Health Professions Council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Birmingham
Name and titles of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of delivery (FT/PT)	Full time / flexible
Date of visit	15th and 16th May 2007
Proposed date of approval to commence	September 2007
Name of HPC visitors attending (including member type and professional area)	Nicola Smith (Physiotherapist, clinician/educationalist) Kathleen Bosworth (Physiotherapist, clinician)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Tracey Samuel-Smith
Joint panel members in attendance (name and delegation):	Anne Ruston – Chair Chris Whiteley – Secretary Nina Thompson – Education Officer, CSP Alison Chambers – Visitor, CSP (15th May) Nesta Hartley – Visitor, CSP (16th May)

Scope of visit *(please tick)*

New programme	☐
Major change to existing programme	☒
Visit initiated through Annual Monitoring	☐

Confirmation of meetings held

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior personnel of provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators	☒	☐	☐
Students (current or past as appropriate)	☒	☐	☐

Confirmation of facilities inspected

	Yes	No	N/A
Library learning centre	☒	☐	☐
IT facilities	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation	☒	☐	☐

Confirmation that particular requirements/specific instructions (if any) of the Education and Training Committee that have been explored e.g. specific aspects arising from annual monitoring reports.

Requirement (please insert detail)	Yes	No	N/A
1	☐	☐	☒
2	☐	☐	☒
3	☐	☐	☒

Proposed student cohort intake number please state	Approx 76

PROGRAMME APPROVED: ALL CONDITIONS MET

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The following summarises the key outcomes of the approval event and provides reasons for the decision.

CONDITIONS

SET 2 *Programme admissions*

The admission procedures must:

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

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit advertising materials for the programme to ensure the entry criteria provides clear information for students wishing to apply for the programme.

Reason: Currently the website and university prospectus include a pre-requisite for entry of 'some physiotherapy/health care experience'. It was clear from discussions with the programme team that this terminology is explained to students who attend an open day or interview. However, the Visitors felt that this must be clarified for those students who only review the website and/or prospectus prior to applying for the programme.

and

Condition: The programme team must review, and where necessary, redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clarify the relationship between holding the qualification and access to the HPC Register.

Reason: Currently the programme documentation states that students 'are eligible to register with ... the Health Professions Council on graduation'. Examples of this can be found in the university prospectus and on the website. These must be updated to explain that upon graduation students are eligible to apply for registration with the HPC.

SET 3. *Programme management and resource standards*

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The programme team must meet the conditions stated below under Standard of Education and Training 5: Practice Placement standards.

Reason: To provide the Visitors with further explanation and clarification about the management of the programme and how the programme team meets the Practice Placement standards, the conditions against the listed SETs must be met;
- 5.2, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.6, 5.8.1 and 5.13
- 5.5 and 5.7.2
- 5.7.1, 5.7.4, 5.8.3 and 6.5.

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The programme team must implement and submit appropriate protocols for gaining student consent across all areas in which students participate as patients or clients.

Reason: Currently there are verbal protocols for gaining student consent for acupuncture and grade 5 procedures. To ensure students are fully aware of the expectations of the

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programme, the Visitors felt that these protocols must be expanded to cover all areas of practical or clinical teaching.

3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme handbook to clearly state which modules or elements of the programme call for mandatory attendance and the consequences of missing compulsory teaching.

Reason: Currently the programme handbook states that 'some elements of the programme are so essential that student attendance is considered mandatory' and that 'non-attendance of such mandatory elements may lead to a delay in practice placements'. The Visitors felt that this information must be revised to clearly communicate the requirements and policies to students.

SET 5. *Practice placements standards*

5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide for safe and effective practice.

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

Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators:
5.8.1 must have relevant qualification and experience;

5.13 The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The programme team must implement and submit policies and processes for approving, and systems for ongoing monitoring, of placements. These must show how the university ensures the placement is a safe environment, a safe and effective practice, there is adequate and appropriately qualified staff and that the placement implements and monitors equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies. These must be applicable for both NHS and private placements.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team it was noted that new placements are required to complete a Physiotherapy Placement Quality Review document. However, the Visitors were unclear about the policies and processes that surround initial approval and about the systems in place for monitoring placements on an on-going basis. To ensure that students have a safe and appropriate placement experience this information must be provided.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:
5.7.2 timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;

Condition: The programme team must draft and submit contingency plans to ensure that should a short fall in the number of clinical placements occur during the course of the programme, students can be assured of continuing opportunities to meet their learning outcomes.

Reason: During the 2006/7 programme, twenty year 1 students experienced difficulties when they were told, before Easter, that their forthcoming placement was no longer available. It is recognised that this was a highly unusual situation; however the Visitors felt that the programme team must have clear processes in place to respond to a situation like this, should it happen in the future.

Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:
5.7.1 the learning outcomes to be achieved;

5.7.4 the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure;

Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators:
5.8.3 must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The programme team must submit policies and processes which ensure that all new placement educators attend a university led training day and that experienced educators attend regular university led refresher training.

Reason: From the discussions with the placement educators, students and programme team, the Visitors noted that the level of training about the learning outcomes and assessment processes was not consistent across all placement educators. In order for students to receive similar levels of feedback and assessment, the Visitors felt it was necessary for all placement educators to undertake similar levels of training.

Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:
5.7.3 expectations of professional conduct;

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the placement handbook to include reference to HPC's Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.

Reason: Currently the placement handbook refers students to the university and professional body standards for conduct, performance and ethics. The Visitors felt that more direction to the HPC Standards is required to ensure students are aware of the thresholds they are expected to meet whilst in education and when registered.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the placement handbook to remove the reference to a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised placement practice to qualify for registration with the HPC.

Reason: The HPC does not stipulate a minimum number of hours for registration and as such, the placement handbook is currently misleading.

Deadline for conditions to be met: 29th June 2007
Expected date visitors' report submitted to Panel for approval: 2nd August 2007
Expected date programme submitted to Panel for approval: 2nd August 2007

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RECOMMENDATIONS

SET 2 *Programme admissions*

The admission procedures must:

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

Recommendation: It is recommended that if there is further development of the option modules, the programme team should update the programme documentation and forward the module descriptors to the HPC for review.

Reason: It is clear from the visit, that the programme enables students to meet HPC's Standards of Proficiency for Physiotherapy. However, there is currently uncertainty regarding the number and content of option modules and to provide students with full information prior to registration, the Visitors have recommended that if there is further development of the option modules, the programme documentation is updated and forwarded to the HPC for review.

SET 3. *Programme management and resource standards*

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

Recommendation: The programme team should consider incorporating the reading lists in the module descriptors in the programme handbook.

Reason: From the review of WebCT, it was evident that there are comprehensive reading lists, linked to library status, for each of the modules. However, the Visitors felt that to provide students with a further source of information, the reading lists should be added to the module descriptors.

and

Recommendation: The programme team should consider incorporating journal references in the WebCT facility and in the module descriptors within the programme handbook.

Reason: While the WebCT facility provides a comprehensive reading list, the Visitors felt that this could be enhanced by including a list of journals, both on the WebCT facility and in the programme handbook.

SET 4. *Curriculum Standards*

4.5 The delivery of the programme must assist autonomous and reflective thinking, and evidence based practice.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider redrafting and resubmitting the module descriptor for Practice Placement 6 to provide further information about the portfolio and associated reflective thinking requirements.

Reason: It was clear from discussions with the programme team that the portfolio requirement in year 3 is an important area for reflective thinking. The Visitors felt that this importance was not articulated within the programme documentation and should be updated to reflect this.

4.7 Where there is inter-professional learning the profession specific skills and knowledge of each professional group are adequately addressed.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider redrafting and resubmitting the module descriptor for Developing as a Health Professional to inform students, in the learning outcomes and indicative content, that they will address HPC's Standards of Proficiency 1a.1 and 2b.5.

Reason: It is clear from discussions with the programme team that students are taught and assessed on what is required of them by the HPC (SoP 1a.1) and their ability to maintain records appropriately (SoP 2b.5) in this shared module. However, to provide students with clear information, the Visitors felt that this descriptor should be revised.

COMMENDATIONS

▪ The visitors wish to commend the programme team for the blended approach to running the full time and flexible route side by side.

The nature and quality of instruction and facilities meets the standards of education and training.

We recommend to the Education and Training Committee of the HPC that they approve this programme, subject to any conditions being met.

Visitors' signatures:

   xxx: K Bosworth

   yyy:

Date: