

## HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Southampton
Name of programme(s)	MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration), Full time accelerated
Approval visit date	08 - 09 October 2019
Case reference	CAS-14821-S3P8M3

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### Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

# Section 1: Our regulatory approach

## Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

## How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

## HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Patricia McClure	Occupational therapist
Jennifer Caldwell	Occupational therapist
Mohammed Jeewa	Lay
Patrick Armsby	HCPC executive

## Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Julie Cullen	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Southampton – Head of Nursing, Midwifery and Health
Matt Smith	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Southampton – Senior Administrative officer, Curriculum and Quality Assurance, Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences

## Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration)
Mode of study	FTA (Full time accelerated)
Profession	Occupational therapist
First intake	01 January 2021
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02113

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

## Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running

We also usually ask to meet the following groups at approval visits, although there may be some circumstances where meeting certain groups is not needed. In the table below,

we have noted which groups we met, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

<b>Group</b>	<b>Met</b>
Learners	Yes
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes
Facilities and resources	Yes
Senior staff	Yes
Practice educators	Yes
Programme team	Yes

**Section 4: Outcome from first review**

**Recommendation of the visitors**

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

**Conditions**

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 20 November 2019.

**4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that they have a process in place for obtaining consent from learners and service users where appropriate.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard prior to the visit, the education provider indicated that as service users were members of the Expert by Experience (EbE) group consent is implicit. The education provider did not disclose how they obtain consent from learners. From this information, the visitors could not confirm there was an effective process in place to obtain consent from service users and learners. At the visit, the visitors enquired about the consent process that is used for service users and learners during practical sessions and teaching. In meetings with learners and the programme team, it was confirmed that learners could opt out of activities, and the teaching team would take into account factors such as cultural differences and physical or mental health, if it was brought up by learners. However, they also confirmed that consent was assumed for learners taking part in the programme. The visitors considered that one cannot assume consent for a learner and the education provider should ensure all learners have consented before specific activities such as manual handling of other learners. Consent for service users was formally taken when practical sessions were

being recorded by film or photograph, however the consent was focused around the use of the footage rather than the service user being involved in the activity. Therefore, the education provider must show how the programme includes an effective process for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners, in order to respect individual's rights and reduce the risk of harm.

**4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what the attendance monitoring processes are and how this will be communicated to learners.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard prior to the visit, the education provider stated that attendance for all of the programme is mandatory and attendance is monitored by personal tutors and the programme lead. The visitors queried how this mechanism would work in practice during the running of the programme and how attendance was recorded for learners. The programme team and learners confirmed that currently a register was only taken occasionally and rationalised this by stating that teaching staff could recognise learner absence due to small cohort sizes. However, the visitors considered this approach to be subjective and based on relationships rather than having a factual, objective record of learners' attendance in the programme. Furthermore, with the MSc adding additional learners this system of recognising absence would not be as effective. The education provider must show that there are relevant monitoring processes in place to ensure that learners are taking part in all essential parts of the programme.

**5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.**

**5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.**

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue.

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify how they maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning, and how this system ensures that the practice environment is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard prior to the visit, the education provider indicated that all placements are audited as part of the Education Provider Agreement (EPA) and provided an example placement audit form. At the visit, the visitors questioned the practice educators about how the audits worked in practice and how effective they have been. Two of the practice educators indicated there had been a learning environment audit for their place of work, however two other practice educators indicated that their placement sites had not been audited by the education provider. This information contradicts the visitors' understanding that the education provider has audited all practice-based learning environments. As the visitors cannot be certain that the education provider has audited all practice-based learning environments, they were also

unsure how the education provider was ensuring the quality, safety and support for learners and service users at each placement site.

### **Recommendations**

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

#### **4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should explore other opportunities for how learners are learning with and from other learners throughout the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that there were examples of interprofessional learning where learners can learn with and from others and therefore this standard was met at threshold level. However, the visitors noted that the activities that allowed learners to learn from other learners are not as developed as the opportunities to learn alongside other learners. Therefore, the visitors recommend that the programme continues to ensure learners benefit from interprofessional learning by developing opportunities for learners to learn from one another throughout the length of the programme.

### Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 29 January 2020 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).