

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Northampton
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time Part time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	22 – 23 July 2014

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction.....	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence	4
Recommended outcome	4
Conditions.....	6

Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'paramedic' or must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care 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 4 September 2014 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 November 2014. At this meeting, the Committee will accept, reject, or vary 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 24 October 2014. 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 20 November 2014.

Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC 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 part of a joint event. The validating body reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The validating body, the professional body and the HCPC 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 HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the validating body and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Vince Clarke (Paramedic) Glyn Harding (Paramedic)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	30 per year full time 30 per year part time
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2015
Chair	Jayne Bingham (University of Northampton)
Secretary	Vivien Houghton (University of Northampton)
Members of the joint panel	John Fox (Internal Panel Member) Tristan Henderson (External Panel Member) Andrew Freeman-May (External Panel Member) Mark Gough (External Panel Member) Bob Fellows (College of Paramedics) Paul Townsend (College of Paramedic)

Sources of evidence

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

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators / mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC met with students from the FDSc Paramedic Science 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 satisfied 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 the relevant 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 50 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining seven SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. 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 did not make any recommendations for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit all programme documentation, including advertising material and website, to ensure that potential applicants have all the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme.

Reason: From the information provided, the visitors were unclear as to how the education provider ensures that applicants to the programme have all of the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. The visitors could not determine where applicants were informed about the following;

- possible location of placement;
- all costs associated with travel in regards to placement; and
- costs of the ambulance driving course and the C1 practical.

The visitors consider this to be essential information for applicants and therefore, require the education provider to review the programme advertising materials and documentation, to ensure potential applicants are informed of the above information. In this way the visitors can determine how the programme can meet this standard by ensuring that applicants have all the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify the admissions procedures for regarding the 'Fitness test' requirements.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme documentation prior to the visit. The entry requirements for the programme specify that students must complete a 'Fitness test'. At the visit, the visitors enquired the 'Fitness test' and the processes in place for managing the 'Fitness test'. From the documentation, the visitors were unable determine whether the 'Fitness test' was a mandatory admission requirement and if so, how this was communicated to potential applicants of the programme. During discussions with the programme team, the team decided that the 'Fitness test' was no longer an entry requirement to the programme. However, from the evidence provided and discussions, the visitors were not sure whether the programme team were certain that the 'Fitness test' was not a mandatory admission requirement. They therefore require further clarification as to whether the 'Fitness test' is a mandatory admission requirement and if it is, what processes are in place to manage the 'Fitness test' and how this will be communicated to potential applicants. If the programme team decides that the 'Fitness test' is not a requirement, then the visitors require the documentation to reflect this. In this way the visitors can determine how the programme meets this standard.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of the memorandums of understanding and/or the service level agreement between them as the education provider and the ambulance trust.

Reason: In the documentation submitted and through discussions at the visit, the visitors identified how the programme is managed. The education provider collaborates with the ambulance trust, the ambulance trust provide placement for their students. The visitors heard the ambulance service is required to provide a student with the appropriate learning opportunities to allow them to complete the placement elements of the programme. From the evidence provided the visitors were unable to determine how collaborative arrangements were agreed and maintained. The visitors were concerned that there was no agreement, such as a contract or memorandum of understanding that the education provider and the ambulance service would sign and be held accountable to. The visitors judged it to be important that such an agreement be in place to clearly identify the expectations of the education provider, the expectations of the ambulance service, the programme requirements, the student requirements and the resource requirements. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence to demonstrate how collaborative arrangements between ambulance trust and the education provider are agreed.

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

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider contained several instances of incorrect terminology. For example, the 'Educational Audit of Learning Environment for Health and Social Care Programmes' states "The Health Professional Council (HPC)...require audit of the learning environment for all students on clinical placement every two years". There is reference to 'HPC'. All reference such as these must be updated to the 'HCPC' or 'Health and Care Professions Council'. Also, the "Rationale and Development Approval Form" states "Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)...propose the need for registration threshold to be at a degree level in the future". Currently, the level of qualification for entry to the Register for Paramedic is under consultation, and as it stands HCPC does not require degree level for entry to the Register. The visitors noted other instances such as these throughout the documentation submitted. Incorrect and inconsistent statements have the potential to mislead potential applicants and students. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, and ensure that the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflects the language associated with statutory regulation

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team must provide further clarification on the Facilitating Learning and Mentorship (FLAM) course and how this training will ensure that placement educator will be fully prepared when they come to work with students.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the FLAM course and what the content of the course entailed. It was also unclear how the FLAM course prepared practice placement educator to take on students. Discussion with the practice educators revealed that not all practice placement educators took the FLAM course. The visitors were therefore, unsure if all practice placement educators did not take the FLAM course how the education provider can be certain that practice placement educator have taken appropriate practice placement educator training to fully prepare them to work with students. Discussion with the programme team did not provide further details about the nature of the FLAM course. The visitors received no information regarding the specific content and learning outcomes of the FLAM course. It was not clear whether the FLAM course was a compulsory requirement of a practice educator before students were allocated. From this, the visitors were unclear as to how the programme team would ensure practice placement educators are appropriately prepared for the requirements of the programme if the FLAM course is not mandatory for practice placement educator. The visitors require further clarification on the content and learning outcomes of the FLAM course and whether it is mandatory requirement of all practice placement educators. If however, the FLAM course is not a requirement; the programme team will need to clarify what other measures are in place to ensure practice placement educators are appropriately trained to take on students from this programme.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence as to their processes to ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that the 'Educational Audit of the Learning Environment for Health and Social Programme' framework was used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around this process and its implementation in how they ensure that practice educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training. The SETs mapping sited 'Practice placement audit' as evidence to meet this standard, however, the visitors were unable to see the information as to the process in place that ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training. In discussions at the visit, the placement providers emphasised how supportive the programme team were in terms of providing training for practice educators. The visitors acknowledged the 'FLAM' course but were unable to see how each placement educator's training is monitored, or how the requirements for training feed into partnership agreements with the providers. The visitors were also unclear about the steps taken to ensure that suitably trained placement educators were in place for students. To ensure that this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to articulate clearly the training requirements for

placement educators and the processes in place for ensuring these requirements are met and monitored in practice.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must submit skills book year one and year three and provide further clarification on the progression and development from level four to level six.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme documentation prior to the visit. The visitors noted that the skill book year one and year three were not included in the submission; instead the visitors were only given skill book year two as evidence. From the information presented in skill book year two, the visitors were unable to determine the progression and development from level four to level six, they were also unable to determine what assessment methods were employed at level four and at level six that measure the learning outcomes as they were not presented with skill book year one and year three. The visitors were also unsure from discussions with the students and practice placement educators, how information regarding skills level at each stage will be communicated to students and understood by practice placement educators taking on students from this programme. The visitors therefore require the programme team to submit the skill book year one and year three and provide further clarification on the development and progression at each stage. The visitors also require the programme team to clarify how information regarding skill level required at each stage is communicated to students and practice placement educators.

6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

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

Vince Clarke
Glyn Harding

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Gloucestershire
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Social Work
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Social worker in England
Date of visit	3 – 4 September 2014

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction.....	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence	4
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions.....	6
Recommendations.....	10

Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'social worker' in England must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care 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 23 October 2014 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 November 2014. At this meeting, the Committee will accept, reject, or vary 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 11 November 2014. 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 4 December 2014.

Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as the social work profession came onto the register in 2012 and a decision was made by the Education and Training Committee to visit all existing programmes from this profession. 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 part of a joint event. The professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The professional body and the HCPC 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 HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the professional body outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Kim Bown (Social worker) Richard Barker (Social worker) Sue Roff (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Hollie Latham
Proposed student numbers	50
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2014
Chair	Sheila Ollin (University of Gloucestershire)
Secretary	Jayne Sedgwick (University of Gloucestershire)
Members of the joint panel	Robert Johns (The College of Social Work) Reshma Patel (The College of Social Work)

Sources of evidence

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

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators / mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval the visitors must be satisfied 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 the relevant 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 seven SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. 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 can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must update the information made available to students prior to taking up or making an offer of a place on the programme, particularly the requirements for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to the education provider's admissions page for the BSc (Hons) Social Work. Although the website stated GCSE English requirements, the visitors were unable to locate any information on the required IELTS level for international students. In the meeting with the programme team it was highlighted that it is a requirement for international students to obtain an IELTS level 7 to be accepted onto the programme. Whilst the visitors were satisfied that this was an appropriate level, they were unable to identify where potential applicants would find this information. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to show how the admissions procedures give the applicants the information they require about IELTS to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must update the information made available to students prior to taking up or making an offer of a place on the programme, particularly the requirements for Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL).

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to a number of documents which outlined the APEL policies and how students should apply. The visitors were satisfied with the policies and processes in place, however were unable to see how potential applicants to the BSc (Hons) Social Work were informed of APEL opportunities. The evidence provided also showed a page on the education provider's website which detailed APEL procedures, however, the visitors could not see how an applicant could easily find this information from the pages linked to the BSc (Hons) Social Work programme, especially without having any prior knowledge of APEL policies. Further to this, in the meeting with students, it was stated that several students were not aware of APEL opportunities and in some instances were made aware of the policies in place after the deadline had passed for applications to be considered for APEL. The visitors therefore require further evidence to show how the admissions procedures give the applicant the information they require about APEL policies to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence to show how the BSc (Hons) Social Work programme fits in to the education provider's business plan.

Reason: Documentation provided prior to the visit included a business plan for the institute of Education and Public services. Whilst the visitors could see that there was a clear commitment to the Institute that social work sits within, they were unable to identify any strategic plan or commitment from the education provider relating specifically to the BSc (Hons) Social Work programme. At the visit, the visitors met with the senior team who were able to provide a little more information about the future of social work within the education provider, including a focus on building relationships with local providers for placements and the possibility of a post qualifying programme. However, the visitors felt that while this clarified some future plans for the programme the education provider did not demonstrate how the programme has a secure place in the education provider's business plan, and how the programme would guarantee that students would progress through the full duration of their programme at the education provider. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of how the BSc (Hons) Social Work programme fits into the education provider's business plan.

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

Condition: The education provider must revise and update the programme documentation to ensure it is accurate and reflects the status of current regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted the documentation provided for the visit contained some inaccuracies when referring to HCPC requirements. For example page 51 of the Course Guide 2013 – 14 final version (2) states "BSc Social Work confers the ability to apply for registered status and to hold the protected title of Social Worker as a graduate." Successful graduates would be eligible to apply for registration only as they would need to meet the HCPC's health and character requirements at the point of registration. The visitors also noted incorrect references to the HCPC name. For example page 1 of the Declaration of suitability for social work 2013 – 14 states "The Health and Care Professionals Council requires that Universities have suitable processes in place". We are the Health and Care Professions Council, not the Health and Care professionals Council. The visitors considered these inaccuracies will need to be corrected for the students to have accurate information about their programme. The visitors therefore require the programme team to review the programme documentation taking into account the above details to ensure it is accurate and reflects the status of current regulation.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence to demonstrate there are appropriate protocols in place to inform students about the nature of participating in activities such as role play and their right to confidentiality.

Reason: Documentation provided at the visit included a form titled Consent to participate in activities (Supporting evidence file 2 (a), section 4, (5.1)). The visitors

were satisfied that this form informed students of the requirement to take part in role play and other shared activities on the programme. However, the visitors could not see how students were informed about the nature of participating in activities such as role plays as service users, the personal or cultural elements that could emerge, and any impact on their academic progression if they chose to opt out of participating. The visitors were also unable to identify where students were informed of their right to confidentiality. The visitors considered it to be important for the programme team to ensure they have informed students fully about their right to confidentiality and to opt-out when appropriate. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence to demonstrate there is a protocol in place to inform students about the nature of participating in activities such as role play, and their right to confidentiality.

3.15 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 further evidence to demonstrate that appropriate monitoring systems are in place for student attendance.

Reason: The visitors were made aware from the documentation that 80% attendance is expected for academic modules. The visitors were satisfied with the attendance requirements and the policies related to it. However, the visitors were unable to identify any formalised and effective monitoring systems in place. In discussions with the programme team the visitors heard that attendance is currently recorded on a paper register. Additionally, in the meeting with students, the visitors heard that students' attendance was not always recorded and there were several instances where students were able to leave lectures early without impacting on their attendance records. The visitors consider monitoring attendance to be a vital component in ensuring that students are fit to practice and able to meet the Standards Of Proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the register. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to show that there is a formalised and effective monitoring system in place to record attendance.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider needs to provide further information regarding the system that is in place to ensure that practice placement educators in all settings receive appropriate training, and that this training is kept up to date.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team at the visit, the visitors were informed that all new practice placement educators are required to complete appropriate training, however, the visitors could not see evidence of a process in place to monitor which placement educators had received training, and when. In addition to this, in discussion with practice placement educators, the visitors were informed that practice educator training was recommended but not compulsory. It was also stated that some students had previously been placed with practice educators who had not undertaken appropriate training prior to taking on a student. The visitors were also unable to identify any refresher training sessions for practice educators. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that practice educator training is compulsory and that there is an effective system in place to monitor which practice educators have undergone training.

6.9 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 and update the programme documentation to clearly state that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the Register.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine where in the assessment regulations there was a clear statement regarding aegrotat awards. The visitors were directed to the course guide 2014 – 15 final version (2), page 53 which states “condonement of modules cannot be allowed.” In addition to this, in the meeting with the programme team it was stated that there is a fall back award available for students, however the award title does not contain a reference to social work. The visitors were unable to determine how the programme team ensured that students understood that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that there is a clear statement included in the programme documentation.

Recommendations

3.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.

Recommendation: The education provider may wish to consider providing more opportunity for staff to engage in research projects.

Reason: From documentation and meetings with the programme team, the visitors were content that this standard is met. However, the visitors noted that the staff could have more opportunities to engage in research projects. The visitors would like the education provider to consider reviewing the current provision and opportunities for research projects in the staff development programme and suggest broadening these opportunities as this could better inform teaching of evidence based practice.

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

Recommendation: The education provider may wish to consider reviewing the current resources available to students, with particular reference to the availability of books.

Reason: From the documentation provided and tour of the facilities, the visitors were content that this standard is met. However, from meeting with the students, the visitors noted that at times throughout the programme students may struggle to obtain the relevant book for their modules through the library or online e-book provision. Particularly for some e-books, the license only enabled one student to access the document at any one time. The visitors would like the education provider to consider reviewing and increasing the current resources available to students, with particular focus on library and e-books.

Richard Barker
Kim Bown
Sue Roff