hcpc health & care professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Surrey
Programme name	PhD in Health Psychology with Stage 2 Training
Mode of delivery	Full time Part time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Health psychologist
Date of visit	3 – 4 June 2015

Contents

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 'practitioner psychologist' 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 24 September 2015. At the Committee meeting, 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 an HCPC only visit. The education provider and awarding body did not validate or review the programme and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Kathryn Thirlaway (Health psychologist) Frances Ashworth (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	10 per cohort, per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 October 2015
Chair	Chris France (University of Surrey)
Secretary	Shane Dowle (University of Surrey)

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	☒	☐	☐
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 HCPC 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	☒	☐	☐
Service users and carers	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

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.
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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 44 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 14 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

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

Condition: The programme team must clarify the selection and entry criteria that will be used in relation to applicants' command of English, and how this will be assessed in applications.

Reason: Discussions with the programme team highlighted that the admission entry test is the main way the programme team ensures that entrants are able to communicate clearly and accurately in spoken and written English. However the visitors were unclear what criteria would be used to measure this. It was also not clear if, or what, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level was required for entry to the programme for applicants whose first language is not English. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revisit programme documentation to clearly state what measures will be used to ensure that the English language requirements needed for entry to the programme are met.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the programme management structure, highlighting the lines of responsibility of everyone involved in the day to day management of the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were provided with staff curriculum vitae's (CVs) for members of the team responsible for the delivery and management of the programme. From the information provided, it was not clear which members of the programme team would be responsible for which aspects of the programme management, and, who would be delivering specific areas of the programme as the visitors were only provided with two CVs. At the visit the visitors were informed that recruitment of staff for the programme was on-going and that a Stage 2 convenor will be recruited for this programme. This meant that the visitors could not be provided with a clear indication of who was responsible for which areas of the programme and if some staff will be full time or part time members of the programme team. In addition to this, the visitors were unsure how, in the absence of a Stage 2 convenor, this programme will be effectively managed. The visitors therefore require further information regarding the structure for the day to day management of the programme, the lines of responsibility of the teaching team, and how this is conveyed to students to ensure that they can refer to this information, and have a clear understanding regarding which members of the team will deliver each area of the programme. In this way the visitors can determine how the management of the programme will work in practice, and how students will be supported through the programme by members of the programme team.

3.3 The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place for this programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors noted that the 'Stage 2' part of the programme will be monitored and evaluated by the Stage 2 convenor. The visitors were informed that to assist with the Stage 2 monitoring and evaluation, students will be invited to feedback on all aspect of the Stage 2 programme, this feedback will then be given to the Stage 2 convenor. However, the visitors noted that a Stage 2 convenor has yet to be recruited for this programme and the visitors were not given a timeline as to when this individual would be recruited to the programme. As such, the visitors could not determine what regular monitoring and evaluation systems are in place for this programme. In addition to this, the visitors could not determine how student feedback will be considered and actioned in the absence of a Stage 2 convenor. The visitors therefore, require further evidence to clearly articulate the regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place for this programme, how these systems will be implemented and how they will be used to quality assure the delivery of this programme to ensure that this standard is met.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence to demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the programme allow students to meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

- **1a.1 be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession**
    - understand the need to act in the best interests of service users at all times
- **1b.3 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to colleagues, service users, their relatives and careers**
    - understand the need to provide servicer users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions
    - understand the need to use an appropriate interpreter to assist servicer users whose first language is not English, wherever possible
    - recognise that relationships with service users should be based on mutual respect and trust, and be able to maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team, the visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the above standards of proficiency. From the standards of proficiency (SOPs) mapping document, the visitors were unable to determine how the above SOPs were being taught within the curriculum in such a way to ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register. The visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence that demonstrates that the learning outcomes ensure all standards of proficiency, specifically SOPs 1a.1 and 1b.3 are addressed within the curriculum.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence of the appropriate protocols to obtain informed consent from students when they participate as service users and for managing situations when students decline from participating as service users in practical sessions.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the standards of education and training (SETs) mapping document provided prior to the visit and noted that consent to participate in role-play will be discussed with students verbally. Through discussions with the students, the visitors learnt that students were aware that role play was part of the taught element of this programme. However, the visitors noted that there was some confusion among the students as to when and if they gave consent to participate as service users. Discussions with programme team revealed that other HCPC approved programmes, delivered by the education provider, have a consent form which students are asked to sign. The visitors were told that the programme team are intending on introducing a similar protocol in September but were not provided with any evidence of what the consent form would consist of. As such the visitors could not determine how students were informed about the requirement for them to participate in this form of teaching and how records were maintained to indicate consent had been gained. Also the visitors could not determine, from the evidence provided, how situations where students declined to participate were managed and what alternative learning arrangements would be provided to ensure that there was no impact on their learning. The visitors therefore require the programme team to provide evidence of the formal protocols that are in place to obtain informed consent.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence regarding the plans for continued service user and carer involvement within the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors noted that there was limited information provided on service user and carer involvement within the programme. Discussions with the programme team at the visit indicated that the dedicated service users and carers who contribute to the clinical psychology programme will also contribute to this programme in a similar way. However, in discussions with the dedicated service user and carers that are involved in the clinical psychology it was clear that they have not been approached to be involved in this programme. The visitors recognised that the involvement of service users and carers is still at the early stages for this programme and that there is an intention to develop a bank of service users and carers to be involved in the programme in the future. However, the visitors were provided with limited information regarding how this group would be developed, and how service users and carers would be involved in the programme in the future. The visitors were therefore unable to determine from the evidence provided that a plan is in place on how service users will be involved in the programme. In order to determine that this standard is met the visitors require further evidence demonstrating current and future plans for service user and carer involvement in this programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how they maintain a thorough and effective system of approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: The visitors noted the 'Finding a placement' document submitted by the education provider. However, from the documentation submitted by the education provider the visitors were not clear how the education provider effectively monitors practice placements. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors noted that the programme team undertakes informal placement monitoring in the form of an initial meeting with the practice placement educator. However, the visitors were unable find any evidence of overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements used by the programme. As such, the visitors could not determine the criteria used by the programme team to assess a placement and the overall process undertaken to approve it, as well as how activities such as the practice educator and students' feedback will feed back into this. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements, and how they are put into practice, to ensure this standard is met. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used to approve placement providers and settings, the overall process for the approval and ongoing monitoring of placements, and how information gathered from placement providers at approval, or during a placement experience is considered and acted upon. Any such evidence should articulate the process in place and how this supports the review of the quality of a 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 demonstrate how the education provider ensures that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Reason: The visitors noted the 'Finding a placement' document submitted by the education provider. However, from the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers the visitors were unable to find enough evidence to determine how this standard is met. Subsequently the visitors were unclear as to how the programme team checks that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at a practice placement. An adequate number of appropriately qualified staff to supervise students is required to ensure that all students on placement have as consistent experience as practicably possible when trying to achieve the learning outcomes. The visitors therefore require evidence of what the programme team considers an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced members of staff and how the team will check that this is the case on practice placements. This standard is linked to other standards in SET 5.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the education provider ensures practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: The visitors noted the 'Finding a placement' document submitted by the education provider. However, from the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers the visitors were unable to find enough evidence to determine how this standard is met. Subsequently the visitors unclear as to how the programme team checks that practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience. This also affects how the programme continues to meets other standards in SET 3. Practice placement educators should have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that all students on placement have as consistent experience as practicably possible when trying to achieve the learning outcomes. Subsequently the visitors require evidence of what the programme team considers relevant knowledge, skills and experience and how the team will check that educators on practice placements meet these standards.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure practice placement educators undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Reason: The visitors noted the 'Finding a placement' document submitted by the education provider. However, from the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers the visitors were unable to find enough evidence to determine how this standard is met. The visitors were also unclear as to what the programme team considers appropriate practice placement educator training and the monitoring systems in place to check that practice placement educators have had appropriate training. Practice placement educators should have relevant training to ensure that all students on placement have as consistent experience as practicably possible when trying to achieve the learning outcomes. The visitors therefore require evidence of what the programme team considers appropriate practice placement educator training and how the monitoring mechanisms in place to check that educators on practice placements meet this requirement. This is to ensure that the practice placement educators are appropriately trained and that the programme continues to meet this standard.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the education provider ensures practice placement educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers the visitors were unable to find enough evidence to determine how this standard is met. As such they are unclear as to how the programme team checks that practice placement educators are appropriately registered, which also affects how the programme continues to meets other standards in SET 5. Practice placement educators should be appropriately registered to ensure that all students on placement have as consistent experience as practicably possible when trying to achieve the learning outcomes. The visitors therefore require evidence of what the programme team considers an appropriately registered member of staff and how the monitoring mechanisms in place to check that this is the case on practice placements

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence of regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Reason: From the documentation provided and during the programme team and practice placement provider meetings, the visitors were made aware service level agreements with practice providers were informal and based on the nature of their good relationships with the placements providers. The visitors discussed this with the programme team and it was indicated that the programme team are in the process of developing a system to maintain regular and effective collaboration with placement providers. Therefore, the visitors were unable to find evidence from the documentation and discussions to determine how the education provider will ensure they have regular and effective collaboration with the practice placement providers and consequently how this standard is met. The visitors require further evidence to show this standard is met. This standard is linked to other standards in SET 5.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that demonstrates that the assessment strategy and design ensures that those who successfully complete the programme meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs):

- **1a.1 be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession**
    - understand the need to act in the best interests of service users at all times
- **1b.3 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to colleagues, service users, their relatives and careers**
    - understand the need to provide servicer users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions
    - understand the need to use an appropriate interpreter to assist servicer users whose first language is not English, wherever possible
    - recognise that relationships with service users should be based on mutual respect and trust, and be able to maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team, the visitors were unable to determine where in the curriculum the assessment of the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the above standards of proficiency (SOPs). From the standards of proficiency mapping document, the visitors were unable to determine how the above SOPs were being taught and assessed within the curriculum in such a way to ensure those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register. The visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence that demonstrates that the learning outcomes ensure all standards of proficiency, specifically SOPs 1a.1 and 1b.3 are addressed within the curriculum.

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 provide further evidence which makes clear in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of an appropriate professional register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of an appropriate professional register. In order to determine this standard is met, the visitors require further evidence of the HCPC requirements regarding external examiners within the programme documentation.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should inform HCPC once they have moved psychology department into a new school through the HCPC major change process.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this programme has a secure place in the education provider's business plan. As such, they were content that this standard has been met. However, the visitors were informed at the visit that the education provider intent to move the psychology department into a new school of faculty in the near future. The visitors had an opportunity to discuss with the new head of school some of the changes that may occur as a result of this move. The visitors want to remind the education provider that they would need to notify HCPC through the major change once they move to the psychology department to a new school, as this may affect how the programme continues to meet this standard. In this way the HCPC can ensure that the programme continues to have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

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

Condition: The education provider should inform HCPC once they have appointed a Stage 2 convenor for this programme.

Reason: At the visit, the visitors were informed that recruitment for the role of Stage 2 convenor is ongoing, and were provided with a CV for the interim programme leader. The visitors were satisfied with the current arrangements for the interim Stage 2 convenor, and that they are adequately supported in their role and therefore this standard is met. However, the visitors would like to remind the education provider that they would need to notify the HCPC through the major change process once a Stage 2 convenor has been recruited to the programme. In this way, the visitors can be assured that there is a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme, that they are appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, on relevant part of the Register.

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