University of Huddersfield	
GOC FULL APPROVAL QUALITY ASSURANCE VISIT	
BSc (Hons) Optometry	
14 & 15 March 2023	

Report confirmed by GOC	31 May 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1 – VISIT DETAILS

1.2 Programme details

Programme title	BSc (Hons) Optometry
Programme description	- The BSc (Hons) Optometry programme (the programme) is a three-year, full-time programme that adheres to the standard academic year. - The University of Huddersfield (the University) delivers the theory element of the route to registration including all stage one competencies. - Upon successful completion of the programme students are able to progress onto the Scheme for Registration delivered by the College of Optometrists (CoO). The CoO is responsible for the clinical placement, all stage two competencies and the qualifying examinations.
Current approval status	Fully approved (FA)
Approved student numbers	68

1.3 GOC Education Visitor Panel (EVP)

Chair	Jane Andrews – Lay chair
Visitors	- Andy Husband – Lay member - Graeme Stevenson – Dispensing Optician/Contact Lens Optician member - Rebekah Stevens – Optometrist member - Graeme Kennedy – Independent Prescribing/Optometrist member
GOC representative	Georgina Carter – Approval and Quality Assurance Officer
Observers	Lamine Kherroubi – Approval and Quality Assurance Officer

1.4 Purpose of the visit

Visit type	FULL APPROVAL QUALITY ASSURANCE VISIT

The purpose of this full approval quality assurance visit was to:

1. The University of Huddersfield's BSc (Hons) Optometry programme to ensure it meets the requirements as listed in *the GOC's Accreditation and Quality Assurance temporary handbook for optometry (July 2020)* (handbook) and the *GOC Education A&QA-Supplementary Document-List of Requirements* (list of requirements).
2. Consider whether the programme sufficiently meets the GOC's requirements for it to be granted continued full approval.

This visit took place in-person.

1.5 Programme history

Date	Event type	Overview
24/03/2022	Visit	A provisional approval quality assurance visit was carried out. The panel recommended to the GOC executive that: • The programme be granted full approval. • 2 previous conditions remained open. • 0 new conditions were set. • 2 new recommendations were offered.
29/06/2022	Administration	The GOC grants full approval to the University's BSc (Hons) Optometry programme.
15/07/2022	Administration	Following an internal review, the SCR status of the programme was removed. • Condition 2, set at the April 2021 visit, remained open. • Condition 9, set in September 2021, remained open.
28/09/2022	Administration	Condition 2, set at the April 2021, was deemed met.
17/10/2022	Administration	Condition 9, set in September 2021, was deemed met.
28/11/2022	Administration	A full approval quality assurance visit was scheduled for 14 & 15 March 2023.

PART 2 – VISIT SUMMARY

2.1 Visit outcomes

The panel recommended that full approval for the university's programme should continue. The panel set one new condition, with one requirement deemed unmet, and offered one recommendation. The panel were pleased to feel the positive atmosphere amongst students and staff, as well as enthusiasm and personal investment in the programme by staff and clinic supervisors. The panel recognises that the team are in the process of developing the qualification in line with the GOC's new Education and Training Requirements (ETRs).

Summary of recommendations to the GOC

Previous conditions – met/unmet	**Two** previous conditions were deemed **MET** by the executive prior to this visit.
New conditions	**One** requirement is deemed **UNMET** and therefore **one** condition is set. Details regarding the condition is set out in **Part 3.**
New recommendations	**One** recommendation is offered**.** Details regarding the recommendation is set out in **Part 3.**
Commendations	**Two** commendations are offered. Details regarding the commendations are set out in **Part 3.**
Actual student numbers	2022/23: • Year 1 – 72 • Year 2 – 72 • Year 3 – 60
Approval/next visit	The next visit will be scheduled within the next five years, in line with the GOC's Approval and Quality Assurance (AQA) process.
Factors to consider when scheduling next visit e.g. when students are in, hospital, audit etc.	The visit should be scheduled to factor in: • time to speak to students from all cohorts. • time to speak to external examiners. • the implementation of the GOC's new Education and Training Requirement's (ETRs).

2.2 Previous conditions
The conditions listed below are extracted from the report of Click or tap to enter a date.

Requirement number	Condition number and description	Status
OP2.12	The University must provide evidence of increased hospital placement capacity to ensure it meets the needs of the upcoming cohorts. This should include signed contracts that specify student numbers.	This condition was deemed **MET** by the executive prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.
OP1.2 OP1.5 OP2.12 OP4.4 OP4.7 OP6.1 OP6.2	The University must submit evidence that clearly identifies how the patient and clinical experience outlined in Annex F of the Temporary Accreditation and Quality Assurance Handbook: Routes to Registration in Optometry: August 2020 will be met **from September 2022**,	This condition was deemed **MET** by the executive prior to this visit taking place and was not reviewed by the EVP at this visit.

OP6.8 OP6.9 OP6.16	including but not limited to: • the opening date of the UEC. • timescales of the operation of the UEC including an update on the mission critical aspects identified. • the development of a patient database. • contingency planning that considers any ongoing impact of COVID-19 and/or how students will be supported to achieve the necessary clinical experience in the event the UEC is not operational, including the number of surrogate patients required and confirmed numbers and where they will be sourced from. • details of how the student protection plan will be applied to the programme's students in the event this becomes necessary including the expected support from the Optometry Schools Council and timelines.	

2.3 Previous recommendations
The recommendations listed below are extracted from the report of Click or tap to enter a date.

Description	Comments
The University should continue to make every effort to provide students with meaningful multi-disciplinary learning experiences. The opportunities should increase in terms of complexity, and potentially volume, as students progress through the programme.	During the visit, the panel were informed of several opportunities, across all years of the programme, for students to participate in multi-disciplinary learning experiences and be taught by professionals from other disciplines. It appeared that such opportunities increased in terms of complexity and volume as students progressed through the programme. As such, the panel were satisfied that this recommendation had been taken on board.
The University should ensure it reviews student attainment to ensure that this accurately reflects student performance.	During the visit, the panel heard from external examiners that they had little concerns with the programme and that any areas of feedback had been acted on appropriately. The programme team also fed back that the external examiners had reported being satisfied with attainment. During this visit, the programme team provided data which showed that attainment had returned to pre-pandemic levels and were assured that grade inflation, in previous years, reflected the types of assessments used in response to the pandemic but nevertheless accurately represented student performance within those. For example, lower performance in exams reflects university wide results. As such, the panel were satisfied that this recommendation had been taken on board.

2.4 Non-applicable requirements

The panel recommends that some requirements be deemed non-applicable to the programme due to its structure and level and the differing, but overlapping, roles and responsibilities of the University and the College of Optometrists (CoO) for example:

- the University provides the theory aspect of the route to registration including all stage one competencies.
- the CoO is responsible for all stage two competencies and ensuring all the elements of the portfolio are completed under supervision.

Additionally, the EVP recommends that some requirements be deemed non-applicable to the programme as:

- the programme has full GOC approval.

A1.3	Provisional approval must be in place prior to advertising the qualification and recruiting the first cohort of students.
OP6.14	Upon completion of the pre-registration placement, the provider must inform the GOC that the student has achieved professional competence at Stage 2 so as to allow them to apply for entry to the GOC Register of Optometrists.
OP6.15	Students must be assessed as competent against each of the Stage 2 GOC Core Competencies.
OP6.16	Students must acquire the minimum amount of patient experience within each patient category (attached in Appendix F).
OP6.17	Students must hold certified portfolios containing a record of both their patient experience and achievement of all core competency elements.
OP6.18	The portfolio must include evidence of how and when each individual element of competence was achieved by the individual student.
OP6.19	The portfolio must contain a case record for each individual patient episode contributing to the minimum requirements.
OP6.20	The portfolio must include evidence of the development of the student's professional judgement through critical thinking and reflection.

PART 3 – CONDITIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & COMMENDATIONS

Conditions are applied to training and assessment providers if there is evidence that the GOC requirements are not met.	
Recommendations indicate enhancements that can be made to a programme, these may not be directly linked to compliance with GOC requirements.	

3.1 Conditions set at this visit
The unmet requirements for this visit are set out below along with the conditions that are required to meet the requirements.

OP5.1	The provider must have a clear framework for obtaining feedback on programme quality from a variety of sources including patients, students, staff, supervisors and employers.
Condition	The provider must submit evidence to demonstrate that a formal framework for obtaining feedback from a variety of sources has been developed, to contribute to the quality of the programme.
Date due	30 September 2023
Rationale	Following conversations had with the programme team, the panel heard how the on-campus optical practice had several formal opportunities to feedback on the programme. However, these discussions highlighted that the provider did not have formal mechanisms in place to receive feedback from a range of employers.

Whilst it was clear that the programme team made themselves informally available to stakeholders directly involved with the students and/or the programme, the panel believed it would be necessary and appropriate to ensure that feedback mechanisms are formalised to ensure that a variety of sources are given the opportunity to feedback on the programme. |

3.2 Recommendations offered at this visit
The EVP offers the following recommendations to the provider.

A6.2	Providers must provide sufficient information to the GOC, as requested, and in a timely manner.
Recommendation 1	The provider should endeavour to ensure that relevant information is given to the executive ahead of the visit.
Rationale	As outlined in section 3.2 of the Temporary Optometry Handbook (2020), providers are expected to submit relevant information to the executive, in advance of the visit, for the panel to review in line with the list of requirements.

Whilst they were available by the deadline of the pre-visit documentation, external examiner reports were not received until the week prior to the visit. Several documentations were also unavailable until access to the virtual learning environment (VLE) was given. Due to IT issues this was not provided until the visit had commenced. As such, the panel would encourage the provider to ensure that all relevant information is given to the executive in advance of the visit and use alternative methods to submit relevant information where available, to ensure that areas of focus for the visit can be identified sufficiently. Ultimately, the delay in the receipt of this information did not hinder the outcome of the visit. |

3.3 Commendations made at this visit

The panel wishes to commend the following areas:

- The positive atmosphere felt by the panel amongst the staff and students who were spoken to during the visit.
- That staff and supervisors spoken to during the visit appeared invested in and excited by the programme.