HCPC approval process report

Education provider	St Mary's University, Twickenham
Name of programme(s)	MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration), Full time accelerated
Approval visit date	06 - 07 March 2018
Case reference	CAS-12196-T0G4Z8

Contents

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:

Anthony Power	Physiotherapist
Pamela Bagley	Physiotherapist
Roseann Connolly	Lay
Eloise O'Connell	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.

Chris Hull	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	St Mary's University
Stephen Scott	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	St Mary's University
Jonathan Gibbs	Internal panel member	St Mary's University
Isaac Sorinola	External advisor	King's College London

Nina Paterson	External panel member	Representative from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP)
Heather Stewart	External panel member	Representative from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP)

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)
Mode of study	FTA (Full time accelerated)
Profession	Physiotherapist
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01802

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 meets our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require 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.

Required documentation	Submitted	Reason(s) for non-submission
Programme specification	Yes	
Module descriptor(s)	Yes	
Handbook for learners	Yes	
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes	
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes	
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes	
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Not Required	This is a new programme therefore there have been no external examiner reports.

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As this is a new programme, and the education provider has no other HCPC approved programmes, we met with current learners on the BSc (Hons) Sport Rehabilitation programme offered by the education provider.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	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 27 April 2018.

2.1 The admissions process 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 demonstrate that admissions information will give applicants the information they require so that they can make an informed choice about whether to take up the offer of a place on the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the assessment load on the programme is particularly high, and were not clear how prospective applicants would be made aware of this. The visitors were referred to a section on assessment in the document 'applicant guide' which states "several methods of assessment throughout the course" followed by a list of the core modules on the programme. At the visit, the visitors heard from the programme team that all prospective applicants for the programme would attend open evenings where they also have

opportunities for one to one discussions with members of staff, which will cover information on assessment. However, the visitors could not determine how all prospective applicants would have this information if they did not attend open evenings. As such, the visitors require evidence that prospective applicants are provided with sufficient information on the assessment load on the programme, to enable them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

In addition, from their review of the documentation, the visitors noted some errors and incorrect terminology. In various places, the documentation refers to "eligibility to register with HCPC". Completing an approved programme does not guarantee someone will become registered, the graduates are eligible to apply for registration and the HCPC need additional information from them in order to be able to register them. The visitors also noted that in places, the documentation refers to HCPC as a 'professional body' rather than a regulator. Therefore, the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, including advertising materials to ensure that the terminology used is accurate, reflects the language associated with statutory regulation and avoids any potential confusion for applicants.

2.5 The admissions process must ensure that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the admissions procedures clearly outline to applicants what the health requirements are.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted in the applicant guide document that the education provider requires all learners "to show a completed Hepatitis B vaccination prior to starting the placement component of the programme". However, at the visit, the visitors heard from the programme team that applicants must go through the education provider's external occupational health company, who will check if the applicants are up to date with vaccinations, and if not refer them to a GP. As such, the visitors understand that if an applicant is not up to date they may require a range of vaccinations, in addition to the Hepatitis B vaccination requested by the education provider. Therefore, the visitors could not determine how applicants are made aware of, and comply with all potential health requirements for the programme. The visitors require further information regarding the health requirements for the programme, and how applicants are informed of them.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how there will be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Reason: In the documentation, the visitors read that there has been some involvement of practice education providers in developing the programme. They were involved in the 'Focus group' that included stakeholder representatives and service users and carers. The group met once to discuss what they would like to see on the new programme. At the visit, the visitors heard from the practice education providers that they had also been involved in the interview process for admissions, and that there had been meetings with the programme leader to discuss the programme. The practice education providers also told the visitors that there have been discussions about meetings going forward. The programme team told the visitors that they plan to invite practice educators

to be on the programme board, which meets once a semester and is currently formed of staff and learners. However, because the visitors were provided with verbal reassurances / plans, and have not seen this in documentation, the visitors were unclear how the information provided demonstrates that regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice education provider would be undertaken on an ongoing basis. As such, the education provider needs to demonstrate that there is a plan in place to address how they intend to maintain regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there are processes in place to plan, monitor and evaluate service user and carer involvement in the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear how service users and carers would be involved in the programme, as they could not see any clear reference to service user involvement. The SETs mapping document referenced the 'Focus group' that service users and carers were involved in, however no further information was provided. At the visit, the visitors heard from the service users and carers that were involved in the 'Focus group' that met once to discuss what they would like to see from the programme, and one of the service users and carers had been involved in putting together questions for the interview process for admissions. When the visitors asked about future involvement in the programme, the service users and carers said that they have committed to be involved in talking to and teaching learners on the programme about their experiences, though no formal plan has been put in place yet. The visitors heard that the service users and carers expect there to be an ongoing relationship, and are confident there will be more discussions going forward. The visitors heard from the programme team that they are planning to introduce service users and carers to the programme board, which currently involves staff and learners. However, the visitors have not seen a process in place to plan, monitor and evaluate service user and carer involvement on the programme. As such, the education provider will need to demonstrate the process in place to plan, monitor and evaluate service user and carer involvement in the programme.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must revise reading lists for modules where the reading lists are outdated, and demonstrate that these are accessible to all learners and educators.

Reason: Prior to the visit, on review of the documentation the visitors noted that some of the modules, for example PHP 7004 and PHP 7005 had out dated reading lists under the 'essential reading list' section. The visitors are unclear whether the books from the required reading lists are contained in the library. As such, the visitors are not clear whether the resources to support learning are accessible to learners and educators. The education provider must revise essential reading lists for modules to ensure they are up to date and relevant to current practice, and demonstrate that these are accessible to all learners and educators.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users is readily accessible and clear to learners.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors note that the education provider referenced the 'Safeguarding Policy' in the SETs mapping document to evidence this standard. However, the visitors noted that there was no information about this in the placement handbook, to which learners may refer should they have any issue or concern in regard to service user safety and wellbeing in the practice-based learning environment. At the visit, the visitors heard from the programme team that the process for learners to raise concerns would be addressed in lectures and discussed with learners before they begin practice-based learning. However, as the relevant information is not included in the placement handbook, the visitors were not clear how learners would know how or where to find this information easily. Therefore, in order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users is readily accessible and clear to learners.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is a process in place to ensure the curriculum remains relevant to current practice on an ongoing basis.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors note that the education provider referenced the PHP7003 module descriptor (learning outcomes 5, 6 and 7) in the SETs mapping document to evidence this standard. The learning outcomes refer to the learners being able to take account of new developments or changing contexts, plan continuing professional development and critically engage in evidence-based practice. However, from the information provided in the SETs mapping document, the visitors could not determine how the education provider will ensure the curriculum is kept up to date on an ongoing basis. In addition, the visitors noted that some of the modules, for example PHP 7004 and PHP 7005 had out dated reading lists under the 'essential reading list' section. At the visit, the visitors mentioned the out of date reading lists to the programme team who agreed that these could be updated, however the visitors are not clear how or why the out of date reading lists were put there in the first place. While the education provider has referred to learning outcomes where learners will be expected to keep up to date with current practice; the visitors could not determine that the education provider has a process in place to consider current practice to develop the curriculum on an ongoing basis. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how they ensure the curriculum remains relevant to current practice on an ongoing basis.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there are processes in place for service users to give consent when working with learners in the academic setting.

Reason: Prior to the visit, on review of the documentation the visitors could see there were consent process in place for service users and learners in the practice-based learning settings. However, the visitors were not clear if there is a process in place to obtain consent from service users if they were to be involved with learners in the academic setting. At the visit, the visitors heard from the programme team that they are putting together a consent form for service users in the academic setting, and will be involving service users in creating this form. However, as the visitors have not seen the consent procedure for the academic setting, the education provider must demonstrate that there is a process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users in the academic setting.

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 05 July 2018 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available on our website.