

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	York St John University
Programme name	MSc Physiotherapy (Pre registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Physiotherapist
Date of visit	25 – 26 September 2012

Contents

Contents.....	1
Executive summary.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Visit details.....	3
Sources of evidence.....	4
Recommended outcome.....	5
Conditions.....	6

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. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 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 4 December 2012. At the Committee meeting on 4 December 2012, 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 of HCPC visitors and profession	Jo Jackson (Physiotherapist) Anthony Power (Physiotherapist)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ruth Wood
HCPC observers	Abdur Razzaq Roy Dunn
Proposed student numbers	30 per cohort once a year
Proposed start date of programme approval	January 2013
Chair	David Maughan Brown (York St John University)
Secretary	Alex Baker (York St John University)
Members of the joint panel	Tina Harness (Internal Panel Member) John Owen (Internal Panel Member) Carolyn Mason (External Panel Member) Judith Lane (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) Nina Patterson (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 the last two years prior to the visit; the programme is a new programme and therefore no past external examiner reports exists.

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"/>
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 approved BHSC (Hons) Physiotherapy programme as the programme seeking approval does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 51 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors did not make any recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

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 further clarifications to demonstrate how the programme team will manage workload commitments over the transitional period between the commencement of the new programme and the phasing out of the existing programme. They must also clarify how they will manage workload commitments in reference to the variable cohort size (ranging from 12 – 30 students).

Reason: Discussion and documentation provided for the visit detailed the education provider has two existing physiotherapy programmes; BHSC (Hons) Physiotherapy In service and BHSC (Hons) Physiotherapy Full time. They are currently closing the BHSC (Hons) Physiotherapy In service programme and are planning to commence this programme once the validation process is complete. The programme team indicated there would be a transitional period whilst the BHSC (Hons) Physiotherapy In service programme 'runs out' and the first year of the MSc Physiotherapy (Pre registration) programme has commenced. This means for a period of time the programme team's workload would be significantly heavier whilst they are working on three programmes with different cohorts at once. The visitors raised this with the education provider and discussion indicated the programme team would not be the sole contributors to the programme, other members of faculty staff would be used also. The visitors also noted through discussions that the cohort size was variable; the number of funded places is set at 12 however the programme is planning to recruit a number of self-funding students meaning a cohort size could vary from 12 to 30. The visitors were pleased to hear the programme team would be supplemented by other faculty staff however were unclear as to the exact commitments the programme team would have with running three programmes. The visitors also considered the undetermined cohort size for this programme means there could be difficulties in managing large or smaller groups of students within the modules. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further clarifications around the workload commitments of the programme team over the transitional period to ensure there is an adequate number of staff in place to deliver the programme effectively. The visitors also require the programme team to provide further clarifications of the plans in place for managing the variable cohort size.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit programme documentation that has been revised to meet the conditions set as a result of this validation event.

Reason: Through discussion at the visit, and from the final conclusions of the internal validation and professional body visiting panel it was clear revisions will be made to programme documentation to meet conditions set by the joint panel. The visitors consider programme documentation that students routinely refer to as important resources to support student learning. In particular, the conditions

set referred to amendments to module descriptors, programme specification document and the student handbook. To ensure the programme meets this standard the visitors need to review the revised documents to ensure the resources to support student learning are effectively used. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to submit the revised programme documentation the students routinely refer to.

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 education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how the programme will ensure that upon successful completion of the programme all students' will meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs);

2b.4 be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and skilfully

- ensure service users are positioned (and if necessary immobilised) for safe and effective interventions
- be able to select and apply safe and effective therapeutic exercise, manual therapy and electrotherapies in order to alleviate symptoms and restore optimum function
- be able to use mobilisation, respiratory physiotherapy, neuro-therapeutic handling and massage techniques

3a.1 know and understand the key concepts of bodies of knowledge which are relevant to their profession-specific practice

- understand the structure and function of the human body, relevant to their practice, together with a knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction
- understand the following aspects of biological science:
 - normal human anatomy and physiology, especially the dynamic relationships of human structure and function and the neuro-muscular, musculo-skeletal, cardio-vascular and respiratory systems
 - patterns of human growth and development across the lifespan
 - factors influencing individual variations in human ability and health status
 - how the application of physiotherapy can cause physiological and structural change
- understand the following aspects of physical science:
 - the principles and theories from physics, biomechanics, applied exercise science and ergonomics that can be applied to physiotherapy
- understand the following aspects of clinical science:
 - pathological changes and related clinical features commonly encountered in physiotherapy practice
 - physiological, structural, behavioural and functional changes that can result from physiotherapy intervention and disease progression

Reason: From the documentation provided for the visit the visitors were unable to determine where in the programme curriculum the above SOPs would be addressed within the learning outcomes. Discussion with the programme team indicated the module descriptors did not overtly refer to specific module content as they adhered to the education providers' guidelines for module descriptors. The visitors highlighted the programme as presented implied the students would need to have prior essential knowledge to be able to progress. The visitors considered the programme content to not cover the core skills and knowledge needed to underpin the students' professional practice. The programme team indicated as discussed the module descriptors did not explicitly describe module content but the core skills and knowledge needed would be incorporated through students' independent learning and supported through tailored tutorial sessions. From this information the visitors were able to see the programme team had more planned for the modules than the module descriptors stated but were unable to determine where the specific SOPs above would be addressed in the programme. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence to demonstrate how the programme will ensure all students will be able to meet the SOPs identified above, upon completion of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate what the students' mandatory induction comprises of and how the programme ensures students are informed about risks and safety issues associated with practice placements and the following standard of proficiency (SOP).

3a.3 understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

- know and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques

Reason: Documentation referenced to evidence this SOP (SOPs mapping document p26) directed visitors to the module descriptors for the Physiotherapy practice module and all Professional practice placements. Discussion with the programme team indicated the module descriptors did not overtly refer to specific module content as they adhered to the education providers' guidelines for module descriptors. The visitors considered this SOP to be important when considering practice placement, as it explicitly refers to appropriate moving and handling techniques which students should be aware of before commencing placement. When discussing this with the programme team they indicated a mandatory induction including this was completed with the students to ensure they could safely work on placement. The visitors did not receive any information about the mandatory induction within the documentation received. In order to ensure the SOP is being addressed appropriately through the programme and to ensure appropriate induction processes, including health and safety issues, are being undertaken before placement, the visitors require the programme team to provide further evidence of the students' mandatory induction.

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 submit the module descriptors that have been revised to meet conditions set as a result of this validation event.

Reason: Through discussion at the visit, and from the final conclusions of the internal validation and professional body visiting panel it was clear revisions will be made to programme documentation to meet conditions set by the joint panel. In particular conditions were set around revising details of assessment within the module descriptors. The visitors need to review the assessment strategy and design as demonstrated through the module descriptors to ensure those who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the register and to ensure this standard is met. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit the module descriptors once they have been revised to meet conditions set as a result of this validation event.

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

Condition: The programme team must clarify the procedures around failing the practice placements and ensure programme documentation clearly articulates the requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: Documentation and further discussion at the visit indicated there was confusion around progression and achievement within the programme. In particular the procedures around failure of a practice placement module were unclear. Due to practice placements 1 and 2 being sequential at the end of year 1 (and to a lesser extent placements 3 and 4 being sequential in block 5 of year 2), the visitors were unable to determine how a failure of a placement would be managed, this included; whether placement 2 could continue if placement 1 was failed; whether the student could progress to year 2 if placement 2 was failed; what would happen to learning outcomes failed at placement 1 or 2; and how the 500 word reflective action plan and report compiled by the student would enhance the process. This information was not included within the student programme handbook or the professional practice handbook where the visitors felt it would be most beneficial for students to understand the processes for progression and achievement. Discussion indicated the programme team had considered some of this already; they were working to look at each instance on a case by case basis as they occur. The visitors feel a case by case basis is appropriate however should be directed by guidelines to ensure the procedures around failing are applied fairly and consistently. The visitors therefore require the programme team to clarify the details mentioned above and ensure programme documentation clearly articulates these requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Jo Jackson
Anthony Power