

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Ulster and Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Validating body	University of Ulster
Name of programme(s)	Foundation Degree in Paramedic Practice, Full time
Approval visit date	3 - 4 May 2018
Case reference	CAS-13002-W9K7X0

Contents

Section 1: Our regulatory approach.....	2
Section 2: Programme details.....	3
Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment.....	3
Section 4: Outcome from first review.....	4
Section 5: Details of the visit to consider the first conditions response.....	26
Section 6: Visitors' recommendation	27
Section 7: Future considerations for the programme(s).....	27

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.

Through undertaking this process, we have noted areas that may need to be considered as part of future HCPC assessment processes in section 7 of this report.

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:

David Whitmore	Paramedic
Robert Fellows	Paramedic
Deirdre Keane	Lay
Amal Hussein	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.

Paul Bartholomew	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Ulster
Debbie Troy	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Frances Devine	Internal Panel Member	Lecturer – University of Ulster

Karen Fearon	External Panel Member	University of Birmingham – Head of Department
Neil Hore	External Panel Member	Swansea University – Senior Lecturer
John Burnham	External Panel Member	Scottish Ambulance Service – Head of Education and Professional Development

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Foundation Degree in Paramedic Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 January 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 48
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01866

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 meet 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
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	This is a new programme.

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

Group	Met
Learners	The visitors met with learners from other NIAS programmes.
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;
- the nature of the proposed conditions mean that a further visit would be the most appropriate method of scrutinising any further evidence provided, enabling further discussions to be conducted with key stakeholders of the programme; and,
- any further visit should focus on the conditions, with scope to review the wider standards if there is reason to do so, and should include meetings with the programme team, senior team, practice education providers, learners, service users and carers, and a facilities and resources review.

The visitors noted that both the University of Ulster (UU) and (NIAS) share the role of education provider. As such, they jointly maintain overall responsibility for delivering the programme.

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.

If the Committee makes the decision to require a further visit, the education provider will need to review the issues identified in this report, and decide on any changes that they wish to make. We will then require evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions, along with normal visit documentation with any updates made, at an appropriate time before the date of the visit.

The visit, if required, will be considered the education provider's first attempt to meet the conditions. If, after the further visit, there are any outstanding conditions, the education

provider will be given one further opportunity to submit documentation in response to those outstanding conditions.

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 revise the programme documentation, in particular advertising material, to clearly state the eligibility criteria for applicants to this programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, it was not clear to the visitors who the potential learners for this programme would be. Discussions with the senior team revealed that this programme is only open to existing Northern Ireland Associate Ambulance Practitioners (AAPs) and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). However from the advertising material and the information provided, the visitors could not see how potential applicants would know that only AAPs and EMTs are eligible to apply for a place on the programme. As such, the visitors require the programme team to revise the programme documentation, in particular, admissions material to clearly articulate that this programme will only consider applications from existing Northern Ireland AAPs and EMTs. In this way, the visitors can determine whether the admissions process gives the applicant and education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on the programme

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 ensure that appropriate, clear and consistent information, that enables applicants to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme, is available to applicants.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures pertinent admissions information relating to the programme will be communicated to potential applicants in order for them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. For this standard, the education provider stated the following, 'NIAS [Northern Ireland ambulance service] and UU [University of Ulster] will provide applicants with information pack containing with programme advertisement and related information'. However, the visitors were not provided with the information pack and as such, they were unable to assess whether the education provider is providing appropriate, clear and consistent information, that enables applicants to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. On day two of the visit, the education provider provided the information pack however; due to time constraints, the visitors were unable to review the documentation. As such, they were unable to determine how important information would be appropriately communicated to prospective applicants. In particular how the education provider intends to communicate the following information to prospective applicants:

- selection and recruitment process;

- any additional costs learners may incur over and above the usual programme fee;
- the expectation that learners will travel to practice-based learning settings at their own expense and that this is an additional cost for the learners; and
- the elements of the programme to which accreditation of prior (experiential) learning can be applied and what the process would be to assess this.

The visitors therefore require further information showing how prospective applicants are provided with the information they need to make an informed choice about whether to apply for a place on the programme.

2.2 The selection and entry criteria must include appropriate academic and professional entry standards.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the selection and entry criteria for this programme including the appropriate academic and professional entry standards required by both education providers.

Reason: From the evidence provided prior to the visit, the visitors understood that NIAS and UU would jointly act as the education provider which maintains the responsibility for delivering this programme. Prior to the visit, the visitors reviewed the UU selection criteria. However, from this information, the visitors were unclear as to how the education provider ensures that appropriate academic and professional entry standards will be applied as part of the entry criteria. From the discussions at the visit, it was clear that NIAS will manage the academic and professional selection and entry criteria through the employment process and that this would also count as the entry criteria to apply to study on the programme. From reviewing the UU selection criteria and from the discussions, the visitors could not determine what academic and professional entry standards would be used to select successful applicants or how UU and NIAS, as the education provider, ensure that appropriate academic and professional entry standards are being applied. The visitors were also unable to determine how any decisions to offer a place on the programme would be reached and managed based on this criteria. The visitors did not see any overarching policies, systems and procedures for managing NIAS and UU approach to the application of academic and professional selection and entry criteria. As such, the visitors were unsure how the education provider, NIAS and UU, could apply selection and entry criteria for the programme, including appropriate academic and professional entry standards. Therefore, the education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how they, as the education provider, ensure that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements, including appropriate academic and professional entry standards.

2.3 The admissions process must ensure that applicants have a good command of English.

Condition: The education provider must clarify how the admissions procedure for this programme ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements for applicants to have a good command of English.

Reason: The visitors were presented with UU selection criteria including requirements for applicants to have good command of English. However, from the discussions at the visit, it was clear that NIAS would manage the selection and entry criteria for

employment of the learner paramedics and in meeting those requirements applicants would also meet the entry criteria for the programme. From discussions, the visitors could not determine how the selection and entry criteria for the programme, as outlined by UU, would be applied by NIAS or would ensure that applicants have good command of English. It was also the case that the visitors were not provided with any overarching policies, systems and procedures for managing NIAS and UU approach to selection and entry criteria. As such, the visitors were unclear how the admission procedures provide the education provider, NIAS and UU, with the information they require, to make a decision about an applicant's suitability for the programme. Therefore, the education provider must provide further evidence regarding the admissions procedure for this programme. Specifically, how the education provider ensures that successful applicants meet the relevant requirements, including evidence of a good command of English.

2.4 The admissions process must assess the suitability of applicants, including criminal conviction checks.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure to detail how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS).

Reason: The visitors were presented with UU selection criteria including requirements for DBS. From the discussions at the visit, it was clear that NIAS would manage the selection and entry criteria for employment of learner paramedics and therefore entry criteria for the programme. In discussions at the visit, the visitors heard that NIAS will be responsible for administering DBS checks, and would share the outcome with UU. However, the visitors were not provided with evidence of how this NIAS process would apply UU selection criteria in practice. As such, the visitors could not determine how the procedures of NIAS will work with those of the UU, and how any issues that may arise as a result of the DBS checks would be dealt with by the education provider. The visitors also could not determine how the education provider ensures that issues arising from DBS checks are dealt with consistently. In particular, the visitors could not determine who makes the final decision about accepting a learner onto this programme, if any issue does arise, as the information provided at the visit articulated that applicants would already be employed by NIAS. The visitors could not see how or when applicants who are accepted onto the training employment programme delivered by NIAS would be assessed to ensure they also meet UU's selection and entry criteria. As the processes and procedures relating to criminal convictions checks are unclear, the visitors could not determine how the suitability of applicants is assessed. Therefore, the visitors require further information about the criminal convictions checks that are applied to ensure that applicants are assessed for suitability for this programme, when they take place and who is responsible for making that assessment. In particular the visitors require further evidence of how NIAS's processes would work with the UU's process, and clarification of who makes the final decision about accepting an applicant onto the programme, including if an issue arises.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide clarity on how it ensures that successful applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements set by the education provider.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the UU selection criteria including any health requirements. From the discussions at the visit, it was clear that NIAS will manage the selection and entry criteria for employment of learner paramedics and therefore entry criteria for the programme. In discussions at the visit, the education provider confirmed that NIAS will be responsible for managing and ensuring applicants comply with health requirements and would share the outcome with the education provider. However, the visitors were not provided with evidence of the process to determine how any issues highlighted by these health checks would be dealt with. As such, the visitors could not determine how NIAS's own procedures to apply health checks, will work alongside those of UU. Additionally, the visitors could not determine who is responsible for identifying what adjustments could be made if health conditions were disclosed and how any issues that may arise would be dealt with consistently. Particularly, the visitors could not see how or when applicants who are accepted onto the training employment programme delivered by NIAS would be assessed to ensure they meet UU's selection and entry criteria. As such, the visitors could not determine who makes the final decision about accepting a learner onto the programme if adjustments would be required. Therefore, the visitors require further information about how the health declarations that are applied at the point of admission to this programme are used by the education provider to determine if a learner can take up a place on this programme. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of how different NIAS's processes work with the UU's process and clarification of who makes the final decision about accepting an applicant onto the programme if adjustments are required, at the point of entry onto this programme.

2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence that there is an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Reason: From the discussions at the visit, the visitors were clear that the only route onto the programme is via the AP(E)L process for existing NIAS employees. Applicants via this route will likely be exempt from completing certain elements of the programme due to their prior learning and experience with NIAS. The documentation submitted prior to the visit detailed the AP(E)L policy for the education provider. At the visit, the visitors heard that applicants employed by NIAS will be assessed on an individual basis for entry onto the programme via the AP(E)L policy. The visitors were unsure how this will be managed or if the process in place ensures that applicants' prior learning and experience is being applied and how any decisions to offer a place on the programme would be managed based on these mechanisms. As such, the visitors require the education provider to provide further evidence that there is an appropriate and effective process in place for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience. In addition, the education provider must confirm whether the AP(E)L policy is only available to applicants from NIAS or whether it will be more widely available.

2.7 The education provider must ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants are implemented and monitored.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were unable to determine how equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants are implemented and monitored. At the visit, the visitors heard that both NIAS and UU have equality and diversity policies. However, the visitors were unable to determine which equality and diversity policy this programme would adhere to and how this will be communicated to applicants of the programme. In addition, the visitors were unable to determine how these policies are appropriate and ensure that the admission process is open and impartial and does not discriminate unfairly against certain applicants. As such, the visitors were unable to determine that a clear, definitive, formal process is in place to monitor how equality and diversity policies are applied throughout the admission process. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of how equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants are implemented and monitored.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide the governance arrangements, which clarify what aspects of the programme the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) and Ulster University (UU) are responsible for delivering.

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors were aware NIAS and UU would jointly act as the education provider responsible for delivering this programme. From the evidence provided the visitors were unclear how the management systems or governance arrangements in place will ensure that the partners can exchange information to ensure the effective delivery of the programme. In particular, the visitors were unclear as to who has overall responsibility to quality assure all aspects of the programme and assure the fulfilment of each organisation's obligations as described at the visit. In discussion with the senior team, the visitors heard that NIAS and UU are in the process of finalising a MOU and that this MOU will then provide a template for the effective management of the programme, including the distinct responsibilities for the different aspects of the programme and how these will be managed by the partner organisations. The visitors understand that the MOU is still in the process of being agreed and finalised so that it is hopefully in place before the programme commences. In order to determine this programme is effectively managed between the parties, the visitors require details of the indicative content of the memorandum of agreement which may include details of placement capacity or the process for either of the partner organisations to withdraw from the programme. In this way, the visitors can determine how the programme can meet this standard.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the programme management structure, which describes the lines of responsibility of everyone involved in the day-to-day management of the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were provided with staff curriculum vitae (CVs) for members of the team responsible for the delivery and management of the programme. However, from the information provided, it was not clear which members of the programme team would be responsible for which aspects of the programme management and who would be delivering specific areas of the programme. At the visit,

the visitors were informed that recruitment of staff for the programme was ongoing and that some staff members are not yet in place. This meant that the visitors could not be provided with a clear indication of who was responsible for what areas of the programme and how NIAS and UU staff will work collaboratively to effectively manage the programme. The visitors therefore require further information which clarifies the structure for the day-to-day management of the programme. The information should contain the lines of responsibility of the teaching team, and how this is conveyed to learners to ensure that they can refer to this information and have a clear understanding regarding which members of the team will deliver each area of the programme. In this way, the visitors can determine how the management of the programme will work in practice, and how learners will be supported through the programme by members of the programme team.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence as to the how the roles and responsibilities of Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) and Ulster University (UU) will be governed to ensure that any issues with learners progress and achievement are dealt with.

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors were aware NIAS and UU will jointly act as the education provider to deliver this programme. They were also made aware that learners will be associated learners of UU. To manage the partnership working it was clarified that the programme will be managed by the Clinical Training Manager (CTM) with daily management delegated to the nominated Course Director. In addition, UU has a Subject Partnership Manager in place to oversee the programme delivery and they will attend Staff Student Consultative Committees and Course Committees. From the evidence provided the visitors were unclear how the management systems or governance arrangements in place will ensure that the NIAS and UU can exchange information and work together to effectively deliver the programme. In particular, the visitors were unclear as to how the arrangements in place will allow any issues in either the academic or practice based learning settings regarding resourcing or learners' progression to be raised effectively and dealt with consistently. They therefore were unclear how the academic board at UU would be able to determine how trainees had progressed on the programme and determine if learners could graduate. As such the visitors were unclear, from the evidence provided, how the arrangements in place allow the committee structure described to manage the programme effectively and to deal with issues regarding resourcing or learners progression. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the management or governance structures that are in place to ensure that any issues that arise will be dealt with quickly, effectively and consistently.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the process in place for identifying and appointing an appropriately qualified and experienced person to hold overall professional responsibility for the programmes is appropriate.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were directed to the staff curriculum vitae. From the documentation and discussions with the senior team, the visitors were aware of the

individuals who will have overall professional responsibility for the programmes. The visitors noted that the staff identified were appropriately qualified and experienced and, are on the relevant part of the Register. In the senior team meeting, the visitors were informed that there is a process in place to ensure that they identify and appoint an appropriately qualified and experienced person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme. The visitors were informed that this process includes sending out an expression of interest and that there are a set of prescribed qualifications and particular criteria including HCPC registration for undertaking the role. However, the visitors were not given the process, and therefore could not determine that it is appropriate to ensure that the education provider will continue to appoint a suitable person and, if it becomes necessary, a suitable replacement. As such, the visitors require the education provider to demonstrate that they have an effective process in place for ensuring that they only appoint a person, with overall professional responsibility for the programme, who is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

3.4 The programme must have regular and effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate what systems are used to ensure that they regularly and effectively monitor the programme and how Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) and Ulster University (UU) collaborate to achieve this.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were made aware that UU has a Subject Partnership Manager (SPM) in post to oversee the programme delivery and quality processes and who will meet with learners. In addition, the visitors understood that UU will require an annual report on the quality of the programme delivery and within this will require feedback from learners, external examiner and the SPM. At the visit, the visitors heard that UU has several existing committees such as Staff Student Consultative Committees and Course Committees that this programme will feed into. The visitors understood the monitoring and evaluation systems in place at UU. However, given that NIAS and UU will jointly act as the education provider to deliver this programme, the visitors were unable to determine what mechanisms are in place that will enable NIAS to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. As such, the visitors require further evidence of how NIAS and UU will work collaboratively to ensure that the programme will have regular and effective monitoring and evaluation systems.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is regular and effective collaboration between Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) and the University of Ulster (UU).

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors were aware NIAS and UU will jointly act as the education provider to deliver this programme. At the visit, the visitors discussed the collaboration that has taken place in the lead up to the approval visit and during the development of this programme. The visitors were given verbal reassurance that regular collaboration has taken place between NIAS and UU, however the visitors were not able to see from the evidence provided the nature or extent of this collaboration. The visitors understood that current collaboration tends to be driven by existing relationships between individuals rather than by a formal process, and that it

tends to be reactive rather than planned at regular intervals. It was not clear to the visitors whether formal records of meetings and communications between NIAS and UU were kept. They were also unable to determine from the evidence provided and from discussions at the visit, the level of input UU has had into the development of the new programme. They therefore require further evidence that there is regular and effective collaboration between NIAS and UU, including the nature and extent of the collaboration.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there is an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of all practice-based learning for all learners.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors could not see information on the process that is in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners. In the SETs mapping document, the education provider supplied a narrative of the audit process. However, from the information provided the visitors were unable to see evidence of a process to ensure the availability and capacity of ambulance practice-based learning for all learners. In addition, the visitors noted that the education provider will offer 'alternative practice-based placements' in non-ambulance settings. From the information provided, the visitors could not see that there is a process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of the alternative practice-based learning for all learners either. At the visit, the practice education provider, NIAS, described the process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice based learning. They also talked about the numbers of mentors available and how provision of practice education for all areas in the region, is organised. The practice education provider talked about the system for mapping learners at all areas in the region against practice educators through a roster system, to ensure capacity. The programme team also confirmed that they had made some verbal agreements with potential alternative practice education providers, however no formal arrangements are currently in place. As the visitors were unclear that the roster system would ensure capacity at ambulance placements, and because the education provider does not currently have formal arrangements in place with providers of 'alternative' practice-based learning, the visitors could not determine that the education provider has an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how service users and carers are involved in the programme, and their strategy for ensuring the continuation of service user involvement.

Reason: From a review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors were unable to determine how service user and carers are currently involved in the programme. At the visit, the visitors heard that service users and carers have previously been involved in existing NIAS paramedic programmes. However, from the discussions with the programme team, it was clear that formal plans to involve service users in this programme are yet to be formulated. As such, the visitors saw no information to

demonstrate how service users and carers are involved in the programme currently, or will be involved in the programmes going forward. The visitors therefore cannot determine:

- who the service users and carers are (or will be);
- how they will be involved in the programme;
- how their involvement is appropriate; and
- the education provider's strategy for ensuring the continuation of service user and carer involvement in the programme.

The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence demonstrating that service users and carers will be involved in the programmes, and how they will ensure the continuation of ongoing service user and carer involvement in the programme.

3.8 Learners must be involved in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how learners are involved in the programme and their plans to ensure continued involvement of learners in the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors could not determine how learners are involved in the programme. During the visit, the visitors discussed the different approaches used by Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and the University of Ulster to involve learners in the programme such as 'course rep' and 'evaluation feedback'. However, from the evidence provided for this programme, the visitors were unclear which approach will be taken to involve learners in the programme and how it will work in practice. In particular, the visitors were unable to determine the process in place to ask for, allow and encourage learners to be involved. As such, the visitors were unable to determine how involving learners in the programme has and will contribute to the quality, effectiveness and continuous improvement of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence which clearly articulates the process in place for managing learners' continuous contribution and involvement in the programme.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that they have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors noted that the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Practice programme will run alongside the Associate Ambulance Practitioners and Emergency Medical Technicians programmes at NIAS. At the visit, the visitors heard that some NIAS staff will work across all three programmes whilst other members will work exclusively on the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Practice programme. In addition, the visitors noted from discussions with the senior team, that plans to recruit additional staff members have been agreed. However, the additional staff are yet to be recruited and due to the lack of clarity about who would be delivering the different aspects of the programme, the visitors were unable to determine how, following the recruitment to these posts, there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that there is, or will be, an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver this programme effectively.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information, which demonstrates that module leaders and external or associate tutors have the relevant specialist knowledge and expertise for their role in the programme.

Reason: The programme documentation submitted prior to the visit indicated module leaders have not yet been finalised. During discussion at the visit it was highlighted recruitment for staff to the programme was ongoing and the final arrangements as to the module leaders and module contributors were ongoing. In order to be assured there is enough profession specific input in to the programme and to ensure subject areas will be taught by staff with the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge, the visitors require further evidence. As such, the education provider must demonstrate who the module leaders and external/associate lecturers are and that they have the relevant specialist knowledge and expertise to deliver the programme content for which they are responsible. The visitors therefore require details of the module leaders and where contributions made from external or associate tutors will be in order to determine how this standard can be met.

3.11 An effective programme must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that there is an effective programme in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors noted in 'NIAS HSCT Education and Development 2017–18', that opportunities for continuing professional development are outlined. At the visit, the visitors heard that there will be opportunities for NIAS educators to further engage in continuing professional and academic development through the UU Collaborative Partnership Forum. Whilst, the visitors were clear of how NIAS educators will engage with continuing professional and academic development, the visitors were unclear how UU educators who contribute to the programme will take part in professional development arrangements that are in place. As such, the visitors were unable to determine how UU educators will continue to develop and maintain their professional and academic skills so they are able to contribute to the delivery of an effective programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how UU educators may engage with a programme of continuing professional and academic development to ensure that this standard is met.

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 demonstrate what significant changes have been made, as a response to the internal validation event and how those changes ensure that resources are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

Reason: Through discussion at the visit, and from the conclusions of the internal validation panel it was clear that revisions will be made to programme documentation to meet conditions set by the joint panel. The visitors consider the programme documentation that learners routinely refer to, an important resource to support learning. In particular, the joint panel conditions referred to amendments to module assessments, possibly the programme specification document, and the learner handbook. To ensure the programme meets this standard the visitors need to review changes made due to the education provider's response to the internal validation event. As such, the education provider must provide evidence which demonstrates that the amended learner resources to support learning are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme. The education provider may wish to provide the programme documentation that has been revised, or provide an overview of their response to the internal validation event.

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 provide further evidence of how the resources to support learner learning in all setting will be appropriate to the delivery of the programme and be accessible to all learners.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit stated the size and number of cohorts on this programme. This programme will enrol 72 learners with one intake per year. Furthermore, this programme will predominantly be delivered at Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) headquarters with learners spending 8 days at the University of Ulster campus. The visitors were given a tour of the physical learning resources at NIAS headquarters and were provided with images of what the new classrooms will look like once finished. Whilst the visitors were happy with the size of the classrooms available to learners across the two campuses, the visitors were not able to determine if there is appropriate availability of skills labs and equipment at both campuses. Furthermore, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures appropriate tutor supervision for learners to learn practical skills. Therefore, the visitors need to see further evidence to show how the education provider ensures all learners will be able to use skills labs and equipment, with appropriate tutor supervision. In this way, the visitors will be assured that resources to support learners learning in all setting will be appropriate to the delivery of the programme and accessible to all learners.

3.14 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to learners.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to learners.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were unable to determine how equality and diversity policies in relation to learners are implemented and monitored. At the visit, the visitors heard that both NIAS and UU have equality and diversity policies. However, the visitors were unable to determine which equality and diversity policy this programme

would adhere to and how this will be communicated to learners on the programme. In addition, the visitors were unable to determine how these policies are appropriate and ensure that the programme provides an impartial, fair and supportive environment to allow people to learn. As such, the visitors were unable to determine a clear, definitive, formal process in place to monitor how equality and diversity policies are put into practice and applied throughout the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of how equality and diversity policies in relation to learners are implemented and monitored.

3.15 There must be a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were unable to determine whether there was an effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints. At the visit, the visitors heard that NIAS and UU have complaints processes in place for learners. However, the visitors were unable to determine which complaints process this programme would adhere to and how this will be communicated to learners on the programme. In addition, the visitors were unable to determine how these policies are appropriate as well as how the education provider deals with and processes complaints from learners and how complaints contribute to the overall way in which the programme is governed. As such, the visitors require further evidence that there is a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.

3.16 There must be thorough and effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.

Condition: There must be clear, formal processes and procedures for dealing with the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were made aware that there are processes in place which deal with ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health, for example, NIAS 'fitness to practice policy'. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors were unsure how this policy links with the established fitness to practice procedures at UU. In addition to this, at the visit, the visitors could not determine which policy will be applied and who will make a decision about a learner staying on the programme if concern is raised about their suitability. Due to the inconsistency in the information provided, the visitors could not determine what criteria are used to determine when an issue around learners' profession related conduct is referred to the fitness to practice procedure, whether NIAS or UU policies and procedures would be followed and how this is communicated to learners, staff and practice educators to ensure consistency. Therefore, the visitors require clear evidence of the formal processes in place to deal with issues around suitability of learners' conduct, character and health. The visitors also require clarity regarding which of NIAS and UU fitness to practice procedures will be adhered to, if both they require further information about how this will work in practice. This evidence should also highlight explicit information for learners and practice educators around this process so that visitors can determine whether this standard is met.

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 what effective and formal process is in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing of service users.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were unable to determine the formal process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing of service users. At the visit, the visitors heard that both NIAS and UU have safeguarding and whistle blowing policies. However, the visitors were unable to determine which policies learners would be expected to adhere to and how this will be communicated to them. In addition, the visitors were unsure how these policies are appropriate and ensure that learners are able to recognise situations where service users may be at risk, support them in raising any concerns and ensure action is taken in response to those concerns, as they did not have sight of these policies. As such, the visitors were unable to determine whether there is a clear, definitive, formal process which supports and enables learners to raise such concerns. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence that there is an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing of service users.

3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revise programme documentation to clearly state, that if an aegrotat award is awarded it does not lead to eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted the following statement on page 63 of the paramedic practice document, “deem the candidate to have passed and recommend an Aegrotat Foundation degree”. It was clear that for this programme the board of examiners may award learners an aegrotat award if the learner is prevented from completing the programme due to illness or other sufficient cause. From the documentation, it was not clear how learners, educators and the public are made aware that aegrotat awards do not lead to eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register. As such, the education provider should revisit programme documentation to clearly state that if an aegrotat award is awarded it does not lead to eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register.

4.2 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the learning outcomes ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included a description of the modules, together with a mapping document, which provided some information about how learners who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs. However, from the documentation, the visitors were unable to determine how the learning

outcomes ensure that throughout the programme; learners are able to learn about professional conduct and demonstrate an understanding of which types of behaviour are appropriate for a professional and which are not. In discussions with the learners at the visit, the visitors were unable to determine how learners are made aware of their obligations to meet the standards of conduct, performance and ethics when they qualify and apply for registration, as well as throughout their future professional practice. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence of how the programme learning outcomes ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the process in place for ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant to current practice.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, in particular the SETs mapping document, the visitors noted the following statement on SET 4.4, “the curriculum is relevant to current practice in that it complies with, JRCALC, ERC and NICE guidelines”. Whilst the visitors agreed that the curriculum is current as it stands, they could not see evidence of the process in place for ensuring that the programme takes account of and reflects current practice, so that it remains relevant and effective in preparing learners for practice. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors heard that the education provider has a number of mechanisms in place such as feedback from practice educators, the course committee and internal feedback that all contribute to how the education provider ensures that the curriculum remains current. However, the visitors were not presented with the evidence to support this and therefore were unable to determine how the programme team will ensure that the curriculum will remain relevant to current practice. As such, the visitors require further evidence of the mechanisms that the programme team have in place to keep the curriculum up-to date with the current practice for the profession.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must articulate how they will ensure that learners will be able to learn with, and from professionals in other relevant professions and where this will take place within the programme structure.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were only provided with the following statement in the SETs mapping document, “opportunities for shared interprofessional learning will be undertaken in planned practice based learning and major incidents simulations. The people involved in teaching...will be a combination of paramedics, nurses, midwives and doctors, thus providing further opportunities for interdisciplinary discussions”. From the information provided the visitors could not determine what the ‘major incidents simulation’ consisted of or how the education provider will ensure that each learner will be able to learn with and from other professionals. As such, the visitors were unclear how learners are prepared to work with other professionals across professions. From the discussions at the visit, the visitors were unclear on the rationale behind the design and delivery of interprofessional education or how the education provider intends to ensure that it is as relevant as possible for learners on this programme. As such, the visitors were unable to determine the following:

- what interprofessional education will take place on the programme;
- why the professions and learners selected are relevant for this programme and;
- how learners will be able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions

The education provider must therefore articulate what interprofessional learning will take place on the programme, and how they will ensure that learners will learn with, and from professionals in other relevant professions.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of the formal and effective process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors did not see evidence of any formal protocols to obtain appropriate consent from service users in activities with learners such as role play and practising clinical techniques. At the visit, the visitors were unclear how the education provider ensures that the learning and teaching methods respect the rights of service users and appropriate consent is sought from service users. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require evidence of the formal protocols in place for obtaining consent from service users. They also require evidence that demonstrates how service users are informed about the requirement for them to participate in activities such as role-play and practising clinical techniques, and how records are maintained to indicate consent has been obtained. The education provider must therefore provide evidence of the formal process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users.

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that their attendance policy is clear and consistent in programme documentation, and ensure that learners are aware of which parts of the programme are mandatory.

Reason: From reviewing programme documentation relating to attendance, and discussions with the programme team and learners, the visitors were not clear about the programme policy on attendance. Some documents gave the minimum attendance figure as 80 per cent and others said that 100 per cent attendance was “normally expected”. In discussion with the learners, it was stated that the policy was that 100 per cent attendance was expected, but that 80 per cent was the threshold below which “sanctions” would be taken. However, the visitors could not see how this was clearly communicated to learners. They were also unable to determine how the 80 per cent attendance expectation would be spread across theory and practical parts of the programme, and could not see where the education provider has specified which parts of the programme were mandatory. The visitors therefore require the education provider to clarify their attendance policy, to demonstrate how they will identify to learners which programme components are mandatory.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how they maintain a thorough and effective system of approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Reason: The visitors noted a number of different documents submitted by the education provider to demonstrate how the programme meets this standard. However, in considering the programme documentation and discussions held at the visit, the visitors could not find sufficient evidence of any overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of practice-based learning. When this was discussed with the programme team, the visitors remained unclear as to how the education provider would maintain overall responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice-based learning. The visitors could not determine the criteria used by the programme team to assess a practice-based learning setting and what the overall process would be to approve it, as well as what activities such as the participant questionnaires would feed into any quality monitoring of practice-based learning setting. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of practice-based learning, and how they are put into practice, to ensure this standard is met. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used to approve ambulance stations and, the overall process for the approval and ongoing monitoring of practice-based learning settings, and how information gathered from practice education providers at approval, or during a practice experience is considered and acted upon.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate how they maintain a thorough and effective system of approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of practice-based learning would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and practice educators. These discussions also clarified that learners would have the opportunity to experience practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with the following statement, "All practice Based Learning areas will be audited to ensure their suitability to provide safe and supportive learning for students". The visitors did not see evidence to show how practice-based learning areas will be audited or the criteria used by the programme team to assess a practice based learning in alternative settings and what the overall process would be to approve it. The programme team informed visitors that a similar processes will be in place for alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at NIAS, but the visitors did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to show how the education provider maintains a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring placements at alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that all practice based learning environment is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Reason: The visitors noted a number of different documents submitted by the education provider to demonstrate how the programme meets this standard. However, in considering the programme documentation and discussions held at the visit, the visitors were unable to determine the approval criteria that the education provider would use to ensure that practice-based learning settings are safe and supportive for learners and service users. The visitors were therefore could not determine what the education provider's system for approving and monitoring placements are and how, through using this system, they will ensure that all practice- based learning settings provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require further evidence to show what steps the education provider takes to ensure that practice-based learning settings provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate how they ensure a safe and supportive environment at alternative (non-ambulance) for learners and service users at practice-based settings.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of practice-based learning would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and practice educators. These discussions also clarified that learners would have the opportunity to experience practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with the following statement, "All practice based learning areas will be audited to ensure their suitability to provide safe and supportive learning for students". The visitors did not see evidence to show how practice-based learning areas will be audited or what the education provider's system for approving and monitoring practice based learning settings are and how, through using this system, they will ensure that all practice based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users. The programme team informed visitors that a similar processes will be in place for alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at NIAS, but the visitors did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service practice-based learning settings, due to the nature of the practice-based learning experience. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to show how the education provider ensures a safe and supportive environment at alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in alternative practice-based learning.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided and the information provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice-based learning settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. The visitors were provided with the following statement, “the audit of the practice-based learning areas will be undertaken and as part of this process the number and qualification of staff will be gathered”. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what number of practice educators would be available for the number of learners on the programme, or how the education provider ensures the practice educators are appropriately qualified and experienced. At the visit, the visitors heard from the practice education provider about the number of practice educators there are for learners in the region, and how the education provider intends to ensure that the practice-based learning staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. The visitor require the formal process in place ensuring that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in alternative practice-based learning.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate how they ensure practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of practice-based learning would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and practice educators. These discussions also clarified that learners would have the opportunity to experience practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with the following statement, “the audit of the practice based learning areas will be undertaken and as part of this process the number and qualification of staff will be gathered”. However, the visitors were not provided with an audit process, which demonstrated how the education provider ensures that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place in at alternative (non-ambulance) practice-based learning settings. The programme team informed visitors that a similar processes will be in place for alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at NIAS, but the visitors did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service practice-based learning settings. Due to the nature of the alternative placement, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that practice educators at alternative (non-ambulance) practice-based learning setting have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support learners on this programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of practice-based learning would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and practice educators. These discussions also clarified that learners would have the opportunity to experience practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. However, the visits were not provided with an audit process which demonstrates how the education provider ensures that practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support learners on this programme. The programme team informed visitors that a similar processes will be in place for alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at NIAS, but the visitors did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the practice-based learning experience, and due to the background of the staff at these settings. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to show how the education provider ensures practice placement educators at alternative (non-ambulance) settings have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support learners.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence demonstrating how they ensure practice educators undertake regular training appropriate to the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of practice-based learning would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and practice educators. These discussions also clarified that learners would have the opportunity to experience practice-based learning in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. However, the visits were not provided with an audit process which demonstrates that practice educators will undertake appropriate practice educator training in alternative (non-ambulance) settings. The programme team informed visitors that a similar processes will be in place for alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at NIAS, but the visitors did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the practice-based learning experience, and due to the background of the staff at these settings. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to show how the education provider ensures practice placement educators at alternative (non-ambulance) settings undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the assessment throughout the programme ensures that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included description of the assessment methods, together with a mapping document, which provided some information about how learners who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs. However, from the documentation the visitors were unable to determine how the assessment throughout the programme ensures learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics. In discussions at the visit, the visitors were unable to determine how the assessment ensures that learners are able to demonstrate that they understand the expectations associated with being a regulated professional by the time they complete the programme. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence that the assessment throughout the programme ensures that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the assessments will provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Reason: On review of the documentation the visitors note that part of the assessment strategies include a 'Clinical Practice Assessment Document (PAD)' which is used to assess a learners clinical practice while in the practice-based learning environment, using a pass / refer / fail mark. The PAD document for the programme was not provided instead the visitors were given exemplar PADs. At the visit, the visitors heard that the PAD is currently being finalised and will be available before the programme commence. As the visitors have not seen what the clinical practice assessment document will be, they could not make a judgement that the assessment throughout the programme will provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the assessment methods used are appropriate in, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Reason: On review of the documentation the visitors note that part of the assessment strategies include a 'Clinical Practice Assessment Document (PAD)' which is used to assess a learner's clinical practice while in the practice-based learning environment, on a pass / refer / fail mark. The PAD document for the programme were not provided instead the visitors were given exemplar PADs. At the visit, the visitors heard that the PAD is currently being finalised and will be available before the programme commences. As the visitors have not seen what the clinical practice assessment document will be, they could not determine whether the assessment would be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes. As such, the visitors

require further evidence which demonstrates that the assessments methods used are appropriate and effective at measuring the learning outcomes. In addition, the visitors heard that if learners do not have the opportunity to get certain skills signed off, they could be assessed via simulation. However, the visitors were unclear what proportion of skills could be assessed via simulation. Whilst the HCPC does not set a requirement on the percentage of skills that can be assessed via simulation. The visitors were provided with no information therefore they were unable to make a judgement as to whether the assessment via simulation was appropriate and effect at measuring the learning outcomes. As such the visitors require further evidence to determine whether this standard is met.

6.6 There must be an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.

Condition: The education must provider further evidence that there is an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors were unable to determine whether there is an effective process in place for learners to make an academic appeal. At the visit, the visitors heard that both NIAS and UU have academic appeal policies in place. However, the visitors were unable to determine which policies learners would adhere to and how this will be communicated to them. In addition, the visitors were unsure how these policies are appropriate and ensure that assessment processes are applied fairly. As such, the visitors were unable to determine a clear, definitive, formal process to make an academic appeal. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of that there is an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.

6.7 The education provider must ensure that at least one external examiner for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be appropriately qualified and experience, and, unless other arrangement are appropriate, be on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team at the visit, it was clarified that the education provider would require an HCPC registered external examiners to be appointed. However from the documentation submitted by the education provider, the visitors were unable to identify the criteria that external examiners must meet in order to be appointed. In particular the visitors could not identify where it was stated that at least one external examiner must be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register. As such, the visitors could not determine how the education provider will ensure that at least one external examiner is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register. The visitors therefore need to see evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the assessment regulations, or relevant programme documentation, to demonstrate that this standard is met.

Section 5: Details of the visit to consider the first conditions response

In order for us to progress with the visit to consider the first conditions response, we required a documentary response to the conditions 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.

Required documentation	Submitted
First response to the conditions contained in Section 4 of this report	Yes

The visit took place on 24 - 25 October 2018. We met the following groups as required in the recommendation by visitors' in section 4.

Group	Met	Reason(s) not met
Learners	Yes	The visitors met with learners studying on other NIAS programmes.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers and educators	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Other groups involved in the visit

There were other groups in attendance at the revisit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Paul Bartholomew	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Ulster
Shelley McKeown	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

HCPC panel for considering the conditions response

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.

David Whitmore	Paramedic
Robert Fellows	Paramedic
Sophie Gamwell	Lay
Shaista Ahmad	HCPC executive

Section 6: Visitors' recommendation

Following their consideration of the conditions response, and from discussions at the revisit, the visitors recommend that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met, and that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 06 December 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](#).

Section 7: Future considerations for the programme(s)

We include this section to note areas that may need to be considered as part of future HCPC assessment processes. Education providers do not need to respond to this section at this time, but should consider whether to engage with the HCPC around these areas in the future.

As of March 2018, the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register for paramedics changed to degree level. From 1 September 2021, education providers will not be able to take on any new learners to programmes delivered below the threshold level. As this programme is a Foundation Degree, which is below the threshold level, we will withdraw approval after September 2021. With this in mind, the education provider should be aware that the HCPC would need to visit any new programmes, in the future, to consider their approval in line with the standards of education and training.