

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy [CSP]

CSP Education Position Statement:

The currency of UK pre-registration physiotherapy programmes within European and international contexts

Introduction

As the UK's professional, educational and trade union body for physiotherapy, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) seeks to shape and support the development of high quality, contemporary pre-registration physiotherapy programmes as described in this document, and promotes the currency of UK pre-registration physiotherapy programmes within European and international contexts

The position statement may be used with physiotherapists, educators and the appropriate European and international authorities and institutions to illustrate the quality, nature and outcomes of pre-registration physiotherapy education in the UK.

The position statement will be kept under review to ensure its currency and updated as necessary.

Scope

As the educational, professional and trade union body for 53,000 chartered physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and support workers, the CSP leads and supports the development of the UK's physiotherapy workforce to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose as population healthcare and service needs change. Pre-registration physiotherapy education is regulated in the UK through processes that bring public protection, patient, service delivery, professional and academic perspectives to upholding high-quality standards. The CSP encourages and supports innovative, evidence-based design and delivery of UK pre-registration physiotherapy programmes

CSP's approach to ensuring the currency of UK pre-registration physiotherapy programmes

Pre-registration physiotherapy education in the UK is subject to robust regulation and quality assurance and enhancement arrangements. Processes ensure that programmes are measured and kept under review against high standards. Physiotherapy education has to meet the requirements of the UK regulatory body, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC); the professional body, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP); the host university; and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

Both the HCPC and CSP take an outcomes-based approach to physiotherapy education. There is therefore a strong focus on the knowledge, skills and attributes of the graduate, rather than educational inputs. HCPC Standards of Proficiency-Physiotherapists (2013) set out what a student must know, understand and be able to do on completion of their programme (irrespective of the length of programme) to be eligible to apply to register with the HCPC. The CSP's Physiotherapy Framework (2011) defines and describes the behaviours (and underpinning values), knowledge and skills required for contemporary physiotherapy practice at all levels, including that for new graduates. A key requirement being that the graduate is able to practise autonomously.

UK pre-registration programmes offer a range of routes to qualifying as a physiotherapist, including full-time three- and four-year BSc honours degrees (the former offered in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the latter offered in Scotland (according to national standards) and

two-year Master's degrees (that build on a Bachelor's degree in a related discipline). Regardless of programme length, level or design, graduates meet the HCPC requirements, making them eligible to register with the HCPC and to practise in the UK. The CSP encourages and supports flexibility, innovation and diversity in evidence-based programme design and delivery assuring high quality physiotherapy education and graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills and values. Accordingly programme delivery teams respond to local, national and global needs enabling a broad range of prospective physiotherapy students access to the profession.

Graduates from UK pre-registration physiotherapy programmes successfully complete a minimum of 1,000 hours of practice-based learning in a variety of contexts and settings, as well as university-based academic and practical studies. Graduates can work autonomously with patients in a range of sectors and settings. They have a broad range of knowledge, skills and attributes and can respond to changing population/patient, service and practice needs. They commit to engagement in continuing professional development (CPD) throughout their careers to enhance their practice. UK physiotherapy pre-registration education supports students to be fully aware of the boundaries of individual scope of practice; an important consideration when preparing for practice in different cultural/healthcare contexts.

Currently over 700 CSP members work outside the UK. Physiotherapy graduates seeking to work abroad are advised to fully investigate differences in scope of practice and level of autonomy in different countries. They should contact the relevant country-specific regulator(s) for advice and information on how to register for work and if necessary, how to demonstrate their ability to practise physiotherapy outwith the UK.

Key references and further reading

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. The UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Gloucester: Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. 2014.

URL: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code>

Health and Care Professions Council. Standards of education and training. London: Health and Care Professions Council; 2014.

URL: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org.uk/aboutregistration/standards/sets/>

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. Learning and development principles. 2011.

URL: <http://www.csp.org.uk/professional-union/careers-development/career-physiotherapy/learning-principles>

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. CSP Accreditation of Qualifying Programmes in Physiotherapy: Quality Assurance Processes. London: The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy; 2010.

URL: <http://www.csp.org.uk/documents/csp-accreditation-qualifying-programmes-physiotherapy-quality-assurance-processes>

Health and Care Professions Council. Standards of proficiency - physiotherapists. London: Health and Care Professions Council; 2013.

URL: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org.uk/publications/standards/index.asp?id=49>

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. Physiotherapy framework. 2011.

URL: <http://www.csp.org.uk/professional-union/careers-development/career-development/professional-frameworks>

Useful links

ER-WCPT website - <http://www.physio-europe.org/index.php?action=15>

Bologna Process – European Higher Education Arena – <http://www.ehea.info>

Advice and support is also available from the CSP (international@csp.org.uk) and UK NARIC (<http://ecctis.co.uk/naric/Individuals/Going%20overseas.aspx>)