**Visitors' Report
Annual Monitoring**

Section One: Programme Details

Name of education provider	Birmingham City University
Name of awarding institution (if different from education provider)	
Name & Title of Programme	BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy
Mode of Delivery	Full time Part time
Name of HPC Visitor(s) considering audit submission	Gillian Stevenson (Speech and Language Therapist) Nikki Smith (Physiotherapist)
Name of Education Officer	Tracey Samuel-Smith

Please tick to confirm the documents submitted by the education provider and list any additional documentation submitted in support of the audit submission:

☒ A completed HPC audit form

☒ Internal quality report 2006/2007

☒ Internal quality report 2007/2008

☒ External Examiner's Report 2006/2007

☒ External Examiner's Report 2007/2008

☒ Response to External Examiner's report 2006/2007

☒ Response to External Examiner's report 2007/2008

Section Two: Recommendation of the Visitor(s)

Please select one of the following recommendations to the Education & Training Committee–

☒ An Approval visit is required to consider the following Standards of Education and Training - SET 2, SET 3, SET 4, SET 5 and SET 6.

Visitors' signatures:

Name: Gillian Stevenson

Date: 23 April 2009

Name: Nikki Smith

Date: 23 April 2009

Section Three: Additional details

SET 2: Programme admissions

The entry and selection criteria has changed but the review of these changes has not yet been completed as the education provider is waiting for the students to go on placement. An assessment of the new entry and selection criteria will occur after the placement. The visitors did not receive any information about the new entry and selection criteria and therefore are unable to comment whether the standards under programme admissions continue to be met.

SET 3: Programme management and resource standards

The programme annual review (July 2008), identified a number of areas which the education provider planned to change as a result of student feedback. This included concerns about the attendance policy; the resources available to students (such as the unreliability of IT, resources not being sufficient for the module); programme management (classes being cancelled and how the module is delivered at short notice, limited feedback to students, insufficient placements). The visitors were concerned about the number and range of standards within SET 3 which had been identified as requiring a change by the education provider and feel that the most appropriate action to ensure that these standards continue to be met is through a visit.

SET 4: Curriculum standards

The education provider has identified that there have been changes to the way the modules are delivered at short notice, such as increasing the level of self directed study. The visitors felt that this impacts on how students are taught and therefore how students can meet the SOPs.

SET 5: Practice placements standards

The programme annual review (July 2008) states that the education provider has experienced ongoing problems finding sufficient placements. The visitors are therefore concerned that students may not be able to attend the required placements which may have an impact on how they meet the SOPs. The visitors are therefore concerned that the placements may not be integral to the programme or the number, duration and range of placements may not be appropriate.

Comments made by the programme team stated that students did not fully understand placements prior to attending. The programme team have suggested ways of resolving this, such as additional clinical sessions before placements in order to prepare. The visitors would like to ensure that students are fully informed about the expectations of them prior to attending the placement.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2009-04-23	a	EDU	APV	AM Visitors Report - Birmingham City University	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

SET 6: Assessment standards

The education provider has identified that there have been changes to the way the modules are delivered at short notice, such as increasing the level of self directed study. As stated under SET 4, the visitors felt that this impacts on how students are taught and therefore how students can meet the SOPs. The visitors also felt that a change to how a module is taught may have had resulting changes on the assessment for the module and would like to ensure that the assessments measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practise safely and effectively.

The education provider also identified that assessment regulations have changed (re-sits have changed to 4) and the visitors were concerned this may not enable a student to demonstrate fitness to practice.

Further comments

The visitors noted the programme leader changed in autumn 2008. Whilst this falls out of the current annual monitoring submission, the visitors' would like to ensure that this is addressed via a major change or at the approval event which they have recommended.

**Birmingham City University
Faculty of Health**

Health Professions Council Audit Document (April 2009)

BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy Request for a Deferred Visit

Formal observations:

On 27TH May 2009 the Health Professions Council (HPC) responded to the Faculty of Health, Division of Speech and Language Therapy, BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Programme Annual Monitoring Report which had been audited by HPC visitors. The visitors' assessment made comments about a number of the Standards of Education and Training (SETs) and recommended a visit.

The Division of Speech and Language Therapy is due to begin a new programme in September 2009 due to the University Redesign of Learning Experiences (RoLEx) where the credit rating of modules has changed from 12 to 15 credits, and a major change form has been sent to the HPC.

The team would like to request a deferred visit to allow both the old (12 credit modules) and new programmes (15 credits modules) to be reviewed at the same time.

The Programme team have met to discuss the issues raised by the visitors and provide responses in relation to each of the SETs with supporting evidence. We hope the attached evidence will support our request for a deferred visit.

SET 2: Visitor Comments: Programme admissions
The entry and selection criteria have changed but the review of these changes has not yet been completed as the education provider is waiting for the students to go on placement. An assessment of the new entry and selection criteria will occur after the placement. The visitors did not receive any information about the new entry and selection criteria and therefore are unable to comment whether the standards under programme admissions continue to be met.

SET 2: Programme Team Response:
2.1: There has been no change to the admission criteria for the BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy programme. There has however been a minor change to the selection process. The change to the selection process – consists of an additional question being added to the interview questionnaire allowing the applicant to comment on their own communication skills. A section was also added to enable staff to comment on the appropriateness of the applicant's communication skills. This is identified on page 9 of the 2006/2007 Programme Annual Monitoring Report (appendix 1) Copies of the both the old and the new interview questionnaire and the new question can be found in appendix 2a & 2b.

2.2 Action 3 in the action plan (appendix 3) of the 2006/2007 Programme Annual

Monitoring Report stated that the impact of the changes to the selection procedure which included the additional interview question would be monitored in July 2009 once the students who had been through the new selection procedure had experienced placement. When comparing the number of fails for the Clinical Placement 1 module (GM500V) there are fewer fails for the cohort that had been through the new interview questionnaire (appendix 4) There were also fewer students failing the specific learning outcome that relates to communication within that module (appendix 5). The team believe that the introduction of an additional question examining communication skills has been a positive addition to the interview procedure.

SET 3: Visitor Comments: Programme management and resource standards
The programme annual review (July 2008), identified a number of areas which the education provider planned to change as a result of student feedback. This included concerns about the attendance policy; the resources available to students (such as the unreliability of IT, resources not being sufficient for the module); programme management (classes being cancelled and how the module is delivered at short notice, limited feedback to students, insufficient placements). The visitors were concerned about the number and range of standards within SET 3 which had been identified as requiring a change by the education provider and feel that the most appropriate action to ensure that these standards continue to be met is through a visit.

SET 3: **Response:**
3.1: The University does have an attendance policy but the Faculty of Health Quality Office at the University has issued advice to Divisions and Programme Directors on monitoring student engagement in timetabled learning experiences (appendix 6)

3.2: On page 22 of the 0708 Programme Annual Monitoring Report comments were made about the level 4 module - Introduction to developmental communication needs (GM4069). These comments referred to insufficient library resources, and difficulty accessing the DVD required for the assignment related to GM4069. In relation to the library resources, we are currently working closely with the library services to increase resources.

In relation to the DVD material the module evaluation for this year (0809) included a variety of responses with some students saying: *"Seeing different videos, clips of children, people with language impairments and needs, helped to give a visual picture of how people might present." "I thought this module was well structured and easy to follow with helpful resources."*
Whereas others commented on the fact that they were:-
"Not allowed to take the assessment DVD home and that the DVD was not very accessible."

Client confidentiality is important and students are made aware of this on the programme, not only in relation to clinical placement but in relation to any client related materials. In this particular case the client involved in the video had not given permission for the material to be viewed on line. It was therefore decided that there would be a number of DVDs that could be booked and viewed on campus. DVDs were not allowed to be taken off campus, again for reasons of confidentiality. In future we hope that a wider range of consent will be obtained from clients but in this particular case the students need to respect the wishes of the client. This was made clear to the students at the briefing session for this assignment (Appendix 8).

3.3: Issues with room bookings resulted in workshops for the clinical linguistics module (GM5232) running in the same room simultaneously. Room bookings within the University from September 2009 will be organised centrally and it is hoped that this will resolve any difficulties in obtaining appropriate accommodation. The timetabling for this module in the year 08/09 has been organised so that sessions have run sequentially to avoid difficulties with room bookings (Appendix 8a).
3.4 Comments were made by students about cancellation of teaching sessions in the level 4 module, communication in context 1 (GM4066) The module evaluation identifies that these sessions were rescheduled and supplementary self directed study material / reading was provided at the time of the cancellation (Appendix 9).

3.5 Staff teaching the level 4 module Foundations of language and linguistics (GM4067) had commented in the Programme Annual Monitoring Report (page 19) that the module had been delivered at short notice. This was due to a Faculty wide process redesign, which had an impact on timetabling. Despite this staff were happy with the module and they felt that the way the module was delivered had greatly improved the students' learning. The students' comments for the current year's evaluation of this module 08/09, provides evidence that students' were indeed satisfied with the learning and teaching provided. (Appendix 10)

3.6: The visitors commented on there being limited feedback given to students. It is the Faculty policy not to annotate scripts and module coordinators do not return scripts to students as samples need to be available for quality monitoring. Students are aware of this procedure (appendix 11). However students are provided with individual feedback for each assessment which outlines what they have done well and what they need to improve. Modules also provide collective feedback to the whole cohort and many modules e.g. GM4067 (Foundations of Language and Linguistics) and GM4069 (Introduction to developmental communication needs) provide extra assignment sessions to assist students who need to re-submit their work. The external examiners report states that standards of marking are high as is the quality of the feedback given (Appendix 12)

3.7: The visitors have expressed concerns about the University providing sufficient numbers of placements. Providing clinical placements is indeed a national challenge for all Speech and Language Therapy programmes. In 2006-2007 there was an issue in providing enough clinical placements, although all students undertaking the programme were eventually placed successfully within the academic year.

We have been working very closely with our Strategic Health Authority to help local Trusts to increase their placement capacity by examining how clinical placements are managed. This work has formed the basis of a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) Project – developing placement provision in regional partner trusts (Appendix 13) which is referred to on pages 59-60 of the Programme Annual Monitoring Report 07/08.

In academic years, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 all students have been placed on time and it is believed that this improvement has been a direct result of the project. Evidence of student placements can be found in Appendix 13a. On page 60 of the Programme Annual Monitoring Report, (Appendix 14) it states that all students at levels 5 and 6 were provided with a full time clinical placement on time.

SET 4: Visitor Comments: Curriculum standards
The education provider has identified that there have been changes to the way the modules are delivered at short notice, such as increasing the level of self directed

study. The visitors felt that this impacts on how students are taught and therefore how students can meet the SOPs.

SET 4: Response:
4.1: An increase in the amount of self directed study for students has been referred to throughout many of the module evaluations for academic year 07/08. However within the Programme Annual Monitoring Report there are also discussions about the structures that were put in place to support students' self directed learning. Preparation of students prior to face to face teaching sessions allows students to gain maximum benefit from the face to face contacts. For example an audio lecture can deliver the didactic theory, and then the follow up face to face sessions can include activities that allow the application of that theory. Many new and innovative learning and teaching methods have been introduced and recent positive student feedback suggests that this teaching style is appreciated. (Appendix 10).

SET 5: Visitor Comments: Practice placements standards
The programme annual review (July 2008) states that the education provider has experienced ongoing problems finding sufficient placements. The visitors are therefore concerned that students may not be able to attend the required placements which may have an impact on how they meet the SOPs. The visitors are therefore concerned that the placements may not be integral to the programme or the number, duration and range of placements may not be appropriate.

Comments made by the programme team stated that students did not fully understand placements prior to attending. The programme team have suggested ways of resolving this, such as additional clinical sessions before placements in order to prepare. The visitors would like to ensure that students are fully informed about the expectations of them prior to attending the placement.

SET 5: Response:
5.1: With regard to the visitors' concerns about the University providing sufficient numbers of placements, this has already been commented on above in point 3.7. (Appendix 13 & 14) On page 33 of the Programme Annual Monitoring Report there is reference to difficulty sourcing re-sit placements, since completion of the Report all re-sit students have been successfully placed.

 5.2: The visitors have commented on the duration of the placements not being appropriate – however our clinical placement blocks continue to be 8 weeks of 4 days a week (32 days) at level 5, and 15 weeks of 4 days (60 days) a week at level 6.

5.3: The visitors identify a staff comment that students do not fully understand placements prior to attending. This refers to placement location and the hours that are involved with clinical placement. This information continues to be provided in our interview day presentation (Appendix 15) to ensure that prospective students are aware of the nature of the commitment that is required to complete this programme.

Once on the programme students receive a number of different types of placement preparation sessions and these sessions have been expanding each year to ensure that students are fully prepared with realistic expectations for clinical placement (Appendix 16).

5.4: Level 5 students in 07/08 were involved in a pilot study to introduce the use of simulation (Appendix 17) where students have the opportunity to work with service

users in a controlled environment. This clearly prepares students for placement and all level 5 students from 08/09 onwards will have this opportunity.

SET 6: Visitor Comments: Assessment standards
The education provider has identified that there have been changes to the way the modules are delivered at short notice, such as increasing the level of self directed study. As stated under SET 4, the visitors felt that this impacts on how students are taught and therefore how students can meet the SOPs. The visitors also felt that a change to how a module is taught may have had resulting changes on the assessment for the module and would like to ensure that the assessments measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practise safely and effectively.

The education provider also identified that assessment regulations have changed (re-sits have changed to 4) and the visitors were concerned this may not enable a student to demonstrate fitness to practice.

SET 6: **Response:**
6.1The external examiner's report (Appendix 12) states that the range of assessment methods used in the SLT programme is considered to be appropriate. The external examiner also commented that the process of marking is of a high standard and the learning outcomes are assessed effectively.

6.2: The visitors have concerns that the assessment regulations may not enable a student to demonstrate fitness to practice. The Standard Undergraduate Assessment Regulations (SUAR) Version 3 has been in existence since September 2005. (Appendix 18) These regulations allow a maximum of four attempts at any one assessment, with the exception of the clinical placement modules where students are only allowed two attempts. Each module applies for exemption from the Regulation in relation to clinical placement assessment. The programme was re-approved by the HPC in May 2005 and at that time the regulations (SUAR 3) were anticipated and would have been referred to during this process. Prior to the implementation of SUAR 3 students had any number of attempts to pass modules. The Programme Team welcomed the reduction to four attempts, and the exemption for practice assessments to 2 attempts.

In summary there were areas identified for improvement in module evaluations and as part of the Faculty of Health quality monitoring process all module coordinators must complete a module evaluation summary with an action plan. These have either been implemented in 2008/2009 or have been incorporated into the new programme via RoLEx. (Redesign of Learning Experiences)

Many of the issues that were highlighted by the visitors' related to level 4 modules. The level 4 modules will not be provided again in the current format due to the rolling out of the new programme in September 2009.

We are confident that our new programme meets the Standards of Education and Training and will produce competent Speech and Language Therapists who are fit for practice.

Fiona Wilcox
Programme Director
Division of Speech and Language Therapy
Birmingham City University.
14th July 2009

HPC   Audit Document (April 2009)
B.Sc. (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy
Birmingham City University

Request for a deferred visit:

Appendices Index:

1) Page 9 - Annual Review 0607 Recruitment and Admissions.
2a) New interview questionnaire.
2b) Old interview questionnaire.
3) Page 46 - Annual Review 0607 Action Plan – point 3.
4) Monitoring impact of interview questionnaire.
5) Learning outcome 4 for clinical placement 1 (GM500V)
6) Student attendance and engagement policy.
8) IDCN brief
8a) GM5232 module timetable and outline.
9) Pages 17&18 - Annual Review 0708 – cancellation of sessions.
10) Foundation of Language and Linguistics (GM4067) student comments.
11) Example of assignment brief (informs students that scripts not returned)
12) External examiner report (Dr Caroline Newton) Marking, feedback and assessment
13) West Midlands Placement Capacity Project.
13a) Placement allocation 0708 and 0809.
14) Pages 59&60 - Annual Review 0708 (Placement Capacity Project)
15) Interview day presentation power point.
16) Clinical Placement preparation information.
17) Page 60 - Annual Review 0708 - Simulation
18) SUAR 3 assessment regulations.