

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Plymouth
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Podiatry
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Chiropodists & Podiatrists
<b>Date of visit</b>	8-10 April 2008

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## 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 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Chiropodist' and 'Podiatrist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health 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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 3 July 2008. At the Committee meeting on 25 March 2009, the education provider's response to the conditions was considered and the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. The Committee's decision to reconfirm ongoing approval varied from the visitors' recommendation. This means that the education provider has met the conditions outlined in this report and that the programme continues to meet our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensure that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme retains its open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

## Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - the curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that 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 following programmes – BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy and BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy. 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 all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

## Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Penny Renwick (Podiatrist) Gordon Burrow (Podiatrist)
HPC executive officers (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
Proposed student numbers	45
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2008
Chair	Dr Colin Wilkins (University of Plymouth)
Secretary	Lisa Lamb (University of Plymouth)
Members of the joint panel	Maureen O'Donnell (Society of Chiropodists & Podiatrists) Dr Colin Wilkins (Internal panel member, University of Plymouth)

## 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Re-approval Document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing 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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 40 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 23 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing 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 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 is recommended for ongoing 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 admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make, or take up a place on a programme.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to outline the process whereby an applicant demonstrates that they have sufficient information about the profession and the programme requirements during the selection process.

**Reason:** In discussions with the programme team it became clear that to ensure that candidates were fully prepared for the programme that they looked for candidates to demonstrate that they had experience in or had researched the profession. The visitors would like to see the programme documentation reflecting this policy.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide assurance of how effective clinical education will be delivered in this programme.

**Reason:** At the visit there was an indication that there may be changes to the way that clinical learning and teaching is carried out in the programme. In discussions the extent and full nature of these changes were not clear, but they are likely to impact on the management for and the resources available to the programme. In particular, if there may be an increase in clinical education being delivered at placement environments new to Plymouth, this will carry a burden for placement management, co-ordination and quality assurance. The visitors felt that they require full details of how clinical education will be delivered in this programme. Where there are changes to the delivery of clinical education the visitors will require assurance of the quality and equity of student experience and assessment, and sufficient resources including the number of placements. This issue impacts on a number of different areas covered separately in conditions under SETs 5 and 6.

### **3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to update the recommended reading lists across all module descriptors to ensure currency.

**Reason:** In the programme documentation the visitors noted that the reading lists in some of the current module descriptors contained texts that were not the most recent editions and feel that these should be updated to reflect the range of texts used on the programme.

**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 redraft and resubmit the standards of proficiency mapping to ensure that the unit descriptors set out precisely where the HPC standards of proficiency are met. The module descriptors and all learning outcomes for the programme should clearly demonstrate how all of the standards of proficiency are addressed.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted by the programme team the unit descriptors have minimal content which does not show where the HPC standards of proficiency are being met. Therefore the visitors felt that there currently was not enough evidence 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 redraft and resubmit the unit descriptors to clearly identify, within the learning outcomes, where students will meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to use a systematic approach to formulate and test a preferred diagnosis, including being able to prescribe foot orthoses.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided to the visitors there was no indication that the students would demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4. The visitors felt that the documentation needs to make explicit the requirement for taking a cast of a patients' foot to ensure that this standard is being 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 redraft and resubmit the standards of proficiency mapping to clarify which standards of proficiency will be met at each of the step off levels on the programme.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team the standards of proficiency mapping suggests that all of the standards have been met at the level 2 step off point of the programme (Assistant Practitioner). In discussion with the programme team this was shown to be inaccurate therefore the visitors require the mapping to be redrafted and resubmitted, ensuring that the unit descriptors set out precisely where the HPC standards of proficiency are met, to clarify this matter.

**5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to explain the reasons for the current placement structure of the programme.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to explain the rationale behind the programme placement structure. The visitors wished to receive further evidence demonstrating why the clinical model being used was chosen and giving further information on the balance between the current use of skills laboratories, Mount Gould clinic and placements and how this best enables students to meet the necessary learning outcomes.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly set out how the adequacy of the number of placement staff and their experience and qualifications is assured.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there were adequate numbers of placement staff and that their experience and qualifications were suitable to provide support to students in their learning in a safe practice environment. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

### **5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the policies and processes for initial approval of placements and the systems for ongoing monitoring and assessment of placements, which should include the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

**Reason:** During discussions with the placement providers the visitors received information that suggested that clinical audits on the placements were not carried out except at initial approval. On discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the programme team had intended to move forward to a system of visits and meetings with the placements but that this plan had suffered due to previous staff shortages that have now been resolved. The visitors wish to receive the clinical audit policy to ensure that as new placements are identified that these are audited before students participate in placement, and information on the annual monitoring process that the programme team are undertaking to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

### **5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the policies and processes for initial approval of placements and the systems for ongoing monitoring and assessment of placements, which should include the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

**Reason:** During discussions with the placement providers the visitors received information that suggested that clinical audits on the placements were not carried out except at initial approval. On discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the programme team had intended to move forward to a system of visits and meetings with the placements but that this plan had suffered due to



staff shortages that have now been resolved. The visitors wish to receive the clinical audit policy to ensure that as new placements are identified that these are audited before students participate in placement, and information on the annual monitoring process that the programme team are undertaking to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

**5.4 Learning, teaching and supervision must be designed to encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly set out the number of placements available to the students and the range of opportunities within them.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there were adequate numbers of placements, and that students can gain access to a range of learning experiences in these practice environments. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the policies and processes for initial approval of placements and the systems for ongoing monitoring and assessment of placements, which should include the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

**Reason:** During discussions with the placement providers the visitors received information that suggested that clinical audits on the placements were not carried out except at initial approval. On discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the programme team had intended to move forward to a system of visits and meetings with the placements but that this plan had suffered due to staff shortages that have now been resolved. The visitors wish to receive the clinical audit policy and information on the annual monitoring process that the programme team are undertaking to demonstrate that this standard is being met.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient information on the learning outcomes to be achieved at the practice placement.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that students are provided with adequate information in relation to learning outcomes. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient information relating to the practice placements.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that students are provided with adequate information regarding the practice placements. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students and practice placements are provided with sufficient information relating to the expectations of professional conduct of students at practice placements.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that both students and practice placements are provided with adequate information regarding professional conduct. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

**5.7.4 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient information relating to the assessments and failure process on practice placements.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that students are provided with adequate information regarding assessments and failure on the practice placements. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

**5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the communication and lines of responsibility.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that students and practice placements are provided with sufficient information relating to the communication of information and lines of responsibility at practice placements.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that both students and practice placements are provided with adequate information regarding lines of responsibility and communication of information. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

**5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly set out how the education provider assures itself that placement staff have relevant experience and qualifications.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there were adequate numbers of placement staff and that their experience and qualifications were suitable to provide support to students in their learning in a safe practice environment. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit programme documentation to provide evidence of the educator training for practice placement educators. This should include the content and details of the initial training undertaken by placement educators and the ongoing updates that these placement educators receive in relation to the programme.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the training that new practice placement educators received and any follow up refresher training given. The visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

**5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the current partnership arrangements they have with practice placement educators.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the arrangements in place between the programme team and placement providers. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

#### **5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to demonstrate that service colleagues have input into the development of the programme, and to provide evidence of the communication strategy between the programme team and placement providers and the feedback mechanisms utilised between both parties.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that named service colleagues participate in developing the programme and it was felt that the communication between the programme team and practice placements could be strengthened. The visitors therefore require further evidence (possible documentation to evidence this to could be the minutes of recent development meetings) to ensure this standard has been met, and that effective systems are in place to monitor the placement environment and for the placement providers to feedback into the development and improvement of the programme.

#### **6.1 The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

#### **6.2 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be

prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

**6.3 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the standards of proficiency mapping to ensure that the unit descriptors set out precisely where the HPC standards of proficiency are met. The module descriptors and all learning outcomes for the programme should clearly demonstrate how all of the standards of proficiency are addressed.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted by the programme team the unit descriptors have minimal content which does not show where the HPC standards of proficiency are being met. Therefore the visitors felt that there currently was not enough evidence to ensure that this standard is met.

**6.3 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the unit descriptors to clearly identify, within the learning outcomes, where students will meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to use a systematic approach to formulate and test a preferred diagnosis, including being able to prescribe foot orthoses.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided to the visitors there was no indication that the students would demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to meet HPC standard of proficiency 2b.4. The visitors felt that the documentation needs to make explicit the requirement for taking a cast of a patients' foot to ensure that this standard is being met.

**6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.**

**Condition:** The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to provide updated documents containing details of the formative and summative assessments carried out in the practical environment.

**Reason:** In the documentation provided by the programme team there was insufficient evidence to reflect that formative and summative assessments carried out in practical environments would demonstrate that students would be prepared for entry into their profession on completion of the programme. In light of the continuing development of the programme the visitors wished to receive further evidence to ensure that this standard is being met.

## Recommendations

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

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider increasing the regularity of obtaining consent from students on the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that a protocol for obtaining consent was in place at the start of the programme. However, the visitors recommended that consent should be obtained at the commencement of each year to ensure that students gave consent based on more current information.

### **3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.**

**Recommendation:** The visitors wished to recommend that the programme team continue to update and improve the resources on campus and in trusts.

**Reason:** The visitors observed on the tour of facilities that, at the time, there was a narrow range of texts, a number of out of date editions and a limited number of copies of texts available in the library. In discussion with the programme team it was apparent that the resources were being updated, the use of e-books was being developed and that the budget was available for these improvements. The visitors wished to support the continuation of this work in order to aid the student experience.

### **4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.**

**Recommendation:** The visitors wished to recommend the removal of an out of date letter from the programme documentation in order to prevent confusion amongst students on the programme.

**Reason:** The programme handbook appendices supplied by the programme team contains a Chiropodists Board letter. The visitors wished to advise the programme team to remove this item as a reference, as it uses terms and references organisations that are out-dated, and this could be confusing to students on the programme.

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

**Recommendation:** The visitors wished to recommend that, at a local level, the programme team engages podiatry clinicians in order to enhance partnership working in a developmental area of widening the range of placement environments available to enhance the student experience.

**Reason:** In discussion with the programme team it was apparent that they planned to continue the work already carried out in expanding the range of placement environments available to the students. The visitors wished to support the work of developing different placement environments and encourage that the programme team engage with local clinicians in order to achieve this target.

Penny Renwick  
Gordon Burrow