

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Keele University
Name of programme(s)	MSc Physiotherapy (Accelerated), Full time accelerated MSci Physiotherapy, Full time MSci Physiotherapy (with International year), Full time
Approval visit date	27 - 28 June 2018
Case reference	CAS-13160-X1F9P8

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Executive Summary

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

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

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

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

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

How we make our decisions

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

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

HCPC panel

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

Anthony Power	Physiotherapist
Susanne Roff	Lay
Ruth Baker	Practitioner psychologist - Clinical psychologist
Eloise O'Connell	HCPC executive
John Archibald	HCPC executive (observer)

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

Katie Szkornik	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Faculty of Natural Sciences, Keele University
Claire Evans	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Keele University
Peter Coventry	Internal panel member	Keele University

John Wootton	Internal panel member	Keele University
Sophie Bessant	Internal panel member	Keele University
Nina Paterson	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy panel member	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
John Stephens	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy panel member	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Physiotherapy (Accelerated)
Mode of study	FTA (Full time accelerated)
Profession	Physiotherapist
First intake	01 January 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01916

Programme name	MSci Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
First intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 70
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01917

Programme name	MSci Physiotherapy (with International year)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
First intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 10
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02017

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

The three programmes listed above will replace the education provider's current approved BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy and BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (with International year). The education provider intends to enrol up to 80 learners per year across the MSc Physiotherapy and MSci Physiotherapy (with International year). For our records, we have recorded this as split across two programmes, however the education provider does not know how many learners will enrol on each programme.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

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

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	We met with learners and graduates of the current approved BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

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

Conditions

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

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 23 August 2018.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify the type of exit awards offered for the programme, and demonstrate that learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

Reason: In the programme specification for the MSci Physiotherapy and MSci Physiotherapy (with International year), the visitors read that “on completion of 360 credits, plus a minimum of 1000 hours practice experience, a BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy would be awarded, where graduates are eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC. N.B. This route to award will only be available in exceptional circumstances. Please see course specific regulations.” At the visit, the programme team explained that the BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, providing eligibility for application to admission to the Register, would be awarded to a learner who met the following requirements:

- due to exceptional circumstances could not continue their studies
- has met the progression requirements to move onto year four of the MSci programme
- has met the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists in the first three years of the MSci programme
- has completed the clinical hours requirements of 1000 hours.

The programme team highlighted that they did not wish to offer this award as an exit award for those who did not wish to complete the MSci Physiotherapy, but rather an option for learners who due to exceptional circumstances could not complete the MSci Physiotherapy. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear how the education provider would clearly define “exceptional circumstances”, to ensure that learners are aware this is not routinely offered as an exit award for the MSci Physiotherapy. The programme team also mentioned that they had been in discussions about what exit award they might offer and had not decided at that stage. The visitors require further information about what exit awards, if any the education provider will offer. Should the education provider offer a BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy exit award in exceptional circumstances, the visitors require further information to determine that clarification is provided to ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the type of exit awards offered for the programme, and demonstrate that learning outcomes for the proposed BSc (Hons)

Physiotherapy exit award ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for physiotherapists.

Reason: In the programme specification for the MSci Physiotherapy and MSci Physiotherapy (with International year), the visitors read that “on completion of 360 credits, plus a minimum of 1000 hours practice experience, a BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy would be awarded, where graduates are eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC. N.B. This route to award will only be available in exceptional circumstances. Please see course specific regulations.” At the visit, the programme team explained that the BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, providing eligibility for application to admission to the Register, would be awarded to a learner who met the following requirements:

- due to exceptional circumstances could not continue their studies
- has met the progression requirements to move onto year four of the MSci programme
- has met the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists in the first three years of the MSci programme
- has completed the clinical hours requirements of 1000 hours.

On review of the SOPs mapping document for the MSci Physiotherapy, the visitors noted that some of the SOPs are mapped onto modules in year four of the MSci Physiotherapy, as well as modules in the first three years of the programme. As such, the visitors could not determine how all SOPs would be met in the first three years of the MSci programme. At the visit, the programme team also mentioned that they had been in discussions about what exit award they might offer and had not decided at that stage. The visitors require further information about what exit awards, if any the education provider will offer. Should the education provider offer the proposed BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy exit award in exceptional circumstances, the visitors require further information to determine that the learning outcomes for the proposed exit award would ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for physiotherapists.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the type of exit awards offered for the programme, and demonstrate that the assessment strategy and design will ensure that those who are awarded the proposed BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy exit award meet the standards of proficiency for physiotherapists.

Reason: In the programme specification for the MSci Physiotherapy and MSci Physiotherapy (with International year), the visitors read that “on completion of 360 credits, plus a minimum of 1000 hours practice experience, a BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy would be awarded, where graduates are eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC. N.B. This route to award will only be available in exceptional circumstances. Please see course specific regulations.” At the visit, the programme team explained that the BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, providing eligibility for application to admission to the Register, would be awarded to a learner who met the following requirements:

- due to exceptional circumstances could not continue their studies

- has met the progression requirements to move onto year four of the MSci programme
- has met the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists in the first three years of the MSci programme
- has completed the clinical hours requirements of 1000 hours.

On review of the SOPs mapping document for the MSci programme, the visitors note that some of the SOPs are mapped onto modules in year four of the MSci programme, as well as modules in the first three years of the programme. As such, because some of the SOPs include mapping to modules in year four of the MSci programme, the visitors were not clear how the assessment strategy and design will ensure that those who are awarded an exit award meet the SOPs for physiotherapists. At the visit, the programme team also mentioned that they had been in discussions about what exit award they might offer and had not decided on it at that stage. The visitors require further information about what exit awards, if any the education provider will offer. Should the education provider offer the proposed BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy exit award in exceptional circumstances, the visitors require further information to determine that the assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who complete an exit award meet the standards of proficiency for physiotherapists.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

3.7 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider strengthen how they plan and monitor service user and carer involvement in the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors understood that service users and carers were involved in reviewing and providing feedback on programme documentation, attending school meetings and activities, and in the recruitment and selection process for the programmes. At the visit, the visitors met the service users and carers who were involved in the programme, such as involvement in reviewing documentation for the proposed new programmes, involvement in the admissions process and some teaching on the programme through talking to learners about experiences. One of the service users the visitors met with had more recently been recruited by the education provider, and at that point had only been involved in attending school meetings. The visitors noted that the education provider does not currently arrange regular or formal meetings for service users and carers involved in the programmes, other than attending the school meetings. While the visitors found that service users and carers were involved in the programme in various ways, the visitors noted that the education provider could strengthen the planning and monitoring of this involvement to ensure meaningful and ongoing involvement. This could include regular meetings organised by the education provider to involve service users and carers in planning and to meet with other service users and carers involved in the programmes. The visitors found also found that service users and carers were mainly involved through attending school meetings and reviewing documentation, and that the

education provider could strengthen the involvement of service users and carers by involving them in wider areas, such as those listed in the SETs guidance.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

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

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 20 September 2018 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).