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Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Cumbria
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Radiographer
Date of visit	11-12 February 2009

Contents

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Radiographer' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. The education provider has until 19 March 2009 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 20 May 2009. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 27 March 2009. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 20 May 2009.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme resources standards, curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Shaaron Pratt (Radiographer) Martin Benwell (Radiographer)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
HPC observer	Brendon Edmonds
Proposed student numbers	70 (split between Lancaster and Carlisle)
Initial approval	January 1992
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Alan Smith (University of Cumbria)
Secretary	Caron Jackson (University of Cumbria)
Members of the joint panel	Ashley Tiffen (Internal Panel Member) Amanda West (Internal Panel Member) Julie Woodley (External Panel Member, University of the West of England) Caroline Adams (Society of Radiographers) Jennifer Edie (Society of Radiographers)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☐	☒	☐
Programme handbook	☒	☐	☐
Stage 1 validation documents	☒	☐	☐
Critical review	☒	☐	☐

The HPC did not review External examiners' reports prior to the visit as the education provider did not submit it. However, they did table these at the visit itself.

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 58 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 5 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a number of recommendations for the programme. Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must revisit all the programme documentation to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, HPC 'approves' educational programmes. We do not 'accredit' or 'validate' programmes. In the submitted documentation, there were instances of out-of-date terminology in reference to the registered status of individuals such as "state registered". It should also be made clear throughout all documentation that HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for those who complete the programme but rather to 'eligibility to apply for HPC registration'. The visitors considered the terminology could be misleading to applicants and students and therefore require the documentation (including website information) to be thoroughly reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide assurance of how effective onsite clinical/practice education will be delivered in this programme and evidence that the education provider is committed to providing enough resources to deliver the programme.

Reason: At the visit there was an indication that there were planned changes to the way that clinical learning and teaching is carried out onsite in the programme. In discussions it was apparent that the development of the clinical skills facilities at both sites would form an essential resource for the programme. To ensure that this standard is being met the visitors require confirmation and further detail of the extent and nature of the developments. In particular, the visitors require evidence of the facilities required to deliver the programme, plans to implement the development of the clinical skills labs at both Lancaster and Carlisle, and confirmation of the sustainability of the facilities. The education provider must also provide clarification of how the site at Carlisle in its current form will deliver the programme until the clinical skills lab resource is completed at this site.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide assurance of how the onsite resources will support the required learning and teaching in this programme.

Reason: At the visit there was an indication that there were planned changes to the way that clinical/practical learning and teaching is carried out onsite in the programme. In discussions it was apparent that the development of the clinical skills facilities at both sites would form an essential resource for the programme. To ensure that this standard is being met the visitors require confirmation and further detail of the extent and nature of the developments. In particular, the visitors require evidence of the facilities required to deliver the programme, plans to implement the development of the clinical skills labs at both Lancaster and Carlisle, and confirmation of the sustainability of the facilities. The education provider must also provide clarification of how the site at Carlisle in its current form will deliver the programme until the clinical skills lab resource is completed at this site.

6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HPC Register.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the policy for aegrotat awards for the programme. The visitors need to see evidence that this policy is clearly communicated within the documentation to ensure that this standard is being met.

6.7.5 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed with the HPC.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the external examiner recruitment policy for the programme. The visitors were happy with the current external examiner arrangements for the programme but need to see evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of this requirement.

Recommendations

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the programme team revisits the programme documentation to clearly articulate the guidelines to students around consent for participation in the programme.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the information regarding student participation in practical sessions could be confusing to the students. They recommend that the programme team review the information provided within the programme documentation to ensure that the guidance is consistent.

3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the programme team revisits the module descriptors to articulate which modules in the programme have mandatory components.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the information regarding mandatory components could be enhanced further by including this detail in the relevant module descriptors. The visitors felt that this would further ensure that students are clear where attendance is required within the programme.

6.7.2 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for awards which do not provide eligibility for inclusion onto the Register not to contain any reference to an HPC protected title in their title.

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the programme team revisits the programme documentation to clearly articulate that exit awards do not provide eligibility to apply for registration.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the information regarding exit awards could be confusing. The visitors recommend that it is made explicit within all documents that the exit award BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Imaging Theory does not provide eligibility to apply for registration in order to prevent any confusion.

Shaaron Pratt
Martin Benwell

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Emergency Response Services (ERS) Group International LTD
Programme name	Award in Paramedic Practice
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	4 – 5 February 2009

Contents

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Paramedic' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 15 April 2009 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 8 May 2009. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 29 May 2009. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 25 August 2009.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC approval for the first time. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was an HPC only visit. The education provider and validating/awarding body did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Jane Topham (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Tracey Samuel-Smith
Proposed student numbers	Approximately 14 students, with between 2 and 4 cohorts per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	2 November 2009
Chair	Richard Brownhill (ERS)
Secretary	Heather Atkinson (ERS)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	☐	☐	☒
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☐	☐	☒

The HPC did not review a programme specification because this documentation does not exist.

The HPC did not review any external examiners' reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

The HPC met with students from the IHCD Technician award, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 19 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 44 SETs. Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a recommendation for the programme. Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation that clearly articulates the admission procedures which apply to all applicants.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor discovered that the admissions procedures and supporting documentation was primarily aimed at current employees or those wishing to gain employment with the education provider. An example of this was the requirement for applicants to hold a valid driving licence. In discussions with the programme team it was confirmed that this was required for employment with the education provider but for not entry onto the programme. The visitor would therefore like to receive documentation that clearly articulates the admissions procedures for all applicants to the programme.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation that clearly articulates the academic support features which applicants can expect once on the programme.

Reason: From the student handbook and discussion with the programme team, it was apparent that there are academic support mechanisms in place for applicants with dyslexia and dyspraxia. However, this information was not made available to applicants as part of the admissions procedures and the visitor felt that this could deter some applicants from applying. Therefore to allow applicants   to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme, the visitor would like to receive updated information.

2.2.2 The admission procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the admissions procedures clearly articulate the criminal conviction checks in place for all applicants.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor discovered that the admissions procedures and supporting documentation was primarily aimed at current employees or those wishing to gain employment with the education provider. In discussions with the programme team it was confirmed that the entry requirements for the programme were different to the requirements for employment. The visitor would therefore like to receive documentation that clearly articulates the criminal conviction checks required for admission to the programme.

2.2.3 The admission procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the admissions procedures clearly articulate the health requirements in place for all applicants.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor discovered that the admissions procedures and supporting documentation was primarily aimed at current employees or those wishing to gain employment with the education provider. In discussions with the programme team it was confirmed that the entry requirements for the programme were different to the requirements for employment. The visitor would therefore like to receive documentation that clearly articulates the health requirements for admission to the programme.

2.2.4 The admission procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the admissions procedures clearly articulate appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards for all applicants.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor discovered that the admissions procedures and supporting documentation was primarily aimed at current employees or those wishing to gain employment with the education provider. In discussions with the programme team it was confirmed that the entry requirements for the programme were different to the requirements for employment. The visitor would therefore like to receive documentation that clearly articulates the academic and/or professional entry standards required for admission to the programme.

2.3 The admission procedures must ensure that the education provider has an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this must be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate how the equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies are monitored.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team, it was clear that the education provider has equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies in place. However, the visitor was unable to determine how the education provider monitored these policies for both successful and unsuccessful applicants. The visitor would therefore like to receive clearly articulated monitoring mechanisms to ensure that this standard is met.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must submit confirmation of the agreement reached with the local Strategic Health Authority (SHA) regarding service levels, student numbers and placements opportunities.

Reason: From the discussion with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA but no agreement had been reached. The education provider was therefore unable to confirm how many students they would expect on the programme (through commissioned numbers); the proposed placement structure for the programme; or what they expected of placements. In addition, during the placement provider meeting, the representative from the local SHA discussed the possibility of sharing processes and resources with the education provider, such as the online placement profiles. The visitor therefore felt that the ability of the programme to start running was dependent on the relationship with the local SHA. The visitor would like to receive confirmation of the agreement reached with the local SHA regarding service levels, student numbers and placement opportunities in order to determine whether this programme is secure.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the mechanisms which ensure that students, regardless of location, receive a comparable learning experience while on placement.

Reason: In discussions with the practice placement providers it was clear that the local SHA had well established policies and procedures and that they were willing to share these with the education provider eg mentor training and sharing of information about placement sites. In discussions with the programme team, it was confirmed that the education provider is looking to incorporate these areas into the programme.

It was also apparent from the programme and senior team meetings that the education provider was very keen to work with SHA's outside of the immediate area and has entered into discussions with some. The visitor was concerned that there was a reliance on the local SHA to provide aspects of the programme, and they felt that other SHA's might not be able to provide the same levels of assistance. The visitor therefore wondered how the education provider ensured that, regardless of location, students would receive a comparable learning experience.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: In addition to the documentation received prior to the visit, additional curriculum vitae's were received during the event. From the discussions with the senior and programme teams, it was clear that there was a core programme team of four individuals plus the programme leader. Added to this, the education provider plans to employ tutors on an as needed basis from a bank of available tutors. Currently the education provider could not say how many or who (in terms of qualifications and experience) would be required as they did not have a clear indication of how many students would be completing the programme in each cohort or the number of cohorts. Due to the uncertainty surrounding student

numbers the visitor was unable to determine whether the core team and bank of available tutors was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

3.5   Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence that subject areas are taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Reason: In addition to the documentation received prior to the visit, additional curriculum vitae's were received at the visit. From the discussions with the senior and programme teams, it was clear that there was a core programme team of four individuals plus the programme leader. Added to this, the education provider plans to employ tutors on an as needed basis from a bank of available tutors. Currently the education provider could not say how many or who (in terms of qualifications and experience) would be required as they did not have a clear indication of how many students would be completing the programme in each cohort or the number of cohorts. The visitor was unsure who would be teaching each subject and due to the uncertainty surrounding student numbers was unable to say whether the core team and bank of available tutors had the relevant experience and knowledge to teach the subject areas.

3.7   The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the resources to support student learning are effectively used on placements.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what resources they expected to be available to students at placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to assess whether the resources to support student learning are effectively used while on placement. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them or the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not clear how the education provider ensures that the resources to support student learning are effectively used while on placements and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

3.8   The facilities needed to ensure the welfare and well-being of students must be both adequate and accessible.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the facilities for the welfare and well-being of students while on placement are adequate and accessible.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was

unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what facilities they expected to be available to students at placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to assess whether the facilities for the welfare and well-being of students are adequate and accessible. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them or the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not clear how the education provider ensures that the facilities for the welfare and well-being of students are adequate and accessible on placements and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

3.9   Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the protocols used to gain consent from students when they are participating in practical or clinical teaching as a patient or client.

Reason: From the discussion with the programme team, it was clarified that students are asked to complete a student informed consent form and that this allows them to choose not to participate as a patient or client. Upon reviewing the informed student consent form, the visitor felt that it did not specifically address when a student was being used as a patient or client. Rather it concentrated on when a student would be practising on another student. Due to the lack of clarity in the documentation, the visitor felt that it must be updated to clearly articulate the protocols used to gain consent from students when they are participating in practical or clinical teaching as a patient or client.

3.10   A system of academic and pastoral student support must be in place.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is a system of academic and pastoral student support while on placement.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what support they expected to be available to students at placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to assess the system of academic and pastoral student support while on placement. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them or the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not clear how the education provider ensures that there is a system of academic and pastoral student support while on placements and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the attendance policy for the programme and associated monitoring mechanisms.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team, the visitor learnt that attendance is 100% mandatory for both the academic and placement elements of the programme. While students are on placement they must complete a time sheet which is checked at the end of the month to ensure that they have completed the required number of hours. The visitor was unsure how attendance was monitored for the academic element. The visitor was also unsure how any lack of attendance was followed up to make sure that students gained the appropriate knowledge before they completed the programme. To ensure that students can meet all the standards of proficiency to be able to practice safely and effectively, the visitor would like to receive documentation which clearly articulates the attendance policy and associated monitoring mechanisms for the whole programme.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the resources provided while on placement adequately support the learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what resources they expected to be available to students at placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to assess whether the resources while on placement adequately support the learning and teaching activities. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them or the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not clear how the education provider ensures that the resources while on placement adequately support the learning and teaching activities of the programme and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, and IT facilities, including internet access, must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the learning resources are appropriate to the curriculum and readily available.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor learnt that many of the learning resources for the programme were on

order or were due to be ordered; this included core text books and paramedic specific equipment. The visitor was unsure of the timings for delivery or the range and extent of the resources which would be available once the text books and equipment had been received. The visitor also learnt that students would have access to the local university library but was unsure of the agreement which had been reached regarding student access and borrowing rights. The visitor would like to receive appropriate documentation to illustrate that the learning resources are appropriate to the curriculum and readily available.

4.1   The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the Standards of Proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation which clearly articulates how students who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted (student handbook and practice placement diary) did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. For example, a learning outcome in the student handbook was 'Understand the legal and ethical factors that are associated with healthcare'; this was assessed in 'modules 1, 4 and assignments 1 & 2'. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each module. The visitor was therefore unable to determine whether the learning outcomes for the programme would enable someone to meet the standards of proficiency. The visitor would like to receive clearly articulated information in order to assess whether this standard has been met.

4.2   The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the programme reflects the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted (student handbook and practice placement diary) did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. For example, a learning outcome in the student handbook was 'Understand the legal and ethical factors that are associated with healthcare'; this was assessed in 'modules 1, 4 and assignments 1 & 2'. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each module. The visitor was therefore unable to determine whether the programme reflected the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession. The visitor would like to receive clearly articulated information in order to assess whether this standard has been met.

4.3   Integration of theory and practice must be central to the curriculum to enable safe and effective practice.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the programme clearly articulates how theory and practice are integrated to ensure safe and effective practice.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted (student handbook and practice placement diary) did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. For example, a learning outcome in the student handbook was 'Understand the legal and ethical factors that are associated with healthcare'; this was assessed in 'modules 1, 4 and assignments 1 & 2'. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each module. The visitor was therefore unable to determine how theory and practice related to each other and whether the integration of theory and practice was central to the curriculum to enable safe and effective practice. The visitor would like to receive clearly articulated information in order to assess whether this standard has been met.

4.4   The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the programme remains relevant to current practice.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted (student handbook and practice placement diary) did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. For example, a learning outcome in the student handbook was 'Understand the legal and ethical factors that are associated with healthcare'; this was assessed in 'modules 1, 4 and assignments 1 & 2'. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each module. The visitor was therefore unable to determine whether the programme remains relevant to current practice.

The visitor would like to receive clearly articulated information in order to assess whether this standard has been met.

4.5   The delivery of the programme must assist autonomous and reflective thinking, and evidence-based practice.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the delivery of the programme assists autonomous and reflective thinking, and evidence-based practice.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted (student handbook and practice placement diary) did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. For example, a learning outcome in the student handbook was 'Understand the legal and ethical factors that are associated with healthcare'; this was assessed in 'modules 1, 4 and assignments 1 & 2'. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each module. The visitor was therefore unable to determine whether the programme assisted autonomous and reflective thinking, and evidence-based practice. The visitor would like to receive clearly articulated information in order to assess whether this standard has been met.

4.6   The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the range of learning and teaching approaches used are appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted (student handbook and practice placement diary) did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. For example, a learning outcome in the student handbook was 'Understand the legal and ethical factors that are associated with healthcare' and this was assessed in 'modules 1, 4 and assignments 1 & 2'. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each module. The visitor was therefore unable to determine whether the range of learning and teaching approaches used was appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum. The visitor would like to receive clearly articulated information in order to assess whether this standard has been met.

5.1   Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that practice placements are integral to the programme.

Reason: From the discussion with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what they expected of placements. From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to assess practice placements. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them or the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor would therefore like to receive further evidence to ensure that practice placements are integral to the programme.

5.2   There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what they expected of placements. For example, what the education provider would accept to be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placements. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not sure how the education provider ensures that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff on placements and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

5.3.1   The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice placement settings provide a safe environment.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what they expected of placements. For example, what the education provider would accept to be a safe environment at placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to ensure that the practice placement settings provide a safe environment. However, the visitor was unsure of the

processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not sure how the education provider ensures that the practice placement settings provide a safe environment and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what they expected of placements. For example, what the education provider would accept to be safe and effective practice at placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to ensure that the practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not sure how the education provider ensures that the practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

5.4 Learning, teaching and supervision must be designed to encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the learning, teaching and supervision encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme leader and the programme team, the visitor was unable to clearly identify the learning outcomes and associated assessment methods for the placements. The visitor was therefore unable to determine how students learn about the behaviour expected of them on their placement and that the placements prepare students for entry into the profession. The visitor would like to receive documentation which illustrates how the learning, teaching and supervision encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the number, duration and range of placements are appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was

unable to confirm that the proposed placement structure for the programme. For example, one of the proposed placements was with the air ambulance and without the agreement of the local SHA; this placement will not be possible. In addition, from the documentation and discussions with the programme leader and the programme team, the visitor was unable to clearly identify the learning outcomes and associated assessment methods for the proposed placements.

The visitor would like to receive information which confirms the number, duration and range of placements and clearly articulates how these are appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme.

5.6 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what they expected of placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to approve and monitor placements. However, the visitor was unsure about the processes which the education provider will use to make sure that practice placement providers complete the audit documentation within set timeframes and how the action plan will be implemented and followed up, if it identified areas for improvement.

The visitor was also unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor would therefore like to receive information which illustrates a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

5.7.1 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the learning outcomes during placement are clearly articulated to students and practice placement educators.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor learnt that students and practice placement educators will be provided with the practice placement diary. This was discussed in detail as the documentation did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information for students and practice placement educators to be

able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each placement.

5.7.2 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the timings of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained are clearly articulated to students and practice placement educators.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure. For example, one of the proposed placements was with the air ambulance and without the agreement of the local SHA; this placement will not be possible.

As the placement structure had not been confirmed, the education provider was unable to provide the visitor with confirmation of how students and practice placement providers will know about the placements which need to happen, when they need to happen and the associated records that need to be maintained. The visitor would therefore like to receive appropriate information to determine whether this standard has been met.

5.7.4 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Condition: The education provider must ensure students and practice placement educators are provided with detailed information about the assessment procedures, including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor learnt that students and practice placement educators will be provided with the practice placement diary. This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'. The practice mentor and student were then required to comment on this.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes and assessment of the learning outcomes were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine whether specific learning outcomes had been achieved in each placement. The visitor was concerned that without specific learning outcomes and associated assessment methods, there was a risk that assessments could be interpreted and applied differently depending on the mentor. The visitor would therefore like to receive documentation which provides students and practice

placement educators which detailed information about the assessment procedures, including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice placement educators are provided with information about and understanding of the lines of communication and responsibility.

Reason: From the discussion with the senior team, the visitor learnt that students and practice placement educators will be provided with the practice placement diary. The visitor felt that the practice placement diary clearly provided students with information about and understanding of the lines of communication and responsibility. However, the visitor felt that practice placement diary did not provide practice placement educators with sufficient information, such as what to do when a student called in sick or took unauthorised absence. The visitor would therefore like to receive information which provides practice placement educators with information about and understanding of the lines of communication and responsibility.

5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice placement educators have relevant qualifications and experience.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what qualifications and experience they expected practice placement educators to hold.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to determine whether practice placement educators have relevant qualifications and experience. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not sure how the education provider ensures that practice placement educators have the relevant qualifications and experience and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

5.8.2 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must be appropriately registered.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice placement educators are appropriately registered.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was

unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what they expected of placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to determine whether practice placement educators have relevant qualifications and experience. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not clear how the education provider ensures that practice placement educators are appropriately registered and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice placement educators undertake appropriate training.

Reason: From the documentation and discussion with the programme team, the visitor learnt that the practice placement educators will hold an appropriate mentor qualification. From the discussions with the senior team and practice placement providers, the visitor learnt that the local SHA may be able to provide the mentor training required for the programme. However, as the education provider had not reached an agreement with the local SHA, the process for ensuring practice placement educators undertook mentor training could not be confirmed.

The visitor was also unsure how the education provider ensured that practice placement educators received training in education provider specific processes, such as assessment regulations. The visitor would therefore like to receive confirmation of how the education provider will ensure that all practice placement educators undertake appropriate training.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that clearly articulated learning outcomes and assessment methods are supplied to practice placement providers.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. An example from the practice placement diary was the objective of the Coronary Care Unit placement 'to gain experience in the care and management of the patient suffering from acute coronary syndromes'. The practice mentor and student were then required to comment on this.

The visitor felt that the learning outcomes and assessment methods were too wide reaching and did not provide sufficient information to be able to determine the specific learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in each module. The visitor felt that this was necessary information which must be provided to practice placement providers and would therefore like to receive updated information which clearly articulates the learning outcomes and assessment methods.

5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.

Condition: The education provider must confirm the mechanisms which ensure that practice placement providers make the necessary information available at an appropriate time for the education provider and students.

Reason: From the documentation the visitor noted that the practice placement providers are required, through the proposed partnership agreement, to provide the education provider and student with appropriate information in a timely manner. However, from the discussions with the programme and senior teams, the visitor learnt that the education provider has not yet signed a partnership agreement with the local SHA. The visitor therefore felt that there was a chance that the partnership agreement could be changed prior to signing, and therefore should be considered to be draft. The visitor would like to receive further information which confirms the mechanisms in place to ensure that practice placement providers make available the necessary information at an appropriate time for the education provider and students.

5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the range of learning and teaching methods respect the rights and needs of patients/clients and colleagues.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what they expected of placements.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to ensure that the range of learning and teaching methods respect the rights and needs of patients/clients and colleagues. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not clear how the education provider ensures that the range of learning and teaching methods used respect the rights and needs of patients/clients and colleagues and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

5.13 The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the placement providers' equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies are in place, and monitored.

Reason: From the discussions with the senior team, the visitor learnt that the education provider was in discussions with the local SHA about placements but no agreement had been reached. This meant that the education provider was unable to confirm the proposed placement structure or what policies they expected to be applicable to students on placement.

From the documentation it was clear that the education provider will use the practice placement annual audit tool to determine whether there is an equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policy in place. However, the visitor was unsure of the processes to inform placements about what is expected of them and the timeframes for visiting placements prior to use. The visitor was therefore not clear how the education provider ensures that the equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory policies are in place and monitored at placements and would like to receive appropriate documentation.

6.2   Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate the assessment methods which measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

Reason: The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 require the education provider to submit clearly articulated learning outcomes and assessment methods. In addition the education provider may be required to revise their proposed placement structure depending on the agreement reached with the local SHA. If this happens, it is possible that amended learning outcomes and assessment procedures will be proposed. The visitor will therefore need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods test the academic and theoretical learning, as well and the practical application of skills, leading to safe and effective practice.

6.3   All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the assessment design; procedures and methods provide a rigorous and effective process.

Reason: The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 require the education provider to submit clearly articulated learning outcomes and assessment methods. In addition the education provider may be required to revise their proposed placement structure depending on the agreement reached with the local SHA. If this happens, it is possible that amended learning outcomes and assessment procedures will be proposed. The visitor will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.

6.4   The measurement of student performance and progression must be an integral part of the wider process of monitoring and evaluation, and use objective criteria.

Condition: The education provider must ensure the assessment regulations clearly specify the requirements for the measurement of student performance and progression.

Reason: The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 require the education provider to submit clearly articulated learning outcomes and assessment methods. In addition the education provider may be required to revise their proposed placement structure depending on the agreement reached with the local SHA. If this happens, it is possible that amended learning outcomes and assessment procedures will be proposed. The visitor will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods measure student performance and progression through the use of objective criteria.

6.6   Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that professional aspects of practice are integral to the assessment procedures.

Reason: This was discussed in detail with the programme leader and during the programme team meeting as the documentation submitted did not clearly articulate the learning outcomes or assessment methods. The visitor was therefore unable to determine how students were made aware of and assessed on professional aspects of practice, such as responsibility for their own actions or the responsibilities involved with professional regulation. The visitor would like to receive documentation which illustrates how professional aspects of practice are assessed.

Recommendations

6.7.5 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider the appointment criteria for the role of external examiner.

Reason: From the documentation and the meetings with the programme and senior team, it was clear that there was a requirement for an external examiner and that one had been appointed. It was however clear that the current external examiner has had involvement in the establishment of the programme and has a long running relationship with the education provider. The visitor wondered whether this prior knowledge might impact on their ability to review the programme impartially. The visitor therefore recommends that the education provider considers its appointment criteria to take account of independence from the programme.

Jane Topham

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Portsmouth
Programme name	Fd Sc Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	27 -28 January 2009

Contents

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Paramedic' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 17 April 2009 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 20 May 2009. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 29 May 2009. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 6 July 2009.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC approval for the first time. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Vincent Clarke (Paramedic) Robert Dobson (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	15
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2009
Chair	Steven Arkle (University of Portsmouth)
Secretary	Karen Yates (University of Portsmouth)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☐	☒	☐

The HPC did not review external examiner reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new. However the visitors were able to review external examiner reports for the part time route.

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

The HPC met with students from the part time Fd Sc Paramedic Science programme, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 51 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 12 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a recommendation for the programme. Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for the approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme

Conditions

2.1   The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme documentation to ensure that the admissions procedures do not contain any reference to state registration or reference to the HPC as a professional body.

Reason: When the visitors reviewed the documentation prior to the visit, clear reference to state registration and the HPC as a professional body were found in the documentation relating to the application and admission procedures for the programme. State registration is no longer used as a term by the HPC and the HPC is a regulatory body and not a professional body and therefore such references were misleading. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation with these references removed.

2.1   The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must update the admissions procedures documentation to clearly identify where if any, driver training takes place within the programme.

Reason: In reading the documentation it was noted that in the information provided to applicants there was information on driving that was unclear. The visitors felt that the current information was misleading and did not give the applicant sufficient information to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

In the meeting with the programme team the ambulance trust representative proposed that the information on driving could be removed. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation to reflect this proposed change to the admissions procedures.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition The education provider must update the programme documentation given to applicants to clearly articulate what driving requirements may be expected for future employment within an NHS ambulance trust.

Reason: From the documentation received prior to the visit, the visitors noted that information about the driving requirements which an applicant could expect within NHS employment were included in the admissions documentation. From the programme team meeting the visitors sought clarification regarding this as they felt that it was not made clear to applicants what the driving requirements may be for their future employment within NHS ambulance trusts. It was also not clear that it was not a requirement for admission to the programme for an applicant to have the required driving skills for any potential future employment. The visitors were informed that it was made clear that the relevant ambulance trusts involved with the programme would provide this information to an applicant. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that clearly articulates the information given to applicants regarding the current driving requirements of an NHS ambulance trust employed paramedic.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation which clearly articulates to applicants that practice placements are undertaken in varied locations including both urban and rural settings, and the organisation and cost of travel to placement locations is the responsibility of the student.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it became apparent that placements may be in rural areas as well as more urban areas. This was not evident in the documentation provided for the visit. The visitors would like to see revised documentation that clearly informs applicants that placements may be in rural areas and that the provision and costs of transportation to all placements would be the responsibility of the student.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme documentation to clearly articulate to applicants that manual handling is an integral part of the programme.

Reason: On reading the documentation the visitors could not find reference to manual handling. During the meeting with the programme team it was discussed that applicants were informed of the requirement for manual handling and the strenuous nature of the profession. To ensure that applicants receive full and clear information prior to taking up a place on a programme, the visitors would like to receive revised documentation provided to applicants that clearly identifies that manual handling is an integral part of the programme.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that clearly articulates the revised service level agreements for the full time mode of the programme and for each ambulance trust.

Reason: At the visit the visitors were provided with draft service level agreements by the programme team. During the meeting with the programme team the visitors were informed that the service level agreements were in the process of being revised to reflect the full time programme and to incorporate the changes for the revised part time programme. The visitors would like to receive revised documentation to include the revised service level agreements for both modes of study for the programme and for each ambulance trust.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that demonstrates how the delivery of the full time programme will take place.

Reason: In the documentation provided for the visit the template for how the programme would be delivered was not clear and only related to the full time mode of study. The programme team in discussion with the visitors talked through how the programme would be delivered. Therefore the visitors would like to receive documentation that shows how both modes of study would be delivered.

3.4   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 documentation that clearly articulates how paramedic teaching hours on the programme are protected.

Reason: In the meeting with the programme team it was noted that the ambulance trusts provide paramedic tutors for integral sessions on a secondment basis. As there are no registered paramedics on the full time university staff, the visitors would like to see documentation to ensure that this secondment arrangement continues regardless of any operational or other pressures placed upon the ambulance trusts.

3.7   The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation that demonstrates how the resources to support student learning are used effectively whilst on practice placements.

Reason: The visitors were unable to determine from the incomplete audit documentation provided that the resources the students accessed whilst on

practice placements effectively supported the required learning activities. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation which demonstrates how the resources to support student learning are used effectively whilst on practice placements.

3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation which clearly identifies where attendance is mandatory.

Reason: On reading the documentation it appeared that only attendance at placements was mandatory. However during discussions with the programme team it was clear that there was a policy for attendance and that attendance was monitored by the taking of registers. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that clearly details the attendance policy for the programme.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation that demonstrates how the resources provided off site adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: The visitors were unable to determine from the incomplete audit documentation provided that the resources the students accessed whilst on practice placements were adequate to support the required learning activities of the programme. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that demonstrates how the resources provided off site, adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation to demonstrate how it will ensure that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at all practice placements.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate clearly the staffing at placements, nor did they detail the experience of staff at placements. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that clearly articulates that there are sufficiently qualified and appropriate staff at all of the placement sites.

5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation which demonstrates how it will ensure that the practice placement settings provide a safe environment.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate that the placement settings were safe environments. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that clearly articulates that practice placement settings provide a safe environment.

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation which demonstrates how it will ensure that the practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate that the placement settings were providing safe and effective practice. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that clearly articulates that practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide clearly articulated documentation that demonstrates that the number, duration and range of placements are appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: The documentation received by the visitors did not include information regarding placements in different areas of hospitals. In the meeting with the students, it was clear that placements in hospitals were undertaken and the students knew where they had to go and the learning outcomes to be achieved. This was confirmed in the meeting with the programme team. The programme team said that the documentation only included the ambulance placements at the moment as the placement structure was being reviewed in the light of adding the full time mode of study. Therefore the visitors would like to receive documentation that clearly details the number, duration and range of placements that are to be undertaken as part of the programme and how these are appropriate to the learning outcomes to be achieved.

5.6   The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that clearly articulates a thorough and effective system of how practice placements are approved and monitored.

Reason: From the documentation received prior to the visit, it was not clear if the practice placement staff were appropriately qualified and experienced; if the resources were in place to support student learning whilst on placement; or if the placements provided a safe environment or safe and effective practice. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive updated documentation that clearly articulates a thorough and effective system of how practice placements are approved and monitored.

5.7.1 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Condition: The education provider must provide clearly articulated documentation for students and practice placement educators that demonstrates the learning outcomes to be achieved whilst on placement.

Reason: The documentation received by the visitors did not include information regarding placements in different areas of hospitals. In the meeting with the students, the students clearly had placements in hospitals and knew where they had to go and the learning outcomes to be achieved. This was confirmed in the meetings with the programme team and the practice placement educators. The programme team said that the documentation only included the ambulance placements at the moment as the placement structure was being reviewed in the light of adding the full time mode of study. Therefore the visitors would like to receive documentation that clearly demonstrates the learning outcomes to be achieved whilst on placement within various hospital areas.

Recommendations

6.1   The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider amend the practice assessment document to include the assessment of endotracheal intubation.

Reason: The documentation provided to visitors at the visit relating to the Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), demonstrated that endotracheal intubation was assessed only as part of the Advanced Life Support OSCE, having been removed from the airway management OSCE of previous years.

In discussion with the NHS ambulance trust representatives it was clear that endotracheal intubation was a skill that the trusts would expect an employed paramedic to undertake on the road and, as such, competency in this skill would be expected of a graduated from a paramedic Foundation Degree.

It is recommended that this skill be written into the practice assessment document to give students the opportunity to undertake the skill in the operating theatres phase of their hospital placement in a safe, controlled environment where the practice can be developed prior to undertaking the intervention in the pre-hospital environment.

Vincent Clarke
Robert Dobson

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Portsmouth
Programme name	Fd Sc Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	27 - 28 January 2009

Contents

Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Paramedic' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. The education provider has until 17 April 2009 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 20 May 2009. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 29 May 2009. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 6 July 2009.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme admissions standards, programme management and resources standards, curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Vincent Clarke (Paramedic) Robert Dobson (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	15
Initial approval	1 September 2005
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Steven Arkle (University of Portsmouth)
Secretary	Karen Yates (University of Portsmouth)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 51 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 12 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for the ongoing approval of the programme. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a recommendation for the programme. Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for the ongoing approval of the programme. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme documentation to ensure that the admissions procedures do not contain any reference to state registration or reference to the HPC as a professional body.

Reason: When the visitors reviewed the documentation prior to the visit, clear reference to state registration and the HPC as a professional body were found in the documentation relating to the application and admission procedures for the programme. State registration is no longer used as a term by the HPC and the HPC is a regulatory body and not a professional body and therefore such references were misleading. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation with these references removed.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must update the admissions procedures documentation to clearly identify where if any, driver training takes place within the programme.

Reason: In reading the documentation it was noted that in the information provided to applicants there was information on driving that was unclear. The visitors felt that the current information was misleading and did not give the applicant sufficient information to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

In the meeting with the programme team the ambulance trust representative proposed that the information on driving could be removed. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation to reflect this proposed change to the admissions procedures.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition The education provider must update the programme documentation given to applicants to clearly articulate what driving requirements may be expected for employment within an NHS ambulance trust.

Reason: From the documentation received prior to the visit, the visitors considered that it was not made clear to applicants as to what the driving requirements would be for their future employment within NHS ambulance trusts. The visitors noted that information about the driving requirements which an applicant could expect within NHS employment were included in the admissions documentation. From the programme team meeting the visitors sought clarification regarding this as they felt that it was not made clear to applicants what the driving requirements may be for their future employment within NHS ambulance trusts. It was also not clear that it was not a requirement for admission to the programme for an applicant to have the required driving skills for any potential future employment. The visitors were informed that it was made clear that the relevant ambulance trusts involved with the programme would provide this information to an applicant. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that clearly articulates the information given to applicants regarding the current driving requirements of an NHS ambulance trust employed paramedic.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation which clearly articulates to applicants that practice placements are undertaken in a variety of locations, including both urban and rural settings, and the organisation and cost of travel to placement locations is the responsibility of the student.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it became apparent that placements may be in rural areas as well as more urban areas and that applicants' would be responsible for the cost of transportation to all placements. This was not evident in the documentation provided for the visit and the visitors' felt that this may be misleading. The visitors would like to see revised documentation that clearly informs applicants that placements may be in rural areas and that the provision and costs of transportation to all placements will be the responsibility of the student.

2.1 The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme documentation to clearly articulate to applicants that manual handling is an integral part of the programme.

Reason: On reading the documentation the visitors could not find reference to manual handling. During the meeting with the programme team it was discussed that applicants were informed of the requirement for manual handling and the strenuous nature of the profession. To ensure that applicants receive full and clear information prior to taking up a place on a programme, the visitors would like to receive revised documentation provided to applicants that clearly identifies that manual handling is an integral part of the programme.

2.1   The admission procedures must give both applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must update the admissions documentation to articulate the role and responsibilities of the student paramedic in the information provided to applicants to the part-time programme.

Reason: During discussions with the students it was clear that those accessing the part-time route from either the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Emergency Care Assistant (ECA) role were unclear of their role and responsibilities as both an employed member of staff and as a student paramedic. This included a lack of understanding of their progression through the different skill levels up to that of Paramedic and this could be seen as misleading. In discussions with the programme team it was said that all applicants are made well aware of the role and responsibilities of the student paramedic. The visitors would like to see documentary evidence to this effect to ensure that the applicants to the programme were clear of their roles and responsibilities as a student paramedic.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that clearly articulates the revised service level agreements for the part time mode of the programme and for each ambulance trust.

Reason: At the visit the visitors were provided with draft service level agreements by the programme team. During the meeting with the programme team the visitors were informed that the service level agreements were being updated to reflect the full time programme and to incorporate the changes for the revised part time programme. To ensure that the programme is managed effectively, the visitors would like to receive revised documentation which includes the revised service level agreements for both modes of study for the programme and for each ambulance trust.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that demonstrates how the delivery of the part time programme will take place.

Reason: In the documentation provided for the visit the template for how the programme would be delivered was not clear and only related to the full time mode of study. The programme team in discussion with the visitors talked through how the programme would be delivered. Therefore the visitors would like to receive documentation that shows how both modes of study would be delivered.

3.4   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 documentation that clearly articulates how paramedic teaching hours on the programme are protected.

Reason: In the meeting with the programme team it was noted that the ambulance trusts provide paramedic tutors for integral sessions on a secondment basis. As there are no registered paramedics on the full time university staff, the visitors would like to see documentation to ensure that this secondment arrangement continues regardless of any operational or other pressures placed upon the ambulance trusts.

3.7   The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation that demonstrates how the resources to support student learning are used effectively whilst on practice placements.

Reason: The visitors were unable to determine from the incomplete audit documentation provided that the resources the students accessed whilst on practice placements effectively supported the required learning activities. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation which demonstrates how the resources to support student learning are used effectively whilst on practice placements.

3.11   Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation which clearly identifies where attendance is mandatory.

Reason: On reading the documentation it appeared that only attendance at placements was mandatory. However during discussions with the programme team it was clear that there was a policy for attendance and that attendance was monitored by the taking of registers. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that clearly details the attendance policy for the programme.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation that demonstrates how the resources provided off site adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: The visitors were unable to determine from the incomplete audit documentation provided that the resources the students accessed whilst on practice placements were adequate to support the required learning activities of the programme. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that demonstrates how the resources provided off site, adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation to demonstrate how it will ensure that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at all practice placements.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate clearly the staffing at placements, nor did they detail the experience of staff at placements. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that clearly articulates that there are sufficiently qualified and appropriate staff at all of the placement sites.

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Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation which demonstrates how it will ensure that the practice placement settings provide a safe environment.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate that the placement settings were safe environments. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated.

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5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide clearly articulated documentation that demonstrates that the number, duration and range of placements are appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: The documentation received by the visitors did not include information regarding placements in different areas of hospitals. In the meeting with the students, it was clear that placements in hospitals were undertaken and the students knew where they had to go and the learning outcomes to be achieved. This was confirmed in the meeting with the programme team. The programme team said that the documentation only included the ambulance placements at the moment as the placement structure was being reviewed in the light of adding the full time mode of study. Therefore the visitors would like to receive documentation that clearly demonstrates that the number, duration and range of placements are appropriate to the learning outcomes to be achieved.

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Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that clearly articulates a thorough and effective system of how practice placements are approved and monitored.

Reason: From the documentation received prior to the visit, it was not clear if the practice placement staff were appropriately qualified and experienced; if the resources were in place to support student learning whilst on placement; or if the placements provided a safe environment or safe and effective practice. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors were informed that the audits

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Recommendations

6.1 The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider amend the practice assessment document to include the assessment of endotracheal intubation.

Reason: The documentation provided to visitors at the visit relating to the Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), demonstrated that endotracheal intubation was assessed only as part of the Advanced Life Support OSCE, having been removed from the airway management OSCE.

In discussion with the NHS ambulance trust representatives it was clear that endotracheal intubation was a skill that the trusts would expect an employed paramedic to undertake on the road. As such, they would expect an individual who had successfully completed the programme to be able to undertake this skill.

It is recommended that this skill be written into the practice assessment document to give students the opportunity to undertake the skill in the operating theatres phase of their hospital placement in a safe, controlled environment where the practice can be developed prior to undertaking the intervention in the pre-hospital environment.

Vincent Clarke
Robert Dobson