

## HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Coventry University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Full time BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Part time
Approval visit date	20 February 2018
Case reference	CAS-12230-S7X9Z0

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### 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.

## 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:

Tristan Henderson	Paramedic
Vincent Clarke	Paramedic
Clare Bates	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.

Bev Stevenson	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Coventry University
Stevie West	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Coventry University
Sarah Baxter	Internal validator (supplied by the education provider)	Coventry University

## Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25 (across both provisions)
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01811

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25 (across both provisions)
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01837

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	Yes

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	This is a new programme, as such the panel met with learners from the Foundation Degree Paramedic Science.
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.

### 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.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 14 May 2018.

### 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 submitted a website link and a PowerPoint that is used on the open day to provide information for applicants. In assessing the content of the website and the PowerPoint, the visitors noted that the information relates to the existing approved FdSc Paramedic programme. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors noted that the education provider intends to update the information provided on the open day including the content on the PowerPoint. However, because the visitors did not have sight of this the visitors could not determine how this information would be

appropriately communicated to prospective applicants. In particular how the education provider intends to communicate the following information to prospective applicants:

- 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
- the elements of the programme to which accreditation of prior (experiential) learning can be applied and;
- correct information about the requirement of a C1 driving licence.

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.

## **2.6 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 documentation provided, and from the discussions at the visit, the visitors were clear that a potential route onto the programme is via the AP(E)L process for existing WMAS employees. Applicants via this route will likely be exempt from completing certain elements of the programme due to their prior learning and experience with WMAS. 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 WMAS 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 are being applied and how any decisions to offer a place on the programme would be managed based on these mechanisms. In addition, the visitors noted in the documentation a number of references to East Midland Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EMAS), the visitors were unsure whether existing employees from EMAS were also able to access the programme via the AP(E)L process. 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 needs to confirm whether the AP(E)L policy is only available to applicants from WMAS or whether it will be more widely available.

## **3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide further evidence of the structure for the day-to-day management of the programme, the lines of responsibility of the teaching team.

**Reason:** Prior to the visit, the visitors were provided with a course staff list of 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 programme management, or 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 includes the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme. The visitors were also unclear of the responsibilities of this role. The visitors therefore require further information regarding the structure for the day-to-day management of the programme, the lines of responsibility of the teaching team. 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.

### **3.3 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 provide evidence of the process in place for identifying and appointing an appropriately qualified and experienced person to hold overall professional responsibility for the programme.

**Reason:** From discussions with the senior team, the visitors were aware of the individuals who will have overall professional responsibility for the programme, although this individual has not yet started their role. The visitors noted that the staff identified were appropriately qualified and experienced and, on the relevant part of the Register. In discussion with the senior team, the visitors heard that there is a process in place to ensure that they identify and appoint an appropriately qualified and experienced person(s) holding overall professional responsibility for the programme. However, the visitors did not have sight of this process, and therefore the visitors could not determine that it is appropriate to ensure that the education provider appoints or approves 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 for ensuring that the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.

### **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 with practice education providers.

**Reason:** The visitors were able to discuss the existing arrangements for collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers relating to the FdSc Paramedic Science provision. They were given verbal reassurances by the programme team that collaboration has taken place in the development of this programme, but they were not able to see from the evidence provided the nature or extent of this collaboration. In their mapping document, the education provider referred to a letter from West Midlands Ambulance Trust (WMAS), which gives a commitment to provide practice-based learning opportunities, but the visitors considered that this did not provide evidence of regular and effective collaboration. In discussion at the visit, the visitors were informed that some practice educators considered that collaboration with the education provider was not regular. The visitors understood that such collaboration tended to be driven by existing relationships between individuals rather than by a formal process, and that it tended to be reactive. It was not clear to the visitors whether formal records were kept of meetings and communication between the education provider and

practice education providers. They were also unable to determine from the evidence provided and from discussions the level of input that practice education providers had had into the development of the new programme. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that there is regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers.

### **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 how they will ensure that sufficient practice-based learning is available for all learners.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that once the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science programme begins, the total number of learners that West Midland Ambulance Service NHS Trust (WMAS) will provide practice-based learning opportunities for is 100 learners for both programmes at Coventry University. The FdSc Paramedic Science is approved for, a maximum learner cohort of 75 and the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science is seeking approval for a maximum learner cohort of 25 per cohort. The visitors were unable to determine the process in place for ensuring availability and capacity of practice-based learning across the whole provision. As such, the visitors had concerns that the education provider will not have enough practice-based learning opportunities for all learners given the increase in numbers across the provision.

In addition, the visitors were told in the programme team meeting that third year practice-based learning has yet not been finalised. As such, the visitors were not able to see the practice-based learning opportunities that will be available, including the split between ambulance based and non-ambulance based practice-based learning, or the type of locations where learners would be based. In discussions at the visit, the visitors heard that learners in the third year of the programme will be able to select practice-based learning opportunities from any area of interest including non-NHS and non-ambulance settings. The visitors heard that these practice-based learning opportunities are not elective and have learning outcomes associated with them. Under these circumstances, the visitors considered that it might be difficult for the education provider to find enough practice-based learning opportunities for all learners given the possible range of practice-based learning opportunities that learners can undertake. The visitors received verbal reassurances that the programme team were confident that they could find practice-based learning opportunities for all learners, and that the education provider intends to phase out the FdSc Paramedic Science programme if this programme is approved.

However, from the discussions and the documentation the visitors were unable to determine whether an effective process was in place to ensure availability and capacity as no formal plan formal plans to ensure availability and capacity was provided. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate that they have an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

### **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 there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

**Reason:** From a review of the course staff profile list, the visitors were unable to determine who the teaching staff would be for this programme as the visitors were not provided with any information on how these staff members would be involved in delivering this programme. In addition, the visitors noted from discussions with the senior team, that plans to recruit an additional staff members have not been agreed. As such, the number of teaching staff that will be in place is not yet final. Due to the lack of clarity in whom will 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 evidence that subject areas will be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

**Reason:** The documentation submitted prior to the visit included course staff profile list. During discussion at the visit it was highlighted recruitment for staff to the programme was ongoing and the final arrangements of staff as well as responsibility has yet not been finalised. Therefore, the visitors were unsure that there will be enough profession specific input to the programme to ensure subject areas will be taught by staff with the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge. The visitors therefore require details that subject areas will be delivered by educators with relevant knowledge and expertise in order to determine how this standard can be met by the programme.

### **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 that the resources to support learning in all setting are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider included instances where the documentation refers to nursing rather than paramedics. For example, page 7 of the placement handbook states, "Thus we expect you to behave in a manner that promotes public trust in you as a nurse". In addition, page 132 of the practice based learning document pack includes a HCPC registration disclaimer, which has the following statement, "By making this declaration of competence/non-competency are certifying that you have assessed the learner and competences in all of the required areas ...you are aware of the implications this has on your own registration". At the visit, the practice educators revealed that they were concerned that signing off a learner had implications for their own HCPC registration. In the meeting with the programme team, it was confirmed that there was no implication for practice educators that sign off competences and non-competence. It is important that practice educators are equipped with accurate information, and the visitors

considered it to be important that the programme documentation accurately reflects the HCPC, and its role in the regulation of the profession. The visitors therefore require the education provider to ensure that the resources to support learning in all setting is effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

### **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 equality and diversity policies in relation to learners are implemented and monitored

**Reason:** Prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to a university wide equality and diversity policy to evidence this standard. Whilst the visitors were satisfied that the content of the policy, if implemented and monitored appropriately, was appropriate to ensure equality and diversity in relation to learners. However, there was no clear evidence to show how the policy is implemented and monitored. The visitors note that without seeing information about how the policy will be implemented and monitored in relation to this programme they are unable to have confidence that the process will continue to be applied consistently throughout the lifetime of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence to show how the policy will be implemented and monitored in relation to this programme.

### **4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for paramedics.

**Reason:** The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors, together with a mapping document giving some information about how learners who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs. However, the SOPs mapping made broad references to modules, rather than specific references to the learning outcomes. Therefore, the visitors were unclear how each of the module learning outcomes linked to each of the SOPs, to ensure that learners completing the programme can meet the SOPs for paramedics. From discussions with the programme team the visitors heard that the necessary learning outcomes were in place but were yet to be finalised throughout the documentation. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence, such as revised documentation, to clearly define the link between the learning outcomes associated with all aspects of this programme and how these outcomes will ensure that learners completing the programme can meet all of the relevant SOPs for paramedics.

### **4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.**

**Condition:** The programme team must provide further evidence of the mechanisms that will be in place to ensure that the curriculum will remain current.

**Reason:** From a review of the initial documentation, the visitors were unable to determine how the programme team ensures that the curriculum remains relevant to current practice. In the SETs mapping document, the evidence referenced was the module descriptors and course specification, however the visitors did not consider this

as 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, internal feedback and ongoing research, that all feedback into ensuring that the curriculum remains current. However, the visitors were not presented with any 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 will have in place to keep the curriculum up-to date with the current practice for the profession.

#### **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 process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from learners and service users and carers.

**Reason:** From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the SETs mapping document stated that the process for obtaining appropriate consent from learners and service users was contained in the course handbook. In a review of this documentation, the visitors noted that the consent form in the course handbook was consent for the use of 'photographer, video and sound recording'. As such, the visitors did not see evidence of any formal protocols to obtain consent from learners and service users in activities such as role play and practising clinical techniques. In addition, the visitors were unclear how the education provider manages situations where learners decline from participating as service users in practical sessions. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require evidence of the formal protocols for obtaining consent from learners and service users and carers. They also require evidence that demonstrates how learners and 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. In particular, the visitors require evidence to show what alternative learning arrangements will be put in place where learners do not consent to participating as a service user.

#### **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 define where attendance is mandatory, demonstrate that associated monitoring processes are in place, along with how these requirements are communicated to learners on the programme.

**Reason:** From review of the documentation, the visitors were unclear on the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, or what the consequences would be for learners that do not attend these parts of the programme. In the documentation, there is an eighty percent attendance requirement, however, it is not clear exactly how this applies across the programme (for example, year three of the programme) or how attendance is monitored by the education provider. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors could not establish how the team would apply this requirement particularly in year three of the programme, or which parts of the programme could not

be missed. Therefore, the education provider must define what the requirements are, how attendance is monitored, and how this is communicated to learners.

## **5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all learners have access to practice-based learning of appropriate structure, duration and range to support the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Reason:** From a review of the documentation, the visitors were unclear how learners have access to practice-based learning of appropriate structure, duration and range to support the achievement of the learning outcomes. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that they intend to make use of a wide variety of practice-based learning settings (particularly for the third year of the programme), and considered that this range would be appropriate for paramedic learners. However, it was not clear to the visitors the rationale for structure, duration and range practice-based learning settings for the third year of the programme. In addition, the visitors were not clear how the education provider ensures that the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning will support the achievement of the learning outcomes and standards of proficiency for each learner. Additionally, the placement handbook gave a narrative briefly explaining some of the details of practice-based learning on the programme. However, it did not give any detailed information about the expected structure, duration or range of practice-based learning. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors were informed practice-based learning in year three will look different for each learner, and that the programme team will put together a process for developing individual practice-based learning plans for each learner. However, they were not able to view evidence of how these individualised plans will be made or finalised as well as how this would integrate with the rest of the programme schedule, or how achievement of learning outcomes and standards of proficiency would be ensured. Therefore, the visitors were not able to determine whether the education provider's approach to ensuring an appropriate structure, duration and range of practice-based learning was appropriate, as they could not see information about what this approach was. They therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence demonstrating how they will ensure an appropriate structure, duration and range of practice-based learning for all learners to determine whether this standard it met.

## **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 demonstrate that there is an effective system in place for 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 were not provided with 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 how the education provider will effectively approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning for this programme particularly for those learners in year three of the programme who are can select practice-based learning opportunities from both

ambulance and non-ambulance settings. Additionally, the visitors could not determine the criteria used by the programme team to assess a practice-based learning opportunity, or what the overall process would be to approve it, as well as what activities and information would feed into any quality monitoring of practice-based learning. 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 in the following:

- the criteria used to approve practice-based learning and settings with a particular emphasis on third year practice-based learning;
- the overall process for the approval and ongoing monitoring of practice-based learning; and
- how information gathered from practice-based learning at approval, or during a practice-based learning experience is considered and acted upon.

This condition links to the conditions for SET 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7.

#### **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 will ensure that all practice-based learning will provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

**Reason:** The visitors understand that practice-based learning opportunities for year three of the programme have yet to be arranged and finalised. As such, the visitors were not able to see which practice-based learning opportunities were ambulance based and which were non-ambulance based, or the type of locations where learners would be based. In discussions at the visit, the visitors heard that learners in the third year of the programme will be able to select practice-based learning opportunities from any area of interest including non-NHS and non-ambulance settings. In addition to this, the visitors heard that these practice-based learning opportunities are not elective and have learning outcomes associated with them. As the education provider has not demonstrated there is an effective process in place for approving and monitoring practice-based learning, the visitors cannot make a judgement at this stage that the education provider can ensure that all practice-based learning will provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users. The visitors cannot make a judgement about whether the education provider has a system for ensuring that the practice-based learning settings provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users. As such, the education provider will need to demonstrate what systems they have in place to ensure the practice-based learning setting provides a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

#### **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 that there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

**Reason:** The visitors understand that practice-based learning opportunities for year three of the programme have yet to be arranged and finalised. As such, the visitors were not able to see which practice-based learning opportunities were ambulance based and which were non-ambulance based, or the type of locations where learners would be based. In discussions at the visit, the visitors heard that learners in the third year of the programme will be able to select practice-based learning opportunities from any area of interest including non-NHS and non-ambulance settings. In addition to this, the visitors heard that these practice-based learning opportunities are not elective and have learning outcomes associated with them. As the education provider has not demonstrated there is an effective process in place for approving and monitoring practice-based learning, the visitors cannot make a judgement at this stage that the education provider will have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning. Specifically, the education provider has not demonstrated there is a process in place for identifying suitable practice-based learning staff, including the criteria that they will use to make this judgement. In order for the visitors to determine whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate there is a process in place for identifying an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

**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 have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.

**Reason:** The visitors understand that practice-based learning opportunities for year three of the programme have yet to be arranged and finalised. As such, the visitors were not able to see which practice-based learning opportunities were ambulance based and which were non-ambulance based, or the type of locations where learners would be based. In discussions at the visit, the visitors heard that learners in the third year of the programme will be able to select practice-based learning opportunities from any area of interest including non-NHS and non-ambulance settings. In addition to this, the visitors heard that these practice-based learning opportunities are not elective and have learning outcomes associated with them. As the education provider has not demonstrated there is an effective process in place for approving and monitoring practice-based learning, the visitors cannot make a judgement at this stage that the education provider has a suitable process for ensuring that practice educators will have relevant knowledge, skills and experience. Specifically, the education provider has not demonstrated there is a process in place for identifying suitable practice-based learning staff, including the criteria that they will use to ensure that these individuals have relevant knowledge, skills and experience. In order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard has been met; the education provider must demonstrate there is a process in place for ensuring practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.

### **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 demonstrate how they ensure that practice educators undertake regular training, which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme

**Reason:** Prior to the visit, the visitors noted training content for East Midland Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EMAS) and not for West Midland Ambulance Service NHS Trust (WMAS). The visitors noted that the training for EMAS was 'optional' as practice educators are only invited to attend. At the visit, the visitors heard that the education provider will be partnering with WMAS in the first instance and later with EMAS. Given, that the education provider is partnering with WMAS, the visitors were unclear on what training would be provided for practice educators, or whether the training would be mandatory. In addition, the visitors heard that learners in the third year of the programme will be able to select practice-based learning opportunities from any area of interest including non-NHS and non-ambulance settings. From the documentation and discussions, the visitors were not clear on the criteria the education provider will use to determine what training individuals will need, or an indication of the content of training for both ambulance and non-ambulance practice-based learning settings. The visitors are also unclear what training is required of practice educators from both ambulance and non-ambulance settings, for example, when initial training would need to be completed, how frequently refresher training would need to be completed, or about the content of this training. Therefore, the visitors require evidence to demonstrate how the education provider ensures that all practice educators undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, the learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes.

### **5.8 Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure learners and practice educators are fully prepared for practice-based learning.

**Reason:** The visitors could not determine from the evidence provided how the education provider ensures that learners and practice educators are fully prepared for practice-based learning. In particular, they could not identify how they were made aware of the learners' ability and expected scope of practice while on practice-based learning and what the expectations of both the learners and practice educators should be at each individual practice-based learning to ensure that learners gain the experience they require. In the meeting with the practice educators, it was clear that the education provider relies on the 'placement launch' which is owned by West Midland Ambulance Service NHS Trust (WMAS). As such, the visitors were unable to determine the education provider process in place for ensuring learners and practice educators have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning. In addition, the visitors heard that learners on the third year of the programme will be able to select from a range of ambulance, non-ambulance, non-NHS practice-based learning opportunities which allies with their interest. The visitors heard that these practice-based learning opportunities are not elective and have learning outcomes associated with them. The visitors therefore require information about the mechanisms in place, which demonstrates how the education provider ensures learners

and practice educators are fully prepared for practice-based learning. In particular, this should demonstrate how practice educators are made aware of students' experience and expected scope of practice for each practice-based learning and how the expectation of both the learners and practice educators at practice-based learning are managed to ensure that learners get the experience they require to meet the relevant learning outcomes. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how learners and practice educator will be fully prepared for practice-based learning and in a timely manner.

#### **6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how the assessments of learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) paramedics.

**Reason:** The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors, together with a mapping document giving information about how the assessment procedures for the programme will ensure that students who successfully complete the programme meet the SOPs. However, the SOPs mapping made broad references to the modules and rather than specific references to learning outcomes. Therefore, the visitors were unclear how the assessment of each module and the associated learning outcomes were linked to each of the SOPs, to ensure that a student completing the programme has demonstrated that they meet the SOPs for paramedics. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that the necessary learning outcomes and associated assessments were in place but were yet to be finalised throughout the documentation. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence, such as revised documentation, to clearly define the link between the assessment of students associated with all aspects of this programme and how these assessments will ensure that students completing the programme have demonstrated that they have meet all of the relevant SOPs for paramedics.

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

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

**Reason:** For this standard, the visitors were directed to various documents including the assessment summaries and details of assessment in all modules. Following a review of the documentation, the visitors were unclear on how the assessment at practice-based learning will provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement. In addition, the visitors were unable to determine the following:

- how progression is assessed in relation to the Practice Assessment Document (PAD) 1 and 2 and;
- how performance on the modules influence progression onto other modules.

In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that there are assessment criteria that the education provider will use to ensure that the assessments employed provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and

achievement. However, the visitors were not provided with the assessment criteria or the process in place to make sure that the assessments in the programme are objective, fair and reliable. The education provider therefore, must provide evidence to demonstrate how the assessments provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

#### **6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide further evidence which clearly articulates the requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

**Reason:** For this standard, the visitors were directed to the course specification. From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that learners were able to carry over 20 credits if they failed a module. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that this is in line with assessment regulations, however the visitors were unable to determine how learners progressed and achieved within the programme if they failed a 20-credit module. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that learners will be able to carry over 20 credits in their second year of the programme as part of the assessment regulations. The visitors were unable to determine how pertinent information regarding carrying over credit due to failing was communicated to learner, so that they can progress and achieve within the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the assessment regulations, particularly information on carrying over 20 credits, will be communicated to students. In this way the visitors can make determinations about whether the programme meets this standard.

#### **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 the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed with the HCPC. The visitors were given the appointment criteria for external examiners however, the visitors need to see evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate that this standard is met.

### **Section 5: Outcome from second review**

#### **Second response to conditions required**

The education provider responded to the conditions set out in section 4. Following their consideration of this response, the visitors were satisfied that the conditions for several of the standards were met. However, they were not satisfied that the following

conditions were met, for the reasons detailed below. Therefore, in order for the visitors to be satisfied that the following conditions are met, they require further evidence.

## **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 condition not met at this time:** From the response to condition, the visitors noted on slide 5 of the presentation given to applicants the following statement, “enabling you to register as a Paramedic on the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) register”. The visitors consider the phrase ‘enabling you to register’ misleading, as completion of the programme does not lead to automatic registration, learners will need to apply to register after they completed their programme. As such, the visitors require further evidence, which demonstrates that applicants are given appropriate, clear and consistent information relating to registration.

**Suggested documentation:** The education provider should consider revising the statement, to ensure that the presentation clearly informs applicants that completing this programme will mean that they are ‘eligible to apply’ for registration with the HCPC.

## **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 that the resources to support learning in all setting are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

**Reason condition not met at this time:** From the response to condition, the visitors noted that page 106 of the practice assessment document Year 1 still contained the HCPC registration disclaimer. Which has the following statement, “By making this declaration of competence/non-competency are certifying that you have assessed the learner and competences in all of the required areas ...you are aware of the implications this has on your own registration”. The visitors noted that the education provider has added, “This is in accordance with the HCPC standard of proficiency (2.1 and 6.2)”. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that there was no implications for practice educators that sign off whether a learner is competent or not. From the response to this condition, the visitors were unable to determine how practice educators would be made aware that their decision about whether or not to sign off competencies will not adversely affect their registration, if the following statement, “you are aware of the implications this has on your own registration” is contained in the documentation. As such the visitors require further evidence, which demonstrate that the resource to support educators is appropriate to the programme.

**Suggested documentation:** The education provider should consider revising the disclaimers on PAD year 1 and 2 to ensure that it correctly reflects that there is no HCPC registration implication for practice educators that sign off competences.

## Section 6: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, and the request for further evidence set out in section 5, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 23 August 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](#).