

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) CSP Education Position Statement: Expectations of compressed BSc(Hons) degrees

Introduction

1. The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) has produced this position statement in recognition of the potential that universities may be exploring whether and how their Bachelor's degree can be developed for delivery as intensive two-year programmes (or three years in Scotland), and with the potential for this exploration to include consideration of pre-registration programmes in physiotherapy. These are referred to as 'compressed' programmes within this statement.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this statement is to
 - Assert CSP expectations, including to uphold and progress professional and education standards for UK physiotherapy
 - Clarify the CSP's particular expectations of two-year Bachelor's degree programmes (or three years in Scotland) for conferring programme accreditation
 - Seek to achieve due consistency of approach in the development of programmes within and for the profession, while also allowing for institutional flexibility and individual programmes' distinctiveness
 - Support developments and innovations in programme design that are responsive to broader workforce developments and changing needs, while safeguarding the quality of the learning experience and outcomes of pre-registration physiotherapy programmes.

Intended audiences

3. The intended audiences of this statement are as follows:
 - Higher education institution (HEI) teams considering or actively progressing the development of a compressed BSc(Hons) pre-registration programme in physiotherapy
 - CSP members with a particular interest in educational developments within the profession
 - Prospective students considering options for entering the UK physiotherapy profession
 - External stakeholders, including HEIs, regulators and policy-makers, with an interest in entry routes into the UK physiotherapy profession.

Context

4. The Westminster government made a policy announcement in February 2017 that students should have more access to intensive two-year degree programmes.
5. In anticipation of HEIs considering developing this type of provision in physiotherapy, it seems appropriate that the CSP considers and asserts its expectations of compressed BSc(Hons) degree programmes.

6. While more intensively-delivered Bachelor's degrees across all disciplines are not new, they are limited in number; see https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595637/Accelerated_Degrees_Literature_Review.pdf

CSP expectations

7. We would expect compressed BSc(Hons) degrees presented for CSP accreditation to address the specific elements outlined below. This is in addition to fulfilling our standard requirements for CSP accreditation.
8. We need to see how the programme allows for the depth, breadth and quality of students' learning within the intensive time period.
9. We need to be assured that the programme fulfils CSP requirements for accreditation and HCPC requirements for approval as a condition of CSP accreditation.
10. The programme needs to fulfil standard academic requirements for a BSc(Hons) degree programme, including in terms of QAA credit and award characteristic requirements, etc.
11. Students need to be enabled to gain at least 1k hours of practice-based learning as an integral part of the compressed programme, and in line with CSP requirements for the accreditation of all types of physiotherapy pre-registration education provision.
12. Students need to have sufficient time to consolidate, integrate and reflect on their learning (in both academic and practice settings) within the time period of the programme.
13. Students need to have sufficient opportunity to develop their research understanding and skills, in line with CSP requirements for accreditation and standard expectations of BSc(Hons) programmes and the development of graduate level skills.
14. Students need to be supported across the duration of the programme and taking account of particular features of its delivery; this includes how students have access to academic, professional and pastoral support throughout the period of their studies (including outside traditional HEI academic terms or semesters).
15. Entry requirements for the programme need to be clear, including how the HEI establishes applicants' suitability, preparedness and capacity to complete an intensive Bachelor's degree programme successfully.
16. Potential interim exit programmes need to be clear, including that they do not provide eligibility for registration and practice as a physiotherapist.
17. The development and delivery of the programme needs to be sustained by sufficient opportunity for the team's collective and individual development and within the additional time constraints that the compressed programme presents (and including in the context of other programmes to which staff contribute).
18. It needs to be clear that staff have sufficient opportunity for research and scholarly activity and developing and nurturing clinical/service delivery links to sustain the programme's delivery and on-going development.

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