![hpc health professions council logo]

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Exeter
Programme name	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	02 – 03 June 2010

Contents

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 15 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 'Clinical 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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 26 August 2010. At the Committee meeting on 21 October 2010, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as the practitioner psychology profession came onto the register in July 2009 and a decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing programmes from this profession. 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.

Whilst undertaking the visit to the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology programme the visitors noted that the programme title and the exit award had been amended for the September 2009 cohort. The visitors noted that the September 2007 and 2008 cohort would exit with the award of Doctorate in Clinical and Community Psychology (DClinPsy) and that these trainees continue to study on the programme. Through discussions with the programme team the education provider clarified that the two programmes have the same content and resource provision and were in essence the same, sharing programme documentation and differing only in terms of exit award title and programme title.

This visit was part of a joint event. The professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered a different programme, the Doctorate in Clinical and Community Psychology (DClinPsy) as referenced above. 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 by the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Sabiha Azmi (Clinical Psychologist) Bob Fellows (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer	Lewis Roberts
Proposed student numbers	15 per year
Initial approval	1 January 1995
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	17 September 2010
Chair	Karen Knapp (University of Exeter)
Secretary	Liz Mears (University of Exeter)
Members of the joint panel	Andrew Cuthbertson (British Psychological Society) Theresa Powell (British Psychological Society) Jan Hughes (British Psychological

Society)
Abdullah Mia (British Psychological Society)
Lucy Kerry (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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

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 46 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining11 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 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 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

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 revisit all programme documentation including advertising materials to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory health regulations.

Reason: The visitors require the documentation to be reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology. The visitors noted on a number of occasions that the language used within the documentation did not make it clear to applicants or trainees the differences between the role of the HPC and the professional body. The visitors require the education provider to clarify the role of the professional body and the role of the HPC within the documentation.

The visitors also noted that the documentation stated on a number of occasions that completion of the programme will enable graduates to register with the HPC. All trainees need to apply to register after they have completed the programme and as such the language the education provider uses needs to reflect this. The education provider needs to make it clear to applicants and trainees that completion of the programme means they are eligible to apply for registration with the HPC. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

2.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must revisit all programme documentation, including advertising materials for the programme to clearly articulate the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) standard or equivalent required for entry on to the programme.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors could not determine the IELTS level for entry on to the programme. The visitors require the IELTS entry level to the programme to be clarified and clearly stated in the programme documentation and advertising materials. If the education allows trainees to enter the programme with an IELTS score below 7.0 the visitors also require evidence of how the programme team ensures at the point of registration the applicant will attain a score of IELTS 7.0 (Standard of Proficiency 1b.3).

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.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate within the programme documentation the areas of the programme where attendance is mandatory.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors could find no evidence outlining which elements of the programme are mandatory. The visitors require the education provider to outline which elements of the programme are mandatory and demonstrate that this information is clearly articulated to students in order to make sure that trainees meet the standards of proficiency, and are able to practice safely and effectively. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is met.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and outline the process for checking the quality of placements. The education provider must also produce guidelines on their placement requirements, articulating what they constitute as a safe and supportive placement environment.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors could find no evidence of a robust mechanism in place to check and monitor the quality of practice placements. The visitors in particular noted that the systems in place were largely retrospective and did not check the quality and safety of placement providers before a trainee goes into the placement setting.

The visitors require further information to demonstrate that the education provider is responsible for placements and the management of placements in the programme. The visitors require further evidence of the auditing process and the guidelines in place to ensure that the education provider can make a judgement on whether placements are of good quality and provide safe and supportive environments.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit all programme documentation and produce clear policies and procedures to support the approval and monitoring of placements.

Reason: From the documents submitted and discussions with the programme team the visitors did not have enough evidence that the education provider has a thorough and effective system in place for the approval and monitoring of placements and therefore that the education provider was responsible for the placements in the programme. The visitors require the education provider to produce clear policies and procedures around placements in the programme to ensure that this standard is met.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the way in which they check the quality of placements and monitor the equality and diversity policies of practice placements. The education provider must also clarify the mechanisms that they use to inform trainees about access to these policies.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors could find no evidence of a mechanism in place to check and monitor the quality of practice placements and therefore demonstrate that the education provider was responsible for managing the placements in the programme. The visitors require further information to clarify the mechanisms that the education provider uses to monitor the equality and diversity policies of its practice placements. The visitors also require evidence that demonstrates how trainees are informed about accessing the equality and diversity policies on placements and what to do if they feel they have been discriminated against whilst on placement.

5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the placement audit process and within this document a clear process for monitoring staff numbers and experience within the placements utilised on the programme. The education provider must also document the criteria by which they judge staff to be appropriately qualified and experienced to support trainees at practice placements.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit and speaking to the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors could find no evidence of a mechanism in place to check and monitor the quality of practice placements and therefore demonstrate that the education provider was responsible for managing the placements in the programme. The visitors require further information to clarify the mechanisms that the education provider uses to monitor the staff numbers and experience of its practice placements and the staff numbers and experience requirements that the education provider sets to ensure that staff support student learning in a safe environment.

5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the placement audit process and within this document a clear process for monitoring the knowledge, skills and experience of practice placement educators. The education provider must also document the criteria by which they judge practice placement educators to have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit and speaking to the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors could find no evidence of a mechanism in place to check and monitor the knowledge, skills and experience of practice placement educators. The visitors require further information to clarify the mechanisms that the education provider uses to monitor and record the knowledge, skills and experience of practice placement educators to ensure that they can support trainee and that they provide a safe environment

for effective learning. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the mechanism they use to ensure practice placement educators undertake appropriate practice placement educator training in advance of receiving trainees.

Reason: From the documents submitted and discussions with the programme team it was not made clear that there were sufficient recording and monitoring mechanisms in place to demonstrate that all practice placement educators are receiving both initial training and regular refresher training. The visitors require clarification on how the education provider records and monitors the training of new practice placement educators. The visitors also require information on how it is determined if a practice placement educator needs refresher training and how this is articulated to the relevant parties. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the monitoring mechanism used to ensure that practice placement educators are appropriately registered.

Reason: From the documents submitted and discussions with the programme team the visitors could find no evidence that the education provider has mechanisms in place to demonstrate that all practice placement educators are appropriately registered. The visitors require clarification on how the education provider records and monitors the registration status of its practice placement educators. The visitors also require clarification on the process and procedure in place if the education provider chooses to utilise practice placement educators who are not registered with the HPC. The visitors would require details on the mechanism in place to collect information about their experience, qualifications and training relevant to the practice placement. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate 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 review the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners must be registered unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with HPC.

Reason: The submitted documentation did not contain reference to the HPC's requirements regarding external examiner recruitment. The visitors, therefore, felt that this needs to be included within the documentation to demonstrate the

recognition of these requirements. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

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 education provider should consider rewording the admissions criterion, 'normally hold a full UK driving licence'.

Reason: The visitors felt that the education provider should consider rewording the admission criteria that currently states candidates should 'normally hold a full UK driving licence'. The visitors felt that this admissions criterion could be reworded to be more inclusive as currently it could potentially deter an applicant from applying. The visitors suggested expanding on the current criterion to outline that trainees would be expected to travel to placements from their homes and that travel within placements may also be expected. The visitors felt that this would clarify that the use of a car would therefore be considered an advantage, or if this was not possible, that there would be an expectation that trainees would use public transport in order to arrive at placement.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revisiting the programme documentation to provide trainees with further clarity around their resit options.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions at the visit the visitors were happy that the requirements of the HPC relating to this standard were being met. The visitors noted that the education provider does include within the documentation details outlining the trainees' options around resits. During discussion with trainees however the visitors did note some confusion in the answers given around the resit options for both clinical and academic assessment. The visitors also recognised that some of the programme documentation could be difficult to access because of its length and detail. The visitors recommend that the options available to a failing student should be highlighted more clearly and simply within the programme documentation.

Sabiha Azmi
Bob Fellows