

Visitors' report

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| Name of education provider | St George's, University of London |
| Programme name | Practice Certificate in Supplementary Prescribing for Health Professions Council (HPC) Members. Level 6 |
| Mode of delivery | Part time |
| Relevant part of HPC Register | Chiropodist / Podiatrist Physiotherapist Radiographer |
| Relevant entitlement(s) | Supplementary prescribing |
| Date of visit | 9 December 2009 |

Contents

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

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 14 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

As well as approving educational programmes for people who want to join the Register, the HPC also approve a small number of programmes for those already on the Register. The post-registration programmes we currently approve are supplementary prescribing programmes (for chiropodists / podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists) and programmes in local anaesthetics and prescription-only medicine (for chiropodists / podiatrists).

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 8 February 2010 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 10 March 2010. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 9 February 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 10 March 2010.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC 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 standard of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) considered their accreditation of the programme. The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and the NMC, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

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|---|--|
| Name of HPC visitors and profession | James Pickard (Podiatrist) Emma Supple (Podiatrist) |
| HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance) | Mandy Hargood |
| HPC observer | Richard Houghton |
| Proposed student numbers | 75 with two intakes per year |
| Proposed start date of programme approval | April 2010 |
| Chair | Peter McCrorie (St George's, University of London) |
| Secretary | Derek Baldwinson (St George's, University of London) |
| Members of the joint panel | Judith Ibison (Internal Panel Member) Alison Hogg (Nursing and Midwifery Council) |

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

| | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Programme specification | <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 type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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 HPC did not review the practice placement handbook prior to the visit as a separate practice placement handbook has not been produced. The information is included in the portfolio documentation.

The HPC did not review the external examiners reports as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new provision for AHP's.

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

| | Yes | No | N/A |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme | <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 HPC met with a student from the nurse prescribing programme, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standard of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

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 54 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining three 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.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must revise the admissions documentation to clarify the supplementary prescribing status permissible within the current legislative framework for chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists.

Reason: The documentation received prior to the visit clearly stated the title Post graduate practice certificate in Independent and/or Supplementary Prescribing (Health Professions Council (HPC)) Members.

At the meeting with the programme team the visitors pointed out that under the current prescribing legislative framework, chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists are only able to supplementary prescribe and not independently prescribe. The visitors felt that this was misleading to potential applicants. The programme team thanked the visitors for pointing this out and said it would remove the reference to independent prescribing in all documentation relating to HPC registrants.

Therefore the visitors considered that for an applicant to make an informed decision to take up a place on the programme they would like to receive revised admissions documentation. This must clearly state the supplementary prescribing status permissible within the current legislative framework for chiropodists/podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists.

2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit all admissions documentation to clarify the academic level for the programme for HPC registrants.

Reason: The documentation received prior to the visit stated that the programme could be studied at level 6 or level 7 in one section, however in the pages specifically related to the HPC registrants it states that the assessments will be marked using level 7 criteria. Therefore the visitors were unclear as to how the applicant selected the academic level of study.

During the meeting with the programme team the visitors discussed that the references to the level of study at either level 6 or level 7 was confusing. The programme team explained that if students wanted to achieve the 60 credits at Masters level the programme would have to be assessed at level 7.

In order for the admissions procedures to be clear for applicants to allow them to make an informed choice to take up a place on the programme, the visitors would

like to receive revised documentation that articulates at what level of study HPC registrants will be taking throughout the duration of the 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 documentation that clearly demonstrates how the education provider maintains a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: During the meeting with the practice placement educators and the programme team, the visitors were informed that designated medical practitioners (DMPs) and the associated placement sites, were monitored for suitability with regards to the quality of education and training and as a safe environment for placement teaching. The process also ensured that the assessment process for the portfolio was equitable for all students. The visit to the DMP or trust site was made by the university staff.

The visitors did not receive any documentation that demonstrated how this process was achieved prior to the visit. In order for the visitors to be assured that the education provider is monitoring and approving placements effectively this documentation should be attached to the final documentation for approval.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation that articulates how and when practice placement educator training for the DMPs takes place.

Reason: At the meeting with the programme team, the team explained that it was difficult to organise training sessions with the DMPs due to their workload. However it was the team's intention to set up a workshop to train the DMPs in all aspects of the programme including assessment to ensure that there was standardisation in the assessment process. There will be an information pack put together to provide to the DMPs, which will be made available if the DMP was unable to attend the workshop. Also where a DMP is unavailable to attend the workshop, a member of staff will visit the DMP and give the workshop on site. By taking this action the education provider stated that all DMPs would receive the appropriate practice placement educator training.

The visitors did not receive any documentation regarding how the DMPs were trained prior to the visit. Therefore in order for the visitors to be assured that training for DMPs takes place, they would like to receive documentation that articulates how and when the training that will be provided, and the strategy that will be put into place to train a DMP who is unable to attend the training workshop.

James Pickard
Emma Supple