![hpc health professions council logo]

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Glasgow
Programme name	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Practitioner psychologist
Relevant modality / domain	Clinical psychologist
Date of visit	19 – 20 June 2012

Contents

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 'Clinical 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 4 December 2012. At the Committee meeting on 4 December 2012, 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 July 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 professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Ruth Baker (Clinical psychologist) Stephen Fisher (Occupational psychologist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	David Christopher
Proposed student numbers	23 per cohort once a year
First approved intake	January 1995
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2012
Chair	Massimo Pignatelli (University of Glasgow)
Secretary	Laura Baggley (19 June 2012) (University of Glasgow) Lindsey Coulter (20 June 2012) (University of Glasgow)
Members of the joint panel	Mark Forshaw (British Psychological Society) Geraldine Kavanagh (British Psychological Society) Margo Onanaiye (British Psychological Society) Mary O'Reilly (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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☐	☐	☒
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐
Joint HPC approval and British Psychological Society accreditation event appendices	☒	☐	☐

The HPC did not review a practice placement handbook as a separate practice placement handbook has not been produced. Information relating to placements is included in the programme handbook.

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

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 54 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 3 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.

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 advertising materials for the programme, including the website, to ensure applicants are provided with clear information about the aligned training pathways and the implications of choosing to follow one of these pathways.

Reason: The programme documentation submitted by the education provider included information about aligned training pathways. These are defined pathways designed to provide students with increasing experience within a defined clinical population, for example older adults, children and child and adolescent mental health. The pathways are intended to meet workforce needs in priority areas. The programme team have designed the programme and the practice placements to ensure that the learning outcomes encompass all the standards of proficiency as well as give students experience within a defined clinical population. Applicants are invited to agree to follow one of these pathways during the application process. However, in discussions with students, it was clear that applicants did always not fully understand the aligned pathways or the implications of choosing to follow such a pathway. The visitors noted in discussions with the programme team that, although students were informed about the aligned pathways through correspondence and in discussions during the admissions procedures, information about the aligned pathways was not included on the programme's website. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revise advertising materials for the programme, including the website, to include information about aligned pathways and the implications of choosing to follow such a pathway, so that applicants have all the information they need in order to make informed choices about the aligned pathways.

6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about how it monitors the processes for providing feedback to students on assessments to ensure that feedback is timely, consistent and sufficiently detailed to inform their learning and performance.

Reason: The visitors noted the documentation provided (Annual Monitoring Report Session 2010-11) included reference to student concerns about the time taken to mark and return work submitted for summative assessment. The education provider attempts to turn around marking within 6-8 weeks. Concerns were raised in discussion with students, particularly amongst Year 1 students, about the length of time that it took for marks to be returned and how the level of detail provided was not always sufficient to help a student understand how performance could be improved. In addition, in some cases, where work had

been double marked, students received inconsistent feedback from markers, which was confusing and unhelpful.

In discussion with the programme team a number of factors were highlighted that impacted upon the delivery of feedback to students. The programme team sought to take account of students' wishes and, in some instances, had delayed feedback on assessments so that it could be delivered to the entire cohort at an agreed time. There were also conflicting priorities and, on occasion, priority had been given to conducting final year viva voce examinations over marking assessments for other years. However, the programme team sought to keep students informed of any delays in returning assessed work. In regards to consistency of marking there were objective marking criteria and standards were moderated by the external examiner. The examinations officer sought to ensure consistency of feedback and detail within assessments, and pointed out that students could ask to review marked work and discuss it with markers if they were unclear about how improvements could be achieved. Nevertheless, despite the steps outlined by the education provider, the visitors remained uncertain whether the education provider had a strategy in place for monitoring feedback on assessments that would identify and address the concerns raised by students. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further information about how it monitors the processes for providing feedback to students to make sure that students receive assessment feedback, which is timely, sufficiently detailed and consistent, to ensure that this standard is met.

6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revise programme documentation to clearly state the requirement for at least one external examiner for the programme to be from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the criteria for the appointment of external examiners for the programme. The education provider provided evidence that the current external examiner is registered with the HPC. The visitors were therefore satisfied that there is a system of external examiners in place and were content with the current external examiner for the programme. However, in order to be assured this standard is met visitors need to see the programme documentation refer to the requirement that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider consider revising programme documentation relating to the aligned training pathways to make clear that any reference to four or five year training plans relates to students following such pathways provided by another education provider involved in this initiative.

Reason: The visitors noted programme documentation submitted prior to the visit included reference to four or five year training plans for students following some of the aligned training pathways. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors noted the aligned pathways were part of a nationwide initiative and references to four and five year training plans were not relevant to this programme, but referred to a programme offered by another education provider involved in the initiative. To avoid any confusion for the students, the visitors suggest it would be helpful if the documentation was revised to make it clear that the four to five year training plans referred to were not applicable to them.

3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider continue to develop and augment IT facilities to support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme for all students.

Reason: The visitors noted that students undertaking the programme with NHS Highlands were unable to attend all taught sessions and, consequently, a number of sessions were run via video conference. The practice placement providers and educators whom the visitors met confirmed that they had experience of this system. However, although discussions with the programme team revealed that the system worked well generally, the education provider was aware of its limitations and was in the process of tendering for a more robust solution for the next academic year. The visitors welcomed this information and wished to encourage the education provider in its efforts to ensure that the IT facilities support the required teaching activities of the programme for all students.

Ruth Baker
Stephen Fisher