

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Stirling
Name of programme(s)	Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology, Full time Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology, Part time
Approval visit date	27 September 2017
Case reference	CAS-12008-J7P4H6

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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:

Deirdre Keane	Lay
Lynn Dunwoody	Practitioner psychologist - Health psychologist
Gareth Roderique-Davies	Practitioner psychologist - Health psychologist
Eloise O'Connell	HCPC executive
Jamie Hunt	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.

Tessa Parkes	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Stirling, Faculty of Social Sciences
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Nicola Hunt	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Stirling
Helen Poole	Convenor of BPS Accreditation Team	British Psychological Society
Liz Simpson	Member of BPS Accreditation Team	British Psychological Society
Susan Quinn	Partnership and Accreditation Officer for BPS Accreditation Team	British Psychological Society
Jason Rowbottom	Member of BPS Accreditation Team	British Psychological Society

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Practitioner psychologist
Modality	Health psychologist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 6 across both programmes
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01749

Programme name	Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Profession	Practitioner psychologist
Modality	Health psychologist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 6 across both programmes
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01750

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.

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	Reason(s) for non-submission
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	Not Required	As this is not yet an approved programme, the education provider was not required to submit this.

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As this is not yet an approved programme, we met with potential trainees for the programme as well as learners on the current MSc Health Psychology programme.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers and educators	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 31 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 31 January 2018.

2.1 The admissions process 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 demonstrate that admissions information will give applicants the information they require so that they can make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on a programme, including information about sourcing their own potential practice-based learning.

Reason: As part of the documentary submission, the visitors were given some advertising information specific to the programme. Prior to the visit, the visitors requested information from the education provider relating to various costs for the programme and whether these would be paid by the education provider or by learners (for example, criminal conviction checks, travel to and from placement). This information was made available to the visitors by email prior to the visit; however, the education provider has not demonstrated how or where this information will be made available to potential applicants for the programme. The education provider has also listed one of the entry requirements for applicants onto this programme, is to have successfully completed a 'British Psychological Society Accredited MSc in Health Psychology'. The visitors were unclear how recently this qualification must have been completed. At the visit, the visitors heard that the MSc programme must have been completed within the last 5 years. The visitors agree that 5 years is reasonable, however this cut off is not noted in the admissions documentation. Therefore, the visitors require that the education provider reviews and revises this documentation, to demonstrate how they will meet this standard.

2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how their admissions process appropriately and effectively assesses applicants' prior learning.

Reason: From their review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear what the process for recognition of prior learning will be for this programme. From discussions at the visit, the visitors understand there is a process in place for assessing applicants' prior learning, however there is limited information in the documentation about how this process works. During the visit, the visitors heard that the recognition of prior learning process would be at the point of application and would be assessed through a series of documentation, which would be completed as part of the application process. However, the visitors were not clear about the criteria that would be used to make judgements about prior learning, how any policy would be applied to applicants to the programme, or how this policy would be made available to applicants and the staff who would apply it. As such, the education provider will need to clearly define the process for assessing applicants' prior learning, and how this will be reflected in relevant programme documentation, in order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard is met.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the future plans for the programme are sustainable.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors understood there would be five learners per cohort with one annual intake, as per the visit request form. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that there would be a maximum of six learners per cohort with one annual intake. At the visit, the senior team and programme team noted there may not be sufficient resources over the three year programme if they take in the maximum of six learners each year. The senior team noted that if they recruited to six learners each year, that by the time of the third year of the programme running they would be over their intended staff-student ratio. In this case, the senior team theorised that the programme would need to take fewer learners in the next year, or recruit more staff. The senior team also noted that they could take more learners in one year, and less in another, and that the maximum of six learners per year would be on a full time equivalent (FTE) basis, and therefore apply across both full time and part time programmes.

The visitors also note the education provider will provide a 'top-up doctorate' award alongside this programme. The visitors were not clear if or how the top up doctorate would impact on the resources for the programmes considered through this process. For example, they were not clear how the education provider will staff the top up programme, or whether the intended learner numbers discussed above include learners on the top-up doctorate.

The visitors did not see a plan in place to manage the various scenarios of learners broken down between years and / or programmes, or information which demonstrates that their staff-student ratio will remain at their desired level, once the programme has been running for several years. Therefore, the education provider will need to demonstrate how they will ensure that the learner and staff numbers for the programme are managed, to ensure it is sustainable in the longer term.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how there will be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Reason: Applicants for this programme must source their own practice-based learning, so practice education providers will be confirmed on an applicant-by applicant basis when the applicant is accepted onto the programme. In evidencing this standard, the education provider referenced policies about the approval and monitoring of practice placements. However, the visitors were unclear how the information provided demonstrates that regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice education provider would be undertaken on an ongoing basis, such as planned future meetings. As such, the education provider needs to demonstrate that there is a plan in place on how they intend to maintain regular and effective collaboration with any future practice education providers.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how service users and carers will be involved in this programme, and how their needs will be supported.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear how service users and carers would be involved in this programme specifically. The SETs mapping document refers to the faculty operating a 'Patient and Public Involvement Group' who will be involved in programme development, monitoring and feedback. At the visit, the visitors met with service users and carers who are part of this 'Patient and Public Involvement Group.' During discussion, the visitors learned that the service users and carers have attended meetings and lectures at the education provider, though this was intended as fact finding for the members of the group, rather than involvement specific to this programme. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors learned that the team hoped to involve service users and carers in an advisory group for this programme, which meets at least annually. The SETs mapping document also mentions service users and carers will be invited to participate in annual programme review. However, the visitors noted that none of the education providers intentions were drawn together in an overarching policy or strategy which would ensure appropriate and ongoing service user and carer involvement in the programme.

Additionally, during discussions with the service users and carers at the visit, the visitors learned that they experienced some difficulty in arriving to the meeting, for example parking at the education provider. In order to enable service users and carers to be appropriately involved in the programme, the education provider needs to ensure there is appropriate support available, including the facilities and resources allowing them to contribute their time.

As such, the education provider will need to demonstrate how service users and carers will be involved in this programme, and how they will be appropriately supported to do so. The education provider seemed aware that they could involve service users and carers through programme development, monitoring and feedback. The visitors note there are other possible areas for involvement in our SETs guidance document.

3.16 There must be thorough and effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the process in place for ensuring ongoing monitoring of the suitability of learners' conduct, character and health is effective.

Reason: The SETs mapping document noted that the education provider intends to have "ongoing monitoring" related to this standard. However, the education provider did not provide any supporting evidence which showed how the process for ongoing monitoring would work (ie by whom and how) in the academic setting. The visitors were also unclear on the process involved for ongoing criminal records checks or how any issues that may impact on the professional suitability of learners is monitored on placement. The visitors also noted that the programme team were unaware of whether or how the education provider's overarching fitness to practice policy would need to be applied by the programme, in either the academic or practice setting. As such, the education provider must demonstrate that the process for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners is thorough and effective and is clearly documented.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Reason: The documentation referenced in the SETs mapping document refers to supervision requirements, which outlines how the supervisor will support the learner in practice. However, there was no specific information in this documentation about providing support to enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users. During discussion with the programme team, the visitors heard that there would be discussions upfront, at the start of the programme about how learners can raise concerns regarding service users' safety and wellbeing. The programme team also referred the visitors to the professional practice and health environment module, as well as the university's safeguarding policy. However, the visitors were unclear where learners, practice staff, and the programme team would access information and support to help learners raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users. Therefore, the education provider will need to demonstrate that there is an appropriate process in place, and that this is clearly documented.

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 review documentation to ensure it is clear which programmes provide eligibility to apply for admission to the Register.

Reason: The visitors noted there is a section on aegrotat awards on page 33 of the student handbook. The documentation does not state that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register. In addition, the visitors noted that the education provider will provide a "top-up doctorate" award alongside this programme. However, the visitors were not clear from the documentation whether this award was intended to be a registrable qualification. From discussions, it seems that this award would only be accessible to existing registered health psychologists, and would not confer eligibility to apply for registration. As such, the education provider must review documentation to clearly specify that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register, or remove any reference to an aegrotat award, and to clarify the intended status of the top up doctorate qualification.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how learners will be able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors found limited information related to this standard. The SETs mapping document referenced a section on programme quality standards in the student handbook, which noted that "trainees will be encouraged to share best practice within the programme, the University of Stirling postgraduate community, with multidisciplinary colleagues in the workplace, and other

stakeholders.” The visitors noted the optional nature of this best practice sharing would not ensure that all learners will interact with these groups. The education provider also referenced the Teaching and Training module proposal to evidence this standard, in which learners would teach other health care professionals. The module proposal states that the learner will develop experience of using different “teaching/training approaches, methods and techniques and to use these in an autonomous manner with different groups, which will include recipients of health care or health-related interventions (including patients and the general population) and health professionals”. The visitors noted that this approach seemed to link to the learners teaching others, rather than learning with and from others. At the visit, the programme team noted that there would be many other opportunities for shared teaching and shared learning, but that no further formal plans have been put in place. Therefore, in order for the visitors to make a judgment about whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Condition: The education provider must define where attendance is mandatory, demonstrate that associated monitoring processes are in place, along with how these requirements are communicated to learners on the programme.

Reason: From review of the documentation, the visitors were unclear on the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, or what the consequences would be for learners that do not attend parts of the programme. In the documentation, there is an eighty percent attendance requirement, however, it is not clear exactly how this applies across the programme (for example, in the academic and / or practice setting), or how this is monitored. When questioned, the programme team were unclear how they would apply this requirement, or which parts of the programme could not be missed. Therefore, the education provider must define what the requirements are, how attendance is monitored, and how this is communicated to learners.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning supports the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency, and how this is communicated to learners.

Reason: From review of the documentation and discussions with senior staff, the visitors identified discrepancies about the duration of the programme. The visitors noted that the placement handbook states the programme is over a minimum of three years full-time, while the student handbook states the programme will be over a maximum of three years full-time. It was confirmed at the visit that the programme would be a minimum of three years full time. The student handbook states that while most learning takes place in the placement, the programme supports this with short blocks of teaching. The visitors noted that learners would “work one day a week” (as set out in the programme documentation), but were not clear what was meant by this. At the visit, the programme team clarified this to mean there would be one day set aside for study time for learners, and that four days of the week would be spent in practice. During the

meeting with possible practice educators, the educators could not confirm what the structure and duration of practice placements would be for the programme, suggesting that they could envisage supporting learners for one or two days a week. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning supports the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards or proficiency, and is clearly documented and communicated to learners and practice education providers.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective system in place for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors were unclear how the education provider will effectively approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning for this programme. It was noted that learners coming onto the programme would be responsible for arranging their own placements, and would need to have identified a practice education provider as part of the admissions process. During the programme team meeting, the education provider noted there will be a 'placement assessment process' in which suitable supervisors will need to be identified, however currently the education provider do not have a set criteria for agreeing the suitability of practice-based learning staff. In addition, the visitors note there appears to be no process in place to capture learner feedback. During the programme team meeting, the education provider noted there will be both informal and formal feedback mechanisms for the various groups involved with practice based learning. However, it is not clear how the various feedback mechanisms discussed, along with audit processes are drawn together by the education provider into a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice based learning. Considering each learner will be reliant on the practice based learning opportunities that they bring to the programme, the visitors were unclear what would happen if a learners' practice based learning failed the initial audit. As such, the education provider will need to demonstrate that there is an effective system in place for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning. This condition links to the conditions for SET 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all practice-based learning will provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors were unclear what policies the education provider has in place to effectively approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning for this programme. The SETs mapping document references the Placement Handbook for evidencing this standard, in particular, the plan of training, roles of workplace supervisors, 'pre-acceptance placement visit' and 'risk assessment' forms. The plan of training talks about expectations of a trainee health psychologist, including scope for handling complex situations and tasks, utilising ethical awareness, professional best practice etc. Requirements for placement include the learner identifying a suitable workplace contact and having a signed provisional workplace

agreement. The placement handbook states that the coordinating supervisor will normally make a pre-approval workplace visit including a risk assessment at this stage. The documentation provided makes no specific reference to service users in the practice-based learning environment. As the education provider has not identified an effective system for approving and ensuring the ongoing quality of practice-based learning, the visitors cannot make a judgement about whether the education provider has a system for ensuring that the practice-based learning settings provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users. As such, the education provider will need to demonstrate what systems they have in place that will ensure the practice-based learning setting provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Reason: The visitors understand that learners will need to source their own placement for this programme, and as such will need to have a suitable placement as part of the admissions process. As the education provider has not demonstrated there is an effective process in place for approving and monitoring practice-based learning, the visitors cannot make a judgement at this stage that the education provider will have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff involved in practice-based learning. Specifically, the education provider has not demonstrated there is a process in place for identifying suitable practice-based learning staff, including the criteria that they will use to make this judgement. In order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard has been met, the education provider must demonstrate there is a process in place for identifying an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the system for approving all practice-based learning on this programme will ensure that practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: The visitors understand that learners will need to source their own placement for this programme, and as such will need to have a suitable placement as part of the admissions process. As the education provider has not demonstrated there is an effective process in place for approving and monitoring practice-based learning, the visitors cannot make a judgement at this stage that the education provider has a suitable process for ensuring that practice educators will have relevant knowledge, skills and experience. Specifically, the education provider has not demonstrated there is a process in place for identifying suitable practice-based learning staff, including the criteria that they will use to ensure that these individuals have relevant knowledge, skills and experience. In order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard has been met, the education provider must demonstrate there is a process in

place for ensuring practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that practice educators undertake regular training, which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were unclear on what training would be provided for practice educators, or when the training would be provided. At the visit, during the programme team meeting the visitors learned that the education provider would have links with the practice education providers once a learner applies for the programme. The programme team noted that at that point they would ascertain what training the practice educator may need to support the trainee. However, it is not clear what criteria the education provider will use to determine what training individuals will need, or an indication of the content of training. The visitors are also unclear what training is required of placement staff, for example, when initial training would need to be completed, how frequently refresher training would need to be completed, or about the content of this training. Therefore the visitors require evidence to demonstrate how the education provider ensures that all practice educators are receiving appropriate and regular training.

5.8 Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure the learners and practice educators have the information they need in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were unclear what information applicants and potential practice educators would be provided in order to prepare them for practice-based learning. The SETs mapping document references the placement handbook, in particular sections on learning outcomes, details on requirements for practice log and relevant assessments and details on placement assessment and progression. The visitors heard that potential learners and practice-based learning staff had received some information about the new programme, such as the student handbook and placement handbook. The visitors also noted that possible practice educators would benefit from some orientation, for example what type of supervision would be required, knowledge of the content of the programme, such as what the trainees are learning as the year progresses. However, the visitors are unclear specifically what information will be given to practice-based learning staff and learners prior to admission to allow them to prepare for the practice based learning element of the programme. As learners on this programme will source their own practice based learning, the visitors considered that timely provision of this information is key to the ensuring all groups are sufficiently prepared for practice-based learning. Therefore, the education provider must demonstrate how this information is provided and that there is sufficient information in order to ensure learners and practice educators will be prepared for practice-based learning.

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

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the education provider intends to use the 'common grading scheme' for this programme. The visitors read that the common grading scheme states that 50 percent pass means the learners meet 'most of the learning outcomes'. However, in order for learners to meet the standards of proficiency for health psychologists, they will need to meet all of the learning outcomes. The visitors also noted that the programme specification document mentions a pass / fail grading system, while the student handbook mentions the use of the postgraduate marking scheme. The education provider will need to clearly identify the assessment strategy and design that will be used and ensure this is consistent throughout documentation. In order for the visitors to make a suitable judgement on whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how their assessment strategy ensures that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for health psychologists.

6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectation of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the education provider intends to use the 'common grading scheme' for this programme. The visitors read that the common grading scheme states that 50 percent pass means the learners meet 'most of the learning outcomes'. However, in order for learners to demonstrate they are able to meet the expectation of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, they will need to meet all of the learning outcomes. The visitors also noted that the programme specification document mentions a pass / fail grading system, while the student handbook mentions the use of the postgraduate marking scheme. The education provider will need to clearly identify the assessment strategy and design that will be used and ensure this is consistent throughout documentation. In order for the visitors to make a suitable judgement on whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how assessment throughout the programme will ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Condition: The education provider must define the requirements for learners to reach a pass or fail, and demonstrate that this requirement is an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' achievement.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the education provider intends to use the 'common grading scheme' for this programme. The visitors read that the common grading scheme states that 50 percent pass means the learners meet 'most of the learning outcomes'. The visitors also noted that the programme specification document mentions a pass / fail grading system, while the student handbook mentions the use of the postgraduate marking scheme. The education provider will need to clearly identify how the assessment on the programme will be measure, and ensure that the approach(es) used are clear throughout documentation. As such, the education provider must revise the documentation to clearly define what requirements are for learners pass or fail, in order to demonstrate there is an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that their requirements for progression onto the research element of the programme are conducive to completing the research in the expected time.

Reason: From review of the documentation the visitors note that trainees can only progress to the research component after completing the taught modules in the first two years of the programme. The visitors noted that it will often not be feasible to carry out a piece of research at this level in one year, especially considering the possible need to gain ethical approval and conduct a research study. Therefore the education provider must demonstrate how the assessment policies relating to progression onto the research component of this programme enable learners to undertake research in the expected timeframe.

Section 5: Outcome from second review

Second response to conditions required

The education provider responded to the conditions set out in section 4. Following their consideration of this response, the visitors were satisfied that the conditions for several of the standards were met. However, they were not satisfied that the following conditions were met, for the reasons detailed below. Therefore, in order for the visitors to be satisfied that the following conditions are met, they require further evidence.

2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how their admissions process appropriately and effectively assesses applicants' prior learning.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has provided an 'Information for Applicants' document, which specifies criteria for recognition of prior learning (RPL) and the process whereby RPL is awarded. The visitors agree that the education provider's statement provides applicants with

information regarding assessment of prior learning, specifically providing a certificate and academic transcript from a BPS accredited MSc in health psychology programme. They also noted that sufficient detail is given about recognition of experiential prior learning (REPL). However, from the information provided, the visitors could not see how the education provider makes a judgement about recognising prior learning. For example, the visitors could not see how an applicant's prior learning would be mapped against the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for health psychologists, so the education provider can make a judgement about which parts of the programme to exempt a learner from.

Suggested documentation: Evidence to demonstrate there is a document to enable the process to happen as described, for example a mapping document.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the future plans for the programme are sustainable.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has developed a revised business plan regarding learner intake. They now plan to take a reduced intake of a maximum of 4 full time equivalent (FTE) learners for the first 3 years of the programme. In the response, the education provider has mentioned a 'University of Stirling – Action Plan' for addressing student staff ratios across all psychology programmes. It was also noted that a business case has been submitted for the provision of five additional academic members of staff, which will include a member of staff for the Health Team. However, the visitors were not provided with a copy of the action plan and were therefore unable to see the whole picture relating to the ongoing sustainability of the programme.

Suggested documentation: Evidence to demonstrate that this condition has been met, this could include a copy of the education provider's action plan.

3.16 There must be thorough and effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the process in place for ensuring the ongoing monitoring of the suitability of learners' conduct, character and health is effective.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has stated that the process of ongoing monitoring is achieved through different processes through the period of supervised practice, and that the coordinating supervisor will have primary responsibility for ongoing monitoring of learners' conduct, character and health. The response includes a monthly log of professional practice, a weekly placement supervision log, and a quarterly review of supervised practice. The visitors note that throughout the response and supporting documentation, reference to fitness to practice is made. However, the visitors have not seen the education provider's fitness to practice policy and are not aware of how it can be found. As such, the visitors are not clear how the learners and practice education providers are made aware of the policy, and understand how it should be used.

Suggested documentation: Information on the education provider's fitness to practice policy and how learners and practice education providers are made aware of the policy.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider referenced a statement on safeguarding which has been included in the 'Trainee's Rights and Responsibilities' section of the placement handbook. The education provider also notes that learners and staff are referred to the education provider's HR 'Public Interest Disclosure and Anti-Bullying and Harassment Procedures' to which they provided an online link for. However, from the information provided, the visitors could not see how the policies referenced would support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users at practice-based learning, as opposed to anti-bullying and harassment which may arise within the education provider. For example, the visitors were unclear how learners will be supported to understand what might constitute a concern, who concerns should be raised to, and how practice-based learning environments are assessed for compliance to any safeguarding policy. As such, the visitors could not determine that this condition has been met.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that demonstrate that the condition has been met, such as an education provider owned policy about safeguarding, with specific detail on how they will support and enable learners to raise concerns.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how learners will be able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant profession.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has provided a narrative to describe ways in which learners will be able to learn with and from other health professionals. In this narrative, the education provider has noted that:

- part of the criterion for placement approval will be that the placement should offer the opportunity for the learners to learn with, and from a multidisciplinary team;
- there will be a range of guest speakers who are health professionals contributing to the taught component of the programme;
- there will be possible shared sessions for teaching and research development; and
- that learners will be encouraged to attend local and national multidisciplinary conferences.

However, the visitors were unclear from the information provided, how these requirements and expectations have been formally integrated into the programme. The visitors were also not clear what the practice education providers would understand by 'multidisciplinary team', or how the provision of this type of learning would be gauged

and monitored by the education provider. More broadly, the visitors were unclear how the education provider would always ensure that all learners are able to learn with and from other relevant professions. They were also unclear how the education provider makes the judgement about which professions are relevant. As such, the visitors require further evidence in order to make a judgement about whether this condition has been met.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that shows who the other groups will be and why these groups are relevant, and evidence that shows that all learners will have the opportunity to learn with and from other professions in a structured way.

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Condition: The education provider must define where attendance is mandatory, demonstrate that associated monitoring processes are in place, along with how these requirements are communicated to learners on the programme.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has specified there is a minimum of 80% attendance requirement for all modules in the taught component of the programme. For practice-based learning, learners must complete 2 years of supervised practice (full time or part time equivalent), attendance is recorded in their monthly log, and absence is recorded and signed off as part of the quarterly review process. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what the consequence of monitoring would be, for example, if attendance falls below the 80% requirement. The education provider noted that full-time learners who are not able to meet attendance requirements in years 1 and 2 have a further opportunity to attend taught sessions in year 3. The visitors note that the word 'opportunity' implies that attendance at these sessions could be optional. As such, the visitors were not clear what the consequence of low attendance would be. The visitors noted that without a formal policy in place the education provider could make inconsistent decisions, and that there is also a risk that learners may not attend key sessions and be at risk of not meeting the SOPs at the end of the programme.

Suggested documentation: Information that shows what would happen if learners who fall below the minimum attendance requirement.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning supports the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency, and how this is communicated to learners.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has provided information and support documentation to demonstrate that the duration of the programme has been standardised across all of the documentation, to a minimum of 3 years full-time. However, the visitors note that the response does not state the duration of the part-time programme. For example, in the document, 'Information for Applicants' on page 3, it states "the programme can be completed... up to 6 years part time". The visitors understood that it would need to be a minimum of 6

years part time in order for it to be pro rata with the full time route. As such, the visitors require clarification on the duration of the part time route if it is a maximum or minimum of 6 years part time.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that clearly define the minimum and maximum duration of the part-time route.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective system in place for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has provided a narrative and supporting documentation in the placement handbook to demonstrate how the approval and monitoring of practice-based learning will work. From this documentation the visitors noted:

- The 'introductory PowerPoint presentation for placement supervisors' was not provided. As such, the visitors are not clear what information is included in the presentation, or what it's intention is in relation to meeting this condition.
- Page 16 of the response document refers to a supervision contract in appendix 6. The visitors note that the document is a contractual agreement with the British Psychological Society and refers to the Health Psychology Qualification Board, rather than the education provider.
- This document also references the BPS Standards of Conduct, and that appeals will be dealt with by the BPS. As such, the visitors are unclear what ownership the education provider has over this process.
- They were unclear if all potential practice educators will be able to access the 'NES Scotland Generic Training' referred to on page 17 of the response document, or if only practice educators who are employed by NHS Scotland would be able to access it.

Broadly speaking, from the information provided, the visitors were unable to determine how the response addressed the condition. Particularly, they are unclear of the overarching system that is in place to ensure the quality of practice based learning, and the ownership of any process. Therefore, the visitors cannot make a judgement about whether this standard is met.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that demonstrates that the condition has been met, such as an overarching policy that includes lines of responsibility, and a specific response to each of the above bullet points.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all practice-based learning will provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has referred to the process of approval and monitoring the quality of practice-based learning. In addition, in regard to the safety and support of service users, the

education provider noted the safeguarding policy is described in the placement handbook on page 25, which was also referenced in response to the condition on SET 3.17. However, the visitors note that while the education provider has provided an extract on the 'safeguarding process', they have not seen the education provider's safeguarding policy. As such, the visitors could not determine that this standard has been met.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that demonstrates this condition has been met, such as the education provider's safeguarding policy.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the system for approving all practice-based learning on this programme will ensure that practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has described the criteria for approval and monitoring of placement supervisors, and included a 'supervisor assessment form', which includes assessment of the knowledge, skills and experience to support effective learning. The visitors note that the placement handbook refers to the supervision requirements that will comply with requirements set out in the 'British Psychological Society Candidate Handbook for stage 2 training'. However, the visitors require more information on supervision requirements, as set out by the education provider, in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard has been met.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that demonstrates this condition has been met, such as the detail of the skills and experience required to be a practice educator on this programme.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that practice educators undertake regular training, which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has outlined the 'placement supervisor assessment' which evaluates the potential practice educator's need for appropriate training. In terms of appropriate regular training, the need for refresher training will be assessed and discussed as part of the 'placement review visits' by the coordinating supervisor. The education provider also mentions a PowerPoint presentation which will be available to potential practice educators. However, the visitors were not provided with the presentation as part of the supporting documentation. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear of the specific training that will be available, or when it will be ready for delivery for practice educators. As such, the visitors could not determine whether this condition has been met.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that demonstrates this condition has been met, such as further detail about the training that will be provided.

5.8 Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure the learners and practice-educators have the information they need in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has referred to the placement handbook which is provided to learners and practice educators. The education provider also refers to communications between potential learners and the programme team, and the PowerPoint presentation for potential practice educators which has not been provided in the response. The visitors note that education provider states that the PowerPoint presentation 'can be made available' to potential practice educators. As such, the visitors were unclear if all possible practice educators would receive the presentation beforehand, which may include important, relevant information. Therefore, the visitors could not make a judgement as to whether this standard has been met.

Suggested documentation: Evidence that demonstrates this standard has been met, such as the detail of when information will be given to practice educators, and what this information will include.

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

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has amended the programme documentation to make it clear that the assessment and marking criteria include a requirement to meet all of the learning outcomes. The education provider stated that the pass mark for all course work is 50%. However, the visitors were unclear, how a learner could demonstrate that they meet all of the standards of proficiency for health psychologists with a 50% pass. The visitors note that the marking sheet provided in the additional documentation, does not indicate criteria for 50% pass mark. As such, the visitors were not clear how this would work in practice.

Suggested documentation: Updated documentation that demonstrates how the chosen pass mark will ensure that all learners that pass will meet the learning outcomes and therefore the SOPs.

6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectation of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has amended the programme documentation to make it clear that the assessment and marking criteria include a requirement to meet all of the learning outcomes. The education provider stated that the pass mark for all course work is 50%. However, the visitors were unclear, how a learner could demonstrate that they are able to meet the expectation of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, with a 50% pass. The visitors note that the marking sheet provided in the additional documentation, does not indicate criteria for 50% pass mark. As such, the visitors were not clear how this would work in practice.

Suggested documentation: Updated documentation that demonstrates how the chosen pass mark will ensure that all learners that pass will meet the learning outcomes and therefore the SCPEs.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Condition: The education provider must define the requirements for learners to reach a pass or fail, and demonstrate that this requirement is objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' achievement.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition, the education provider has amended the programme documentation to make it clear that the assessment and marking criteria include a requirement to meet all of the learning outcomes. The education provider stated that the pass mark for all course work is 50%. However, the visitors were unclear, how a 50% pass mark at the end of the programme would provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement. The visitors note that the marking sheet provided in the additional documentation, does not indicate criteria for 50% pass mark. As such, the visitors were not clear how this would work in practice.

Suggested documentation: Updated documentation that demonstrates how the chosen pass mark will ensure that all learners that pass will meet the learning outcomes and therefore the SOPs and SCPEs.

Section 6: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, and the request for further evidence set out in section 5, 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 24 May 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](#).