

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Lincoln
Programme name	MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Physiotherapist
Date of visit	19 – 20 July 2017

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Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'physiotherapist' must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care 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. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 21 September 2017. At the Committee meeting on 23 November 2017, the programme was approved. 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 HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC 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 education provider validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC 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 HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Fleur Kitsell (Physiotherapist) Jennifer Caldwell (Occupational therapist) Roseann Connolly (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer	Jasmine Pokuaa Oduro-Bonsrah
Proposed student numbers	20 per cohort, one cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	January 2018
Chair	Karin Crawford (University of Lincoln)
Secretary	Carolyn Smith (University of Lincoln)
Members of the joint panel	Martin Pinnick (Internal Panel Member) David Jones (Internal Panel Member) Izzie Easton (External Panel Member and Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) Nina Paterson (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC 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 HCPC did not review external examiners' reports from two year ago prior to the visit as there are currently no external examiners as the programme is new.

During the visit the HCPC 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"/>
Service users and carers	<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 HCPC met with students from the MSc Specialist Practice Frail Older Adults for Health and Social Care, MSc Advanced Clinical Practice and BSc (Hons) Nursing (Adult) 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 satisfied 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 the relevant part of the Register.

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 four SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. 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 can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

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 provide further evidence to demonstrate that the information to applicants and students is consistent in delivering the message that successful completion of the programme will allow eligibility to apply to the Register as a physiotherapist.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the admissions guidance document and the programme web page. The visitors noted that there were inconsistencies in the admissions information available to students. In both the programme handbook and on the programme webpage it states that “successful completion of the course will provide eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.” However on the programme web page available to students it also states that “this course is for graduates of relevant degrees who aspire to qualify for eligibility to register as a Physiotherapist”. The visitors also noted in the programme handbook that “the programme will therefore ensure that those qualifying are fit for practice, purpose, award and professional standing and therefore registration as a physiotherapist with the HCPC”. These statements could be misleading to applicants and students, as students are only eligible to apply to the HCPC Register and will not automatically be eligible for HCPC registration. The education provider will therefore need to ensure that all the admissions information and programme documentation available to potential applicants and students admitted onto this programme is consistent and clear in delivering the message that successful completion of the programme will allow eligibility to apply to the Register as a physiotherapist.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate, there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to various documents including the staff resource document, administration structure and interprofessional practice support team document. In the visit request form, financial statement and resources list submitted the visitors noted that the education provider were originally seeking approval for 15 students for the programme. However, at the visit the education provider told the visitors that they would want the programme approved for 20 students and that they had resources to support 20 students. The education provider also mentioned that they are currently in the process of recruiting a new physiotherapist member of staff to join the team in order to effectively deliver the programme. The education provider did not however submit any documentation to demonstrate formal plans in place to demonstrate how the university will ensure that there will be an adequate number of staff to deliver an effective programme especially for 20 students. The visitors will therefore need to see further evidence of formal plans in place ensure that there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver the programme effectively.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that there are sufficient resources to support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to various documents including the equipment list, programme specification, programme handbook and were taken on a facilities tour at the visit. In the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors noted that the education provider were originally seeking approval for 15 students for the programme. However, at the visit the education provider told the visitors that they would want approval for 20 students and that they had resources to support 20 students. The visitors however noted that they had only seen evidence to demonstrate that the education provider has the resources to deliver the programme to effectively support 15 students. The visitors therefore require evidence to demonstrate that there will be sufficient resources for 20 students to support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that there are an adequate number of appropriate placements for all students on the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to various documents including the practice handbook. The visitors also reviewed the memorandums of understanding between the placement provider and the education provider. At the visit the visitors were shown the Practice Education Management Systems (PEMS), the auditing tool for placements, where the capacity of placements are also recorded. In addition, the visitors had discussions with the placement providers and programme team regarding the capacity of placement and both groups stated that they were confident that they will have capacity to support 20 students. However, the visitors did not receive any evidence to demonstrate what the capacity in each placement area would be. Although both the education provider and placement provider mentioned that they believe there is capacity to support the students, the education provider was waiting for approval of the programme before auditing the placement areas, and have therefore not recorded what the capacity of each placement area is yet. As the education provider will now be seeking approval for 20 students the visitors will need to see evidence to demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity for all students and that these placements are appropriate to support student learning.

Recommendations

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider the support they give to practice placement educators to ensure they are fully prepared to supervise Masters level students

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussions at the visit, the visitors noted that practice placement educators will have their training before taking any students on this programme and were therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, from discussions with the practice placement educators they expressed that although they are assessing students on placements at a Bachelors level, due to the level of the students expected to be enrolled on this programme they may be faced with different challenges as faced when supervising undergraduate students. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team monitors the communication with practice placement educators to ensure that they are aware of possible challenges they may face when supervising postgraduate students and that these possible challenges are adequately addressed.

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the programme team revisits the programme documentation to state the relevant profession and programme name.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitors saw various instances of other professions mentioned, whilst physiotherapy had not been added to the documentation yet. For example, in the Service user and carer participation handbook there are various examples of how service users and carers are involved in the social work and nursing programmes. However there are no examples in this document of how service users and carers will be involved in the physiotherapy programme. The programme team should therefore consider revisiting the programme documentation available to students to accurately reflect the existence of the physiotherapy programme.

Fleur Kitsell
Jennifer Caldwell
Roseann Connolly