

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Southampton
Programme name	Doctorate in Educational Psychology
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Educational psychologist
Date of visit	16 – 17 June 2011

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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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Practitioner psychologist' or 'Educational psychologist' 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 25 August 2011. At the Committee meeting on 25 August 2011, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. 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 HPC visited the programme at the education provider as the Practitioner psychologist profession came onto the register in 2009 and a decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing programmes from this profession. 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 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Peter Branston (Educational psychologist) Trevor Holme (Educational psychologist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	12
First approved intake	1 January 2005
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2011
Chair	Peter Smith (University of Southampton)
Secretary	Sean Withall (University of Southampton)
Members of the joint panel	Graham Pratt (British Psychological Society) Julie Hardy (British Psychological Society) Frances Lee (British Psychological Society) Dilanthi Weerasinghe (British Psychological Society)

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"/>

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"/>

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 55 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 2 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 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 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 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 provide clearly articulated documentation that will allow a potential applicant to make an informed choice as to whether to take up a place on the programme.

Reason: In the documentation provided before the visit, the visitors could not see where it was clearly documented that trainees were required by the education provider to maintain their own health throughout the programme and how the trainee would report any change to their health status to the programme team.

The visitors considered that this was an important element for a potential applicant to consider when applying to the programme in terms of the psychological status of an applicant.

In the meeting with the trainees, the visitors discussed the issue of maintaining their own health and well-being for the duration of the programme. It was clear that the trainees had received a copy of HPC's guidance on conduct and ethics for students and knew that the education provider expected them to tell the programme team if their health status changed in any way.

The programme team confirmed that health issues were discussed with potential applicants during the interview process and the applicants were advised to consider the maintenance for their health and well-being throughout the duration of the programme.

Whilst the visitors were happy that trainees were made aware of maintaining their health and well-being throughout the duration of the programme, they considered that it was not clearly articulated in the admissions documentation for the programme. Therefore the visitors want to receive revised documentation that clearly identifies the health and well-being requirements for the programme, to allow a potential applicant to make an informed choice as to whether to take up a place on the programme and for the education provider to offer a place on the programme regarding compliance with any health requirements.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that an appropriate protocol is in place to gain trainee consent where they may participate as service users.

Reason: In the documentation received prior to the visit the protocol was listed as proposed.

In the meeting with the trainees, the visitors asked if they had signed any form giving their consent to participate as a service user at any point whilst on the

programme. The students reported that they had not signed any form but they had been asked to give verbal affirmation that they were happy to participate in role play activity. The programme team and students, in their respective meetings, considered that by signing up to the programme trainees were consenting to participate in activities in the role of service users. They considered that the seeking of consent was implicit and that the ethos was there. The visitors learned that although there were discussions and awareness of the issue, there was no protocol in place to gain the informed consent of trainees to participate as service users.

The visitors were not satisfied the programme gained informed consent from trainees. Therefore the visitors require clarification of how trainees give their informed consent for participation and manage potential emotional distress, and how the proposed protocol is to be implemented to meet this standard.

Peter Branston
Trevor Holme