET 1 Level of qualification for entry to the Register

SET 2 Programme admissions

SET 3 Programme management and resources

SET 5 Practice placements

SET 6 Assessment

The education provider has highlighted their intent to introduce an MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) route to the existing HCPC approved BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology). This route will would mean developing an additional year of M- Level study that student may elect to undertake on successfully completion of the three years of the BSc (Hons) programme. The education provider anticipates that the new programme will be undertaken by students through a part time route across two years.

The following documents were provided as part of the submission:

- Major change notification form (completed by the HCPC executive)
- Context pack
- Major change SETs mapping document (completed by education provider)
- Programme specification
- Role and responsibilities of External Examiners
- Response to HCPC
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Faculty Programme Committee Minutes
- Policy and procedure for External Examiners

Section three: Additional documentation

- The visitors agreed that no further documentation was required in order to make a recommendation.
- The visitors agreed that additional documentation was required in order to make a recommendation. The standards of education and training (SETs), for which additional documentation was requested, are listed below with reasons for the request.

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.

Reason: The visitors noted the changes made to the programme specification to include information about the proposed additional exit point of an MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology). However, no information provided to applicants was included to reassure the visitors that applicants can make a fully informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme. Therefore, the visitors were unsure of the admission procedures in place to ensure that applicants have all the information to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on a programme.

Suggested documentation: Further evidence such as information packs, advertising or open day materials, prospectus pages or weblinks demonstrating that the information provided will enable potential applicants to make an informed choice.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Reason: The visitors noted the change in programme from BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) to the proposed additional exit point of an MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology). However, the visitors could find any information that the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme is secure within the education provider's business plan. Therefore, the visitors were unable to determine from the information provided that the education provider is committed to providing enough resources to deliver the additional one year MSci, any risks or threats to delivering the additional year are currently very limited and that there

is a future for the introduction of the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme.

Suggested documentation: The education provider's business plan

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme specification that was submitted by the education provider to support the proposed additional year of M- Level study, that student may elect to undertake on successfully completion of the three years of the BSc (Hons) programme. The visitors were unable to see information in the programme specification about the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme will be effectively managed alongside the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology). From the information provided, the visitors were unable to determine how the additional year of study will be managed effectively. The visitors will want to be assured that the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the programme management remain appropriate across both the full time and part time provision. Therefore, visitors require further evidence of the programme management structure, the line of responsibility, highlighting the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in running and managing the MSci programme in order to be assured that the programme is being effectively managed.

Suggested documentation: Further evidence to demonstrate the effective systems in place to manage the programme. This could include the programme handbook, an outline of management structure and role descriptions.

3.4 There must be a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme who must be appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors noted the information in the programme specification provided by the education provider. However, no information was provided as to who the named person who has overall professional responsibilities for the MSci programme is. The visitors were unable to determine if the MSci programme has a named person who has overall professional responsibilities. Therefore, the visitors would require further information on who has overall professional responsibility for the MSci programme as well as further information to show how the named person is appropriately qualified and experience and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be on the relevant part of the Register.

Suggested documentation: Further evidence to indicate that there is a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the MSci programme and that this person is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be on the relevant part of the Register.

3.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme specification provided by the education provider to meet this standard. The visitors were unable to see

information on how the education provider ensures that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver the additional one year MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology). The visitors considered that the introduction of the MSci will require students to be supported for an additional year and may affect the number of appropriately qualified and experience staff in place. The introduction of MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) to the already existing BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) could have an impact on student numbers. The visitors will require further information to assess if there will be changes to student number and, if so, how the education provider will ensure they maintain an appropriate number of staff to deliver the programme effectively

Suggested documentation: Further evidence to demonstrate the education provider ensures that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff in place. This could include information such as staffing and management structure for the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme. As well as information on teaching loads for staff teaching on both the BSc (Hons) and MSci and how this will impact on the number of staff teaching on the programme.

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

Reason: The visitors noted the programme specification provided by the education provider to meet this standard. The visitors were unable to see information on how the education provider ensures that staff in place to deliver the additional one year MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) have the specialist expertise and knowledge to support student learning. The visitors recognise that the MSci will be delivered at a higher level than the current approved BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology), therefore the visitors will need to be assured staff have relevant specialist expertise and knowledge to deliver the programme.

Suggested documentation: Evidence to demonstrate staffs delivering the additional year of M-Level study have relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

3.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used.

Reason: The visitors noted the information in the programme specification 'Support for students and learning'. From this information, the visitors were unable to see the support that would be offered to students at an M-Level. The visitors also recognised the introduction of the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) to the already existing BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) could have an impact to students' access to resources. The visitors therefore require further information of the resources in place to support students learning in all setting and how the resources are being effectively used.

Suggested documentation: Further information about resources students on the MSci programme have access to and the monitoring and evaluation systems to monitor how resources are used, and how effective they are.

3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the information on 'Support for students and learning' in the programme specification'. From this information, the visitors were unable to see the resource support that would be offered to students at an M-Level. The visitors also recognised the introduction of the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) to the already existing BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) could have an impact to students' access to resources. The visitors therefore, require further information on how the education provider ensures that resources are readily available and appropriate for the delivery of the MSci programme as well as information on the hours students will be expected to be required to complete the course on a part time basis.

Suggested documentation: Further information on the resources in place to support the required learning and teaching activities of the MSci programme. This could include information such as student handbook and module descriptors for year 4.

5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the information on placement in the programme specification. From the information provided the visitors were unsure how practice placements were integral to the MSci programme. The information on placement suggests only students who are working and taking the programme on a part time route will have clinical practice. The visitors require further clarification of any inclusion of university organised clinical placements to meet learning outcomes of the MSci programme, this way visitors can be assured that practice placement is integral to the MSci programme.

Suggested documentation: Further information to on the structure of the MSci programme shows that practice placements are an important part of the programme.

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.

Reason: The visitors noted changes to the overall programme learning outcomes. Although module information was provided in the programme specification, it was not possible from this information to see how assessment design related to the standards of proficiency for Hearing aid dispensers.

Suggested documentation: Documentation demonstrating how assessment link to the standards of proficiency. For example a SOPs mapping document showing where assessments link to SOPs.

6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted the information on programme structure and the taught modules that will be covered in the proposed MSc Health Science (Audiology). However, the visitors were unsure of how the education provider assess students to ensure that they continue to progress from BSc (Hons) Health Science (Audiology) onto the MSc Health Science (Audiology) programme. As a result, the visitors were unable to determine if these regulations were clear and whether students understand what is expected of them to progress from the BSc (Hons) programme onto the MSc programme.

Suggested documentation: Further information on how the education provider informs students of the overall requirements of the programme.

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.

Reason: The visitors noted the programme specification provided by the education provider to meet this standard. The visitors were unable to see information on the external examiner for the MSc programme; the visitors considered that the external examiner for the BSc (Hons) may be appointed as the external examiner for the MSc programme. If so, the visitors require information on the current examiner external for the BSc (Hons) programme and a confirmation that they are taking on the additional role for the MSc programme. This way the visitors can be assured that at least one external examiner will be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Suggested documentation: Further information on the external examiner recruited for the MSc programme.

Section four: Recommendation of the visitors

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 have demonstrated an ability to meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:

- There is sufficient evidence to show the programme continues to meet the standards of education and training and that those who complete the programme will continue to demonstrate an ability to meet the standards of proficiency.
- There is insufficient evidence to determine if or how the programme continues to meet the standards of education and training listed. Therefore, a visit is recommended to gather more evidence and if required place conditions on ongoing approval of the programme.

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.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider consisted of an online undergraduate brochure and an FAQ document. The visitors were also informed that the website for the MSci programme is currently under development but were not provided with the content of the website. The visitors were unable to make a judgement of where students and potential applicants were informed that the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme was only available for students who completed the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) at Southampton University. The visitors are unclear as to how applicants were going to make an informed choice as to whether they take up a place on the programme. Therefore the visitors considered that a visit would be the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure the programme meets the standards.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Reason: The visitors were provided with a response to HCPC document, from this information the visitors were satisfied that Gary Farrell will be managing the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology). However, the visitors were not provided with any information on changes to management structure and lines of responsibilities to support the introduction of MSci programme, without this information the visitors were unable to determine how the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme will be effectively managed alongside the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology). Although the visitors are satisfied that there is an effective system in place in managing the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology), the introduction of the M-Level study will mean students will be on a cycle of five years as opposed to three years. With the additional two years, the visitors were unable to determine that the role and responsibilities of everyone involved in the programme management remain appropriate across both the full time and part time provision. Therefore the visitors considered that a

visit would be the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure the programme meets the standards.

3.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: The visitors were provided with a response to HCPC document, from this information, the visitors noted that there will be no additional staff recruited to facilitate the implementation of the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme. The current proposal is that the 13 contracted staff currently delivering the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Audiology, will also deliver the proposed MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme. The visitors are satisfied that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff in place to deliver the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Audiology. However, the visitors considered that the introduction of the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme may impact the programme team in their ability to support students academically and pastorally on both the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Audiology and the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programmes. The visitors also noted that the introduction of the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme will require students to be supported for an additional two years. Although the HCPC does not set staff – to – student ratios, the visitors were unable to see how the proposed changes will ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately and qualified staff in place to deliver an effective programme if the proposed MSci programme is approved. Therefore the visitors considered that a visit would be the most appropriate way to gather evidence to ensure the programme meets the standards.

3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: The visitors were provided with a response to HCPC document, however, the document contained no reference to the resources in place to support student learning in all settings. The visitors recognised that the introduction of the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) to the already existing BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Audiology will have an impact to students' access to resources. However, due to no information being provided by the education provider, the visitors were unable to determine what additional resources have been put in place to support students on the MSci Healthcare Science (Audiology) programme. The visitors would like to recommend a visit as they were unable determine through the additional documentary evidence how the education provider ensure that resources effectively supports the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.