

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Brighton
Programme name	MSc Podiatry (pre-registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time accelerated
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Chiropodist / podiatrist
Date of visit	8 – 9 March 2017

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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 'chiroprapist' or 'podiatrist' 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 25 May 2017. At the Committee meeting on 6 July 2017, 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 reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the BSc Podiatry. The education provider and the professional body participated in separate scrutiny of both programmes; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on the MSc Podiatry only. A separate report exists for the BSc Podiatry. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Wendy Smith (Chiropodist / podiatrist) Diane Whitlock (Lay visitor) Sharon Wiener-Ogilvie (Chiropodist / podiatrist)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Niall Gooch
HCPC observer	Adam Bird (Australia and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council) Rachel Portelli (Australia and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council)
Proposed student numbers	15 per cohort, 1 cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2017
Chair	Phil Mandy (University of Brighton)
Secretary	Rachel Quinn (University of Brighton)

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 as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

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"/>
Service users and carers	<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 BSc Podiatry 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 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 50 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining eight 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 two 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

2.1 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: Prior to the start of the application process, the education provider must ensure that appropriate information about the programme is provided to potential applicants, allowing them to make an informed decision about taking up a place on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted from the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team that information about what was required of applicants before they could take up a place on the programme, such as passing an enhanced DBS check and an occupational health check, was only communicated in materials available at selection days or in the handbook given to students when they started the programme. The visitors considered that, from the evidence provided, the timing of the provision of the information could impact on the ability of applicants to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme. They noted that a number of the applicants were potentially disrupting existing careers to apply to the programme, and so may require the information as soon as possible to be able to limit their uncertainty about the requirements of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence as to what information is provided to applicants and at what points in the application process this information would be provided. In this way the visitors will be able to determine how the education provider ensures that applicants have all the information they require in order to make informed decisions about taking up a place on the programme.

2.5 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and / or professional entry standards.

Condition: Prior to the start of the application process, the education provider must ensure that potential applicants have access to appropriate information about what kind of previous study will be considered relevant in the application process.

Reason: From discussion with the programme team and senior team, the visitors noted that the education provider expects a proportion of the MSc students and applicants to be mature students or career changers. There is a relatively high number of such students on the existing BSc. The visitors considered it likely that these students will come from a variety of educational backgrounds. However, they could not see evidence that the materials designed for applicants and potential applicants made it clear what kind of recent relevant academic experience would be acceptable for the MSc. The visitors considered that, from the evidence provided, the timing of the provision of the information could impact on the ability of applicants to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme. They noted that a number of the applicants were potentially disrupting existing careers to apply to the programme, and so may require the information as soon as possible to be able to limit their uncertainty about the requirements of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence as to what information is provided to applicants and at what points in the application process this information would be provided. In this way the visitors will be able to determine how the education provider ensures that applicants have all the

information they require in order to make informed decisions about taking up a place on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how service users and carers will be involved in the programme, why this involvement is appropriate and how service users and carers will be able to feed back to the programme team about their experience with students.

Reason: The visitors were able to talk to service users and carers about their involvement with students on the BSc, and found that all students had frequent interaction with service users and carers in clinical work throughout the programme. The visitors were made aware that this interaction with service users and carers was at the Leaf Hospital, the podiatry clinic that is run by the programme and where students treat service users and carers, gaining practical experience in a placement setting. The visitors also learned from discussion with service users and carers that they had some involvement with objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs). However, the visitors could not see in the evidence provided any records of this involvement, any records of feedback provided, or any formal mechanisms for feedback about students or the programme, from service users and carers to the programme team.

Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of how service users and carers will be involved specifically in the MSc programme, particularly in regard to how feedback from service users and carers will be incorporated. This evidence should detail how service users and carers will be involved in the MSc, why this involvement is appropriate for this level and type of programme, why the service users and carers involved are appropriate for the programme, and what support mechanisms the education provider has to support this involvement. In this way the visitors can determine how the programme can meet this standard.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that demonstrates clearly which practice placements are linked to which theoretical modules and which learning outcomes.

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors were able to view evidence about placement structure and at the visit they were able to have discussions with placement providers. However, in their reading of the documentation provided, and in their discussions with practice placement providers, they were not always clear as to which modules and were linked to which learning outcomes. This was particularly the case for Pre-registration Clinical Practice 4 as they did not have a module descriptor. The visitors were therefore unclear as to how students and practice placement educators were clear about what learning outcomes need to be met at which placements and how these learning outcomes were to be achieved. In order to provide as much clarity as possible for students, staff and placement educators, the visitors therefore require further evidence as to which practice placements are linked to which modules and learning outcomes. In this way the visitors will be able to see exactly how

the practice placements support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

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 that a process is in place for ensuring that enough placement practice educators are available, and that they are appropriately qualified and experienced.

Reason: The visitors were able to have extensive discussions about the practice placements with the programme team and practice placement educators. The visitors noted that there were clearly good working relationships between individuals on the programme team and those responsible for practice placements, and that there were enough placements for the students with appropriately qualified and experienced staff. However, the visitors were not able to see evidence of agreements between the programme team and the placement providers being formalised in writing, which would help to ensure continuity and stability of approval and monitoring in the event of personnel changes on the programme team or at the placement locations. They therefore require the education provider to provide evidence of the process for monitoring of placement staff's qualifications and experience being set down in writing.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all practice placement educators have a clear understanding before placements start of what is expected of them regarding assessment of students at MSc level.

Reason: The visitors were able to discuss practice placements with the placement educators and the programme team, and they considered that the practice placement educators were very clear in their understanding of how to assess BSc students and so ensure appropriate progression and achievement for those students. However, the visitors were not able to see that the practice placement educators were as clear on the different approaches to assessment that might be required for students on an MSc. For example the programme team said in discussions that students coming starting the MSc were more likely than students starting the BSc to already have some relevant skills. As such the visitors were unclear, from the evidence provided, as to how the practice placement educators are being fully prepared to assess students on this programme. Therefore they require the education provider to provide evidence showing what procedures are in place to ensure that practice placement educators are prepared for the methods of assessment that the programme team have judged to be appropriate for this level of study. In this way the visitors will be able to see that placement educators are fully prepared to assess MSc students.

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 ensure that the methods of assessment used are appropriate to measuring the learning outcomes of particular modules, and that they ensure that students are able to demonstrate that they have met the standards of proficiency for chiropodists / podiatrists.

Reason: The visitors were able to discuss assessment methods with the programme team and review the relevant parts of the documentation. They noted that, in some modules, the learning outcomes for the programme were only assessed by one method, for example 'Health Psychology and Professional Practice', 'Musculoskeletal disorders of the foot and lower limb' and 'Research Design and Ethics'. The visitors were therefore unclear as to how students could be adequately assessed as having met all of the relevant learning outcomes when only one assessment method is utilised. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how the assessment methods employed ensure that all students can meet the relevant learning outcomes and therefore can meet all of the relevant standards of proficiency.

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

Condition: The education provider must review categorisation of mandatory and compulsory modules in order to provide clarity for students, and ensure that the categorisation is correctly aligned to the level of the module.

Reason: The visitors were able to review assessment regulations, and discuss assessment with students and the programme team. The programme team and the students seemed clear in their understanding of the difference between 'mandatory' and 'compulsory' modules. However, the visitors were not able to see that there always clarity about the meaning of 'mandatory' and 'compulsory' modules in the programme documentation. They considered that this ambiguity might make it harder for students to understand progression and achievement within the programme. They therefore require that an explanation of the difference be included in all module descriptors. In this way the visitors will be able to see that all students can understand the requirements for achievement and progression.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify the level at which the module "NHS Placement 2 (pre-registration)" is intended to be situated.

Reason: From viewing the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team, the visitors were not clear at which level the planned "NHS Placement 2 (pre-registration)" module was intended to run. The module stretches over two years and the visitors were not able to see how it could be ensured that all students or staff would be able to understand the progression points between Years 1 and 2, or about how the decision about progression was made, or what happened if a student failed Year 1.

The visitors therefore require the education provider to amend assessment regulations and related programme documentation in order to clearly explain how progression and achievement within the module worked. In this way the visitors will be able to see that there is clarity for both staff and students about progressions and achievement on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must review documents mapping the programme's learning outcomes to the standards of proficiency for chiropodists / podiatrists, to ensure that students can accurately monitor their own progress.

Reason: The visitors were able to review documents mapping the learning outcomes of modules to the standards of proficiency for chiropodists / podiatrists, and to discuss these learning outcomes and modules with the programme team. For some of the module descriptors, for example 'Dermatology' and 'Local Anaesthetic and Surgery', the visitors were not clear how the learning outcomes were aligned to the standards of proficiency for chiropodists / podiatrists. They considered that students may encounter difficulties in understanding what was required for progression and achievement within the programme. The visitors therefore require that module descriptors state clearly which learning outcomes are being assessed. In this way the visitors will be able to see how students are enabled to understand requirements for progression and achievement.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the wording of the module description for the module 'Musculoskeletal disorders of the foot and lower limb'.

Reason: In the evidence provided the visitors saw the module descriptors and were satisfied that the standard was met. However, in this module mentioned above they considered that the brief description of module content did not fully describe the areas that students would study on this part of the programme. They therefore suggest that the document be reviewed to ensure that it will give students a clearer indication of module content, and so will support student learning as effectively as possible.

5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the practice placement plan to ensure that it provides maximum clarity and uses correct terminology.

Reason: In the evidence provided the visitors saw the documentation that related to the practice placements and how placements are due to be undertaken throughout this programme. The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met. However, they were unclear about the detail of the placement plan in places, for example it was sometimes difficult to see how long placements lasted, or what module they were connected to. They therefore suggest that the document be reviewed for clarity – and use up-to-date references, for example, replacing references to 'HPC' with 'HCPC'.

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