

HCPC approval process report

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

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Tristan Henderson	Paramedic
Vincent Clarke	Paramedic
Clare Bates	Lay
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

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

Section 2: Programme details

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

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

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	This is a new programme, as such the panel met with learners from the Foundation Degree Paramedic Science.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

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

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

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

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures pertinent admissions information relating to the programme will be communicated to potential applicants in order for them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. For this standard, the education provider submitted a website link and a PowerPoint that is used on the open day to provide information for applicants. In assessing the content of the website and the PowerPoint, the visitors noted that the information relates to the existing approved FdSc Paramedic programme. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors noted that the education provider intends to update the information provided on the open day including the content on the PowerPoint. However, because the visitors did not have sight of this the visitors could not determine how this information would be

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

- any additional costs learners may incur over and above the usual programme fee;
- the expectation that learners will travel to practice-based learning settings at their own expense and that this is an additional cost for the learners
- the elements of the programme to which accreditation of prior (experiential) learning can be applied and;
- correct information about the requirement of a C1 driving licence.

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

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

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

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

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

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

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were provided with a course staff list of members of the team responsible for the delivery and management of the programme. However, from the information provided, it was not clear which members of the programme team would be responsible for which aspects of programme management, or who would be delivering specific areas of the programme. At the visit, the visitors were informed that

recruitment of staff for the programme was ongoing and that some staff members are not yet in place. This includes the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme. The visitors were also unclear of the responsibilities of this role. The visitors therefore require further information regarding the structure for the day-to-day management of the programme, the lines of responsibility of the teaching team. In this way, the visitors can determine how the management of the programme will work in practice, and how learners will be supported through the programme by members of the programme team.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of the process in place for identifying and appointing an appropriately qualified and experienced person to hold overall professional responsibility for the programme.

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

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers.

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

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

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that sufficient practice-based learning is available for all learners.

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

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

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

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

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

Reason: From a review of the course staff profile list, the visitors were unable to determine who the teaching staff would be for this programme as the visitors were not provided with any information on how these staff members would be involved in delivering this programme. In addition, the visitors noted from discussions with the senior team, that plans to recruit an additional staff members have not been agreed. As such, the number of teaching staff that will be in place is not yet final. Due to the lack of clarity in whom will be delivering the different aspects of the programme, the visitors were unable to determine how, following the recruitment to these posts, there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that there is, or will be, an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver this programme effectively.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence that subject areas will be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

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

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the resources to support learning in all setting are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

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

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

as evidence of the process in place for ensuring that the programme takes account of and reflects current practice, so that it remains relevant and effective in preparing learners for practice. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors heard that the education provider has a number of mechanisms in place such as feedback from practice educators, the course committee, internal feedback and ongoing research, that all feedback into ensuring that the curriculum remains current. However, the visitors were not presented with any evidence to support this and therefore were unable to determine how the programme team will ensure that the curriculum will remain relevant to current practice. As such, the visitors require further evidence of the mechanisms that the programme team will have in place to keep the curriculum up-to date with the current practice for the profession.

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

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

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

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

Condition: The education provider must define where attendance is mandatory, demonstrate that associated monitoring processes are in place, along with how these requirements are communicated to learners on the programme.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective system in place for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Reason: The visitors noted a number of different documents submitted by the education provider to demonstrate how the programme meets this standard. However, in considering the programme documentation and discussions held at the visit, the visitors were not provided with sufficient evidence of any overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of practice-based learning. When this was discussed with the programme team, the visitors remained unclear how the education provider will effectively approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning for this programme particularly for those learners in year three of the programme who are can select practice-based learning opportunities from both

ambulance and non-ambulance settings. Additionally, the visitors could not determine the criteria used by the programme team to assess a practice-based learning opportunity, or what the overall process would be to approve it, as well as what activities and information would feed into any quality monitoring of practice-based learning. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of practice-based learning, and how they are put into practice, to ensure this standard is met. In particular, the visitors require further evidence in the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.

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

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that practice educators undertake regular training, which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme

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

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

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

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

managed to ensure that learners get the experience they require to meet the relevant learning outcomes. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how learners and practice educator will be fully prepared for practice-based learning and in a timely manner.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that there are assessment criteria that the education provider will use to ensure that the assessments employed provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement. However, the visitors were not provided with the assessment criteria or the process in place to make sure that the assessments in the programme are objective, fair and reliable. The education provider therefore, must provide evidence to

demonstrate how the assessments provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

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

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

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

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

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

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

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Huddersfield
Name of programme(s)	MSc Social Work, Full time Integrated Masters in Social Work, Full time
Approval visit date	14-15 March 2018
Case reference	CAS-11931-D8W6V2

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Diane Whitlock	Lay
Anne Gribbens	Social worker
David Childs	Social worker
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

Pete Woodcock	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Huddersfield
Leanne Hodge	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Huddersfield

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 July 2009
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01729

We undertook this assessment via the approval process, which involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme continues to meet our standards. We decided to assess the programme via the approval process due to the outcome of a previous assessment. Due to changes to the existing provision of the programme and the introduction of the Integrated Masters in Social Work, we decided to visit this programme.

Programme name	Integrated Masters in Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01730

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

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

Group	Met
Learners	Yes
Senior staff	Yes
Practice education providers	Yes
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes
Programme team	Yes
Facilities and resources	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 04 May 2018.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how service users and carers are involved in the programmes, and how they will ensure the continuation of service user and carer involvement in these programmes.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were provided with modules that service users and carers contribute to. At the visit, the visitors met several service users and carers and discussed how they are involved in the programmes. During discussions, it was clear that the service users and carers are involved at a university level; however, the visitors were unable to determine how service users and carers are involved directly with this programme. From the documentation and discussion, the visitors saw no formalised information to demonstrate how service users and carers are involved in the programmes currently, or will be involved in the programmes going forward. The visitors therefore cannot determine:

- who the service users and carers are (or will be);
- how they will be involved in the programmes;
- how their involvement is appropriate; and

- the education provider's strategy for ensuring the continuation of service user and carer involvement in the programmes.

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

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the resources to support learning in all settings are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programmes.

Reason: The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider contained inaccuracies in relation to HCPC regulation. For example, appendix 44 states, "They must indicate whether the student has met the requirements of the HCPC Professional Capabilities Framework". HCPC does not have a Professional Capabilities Framework. In addition, the visitors noted reference to the National Occupational Standards (NOS); the NOS have not applied to social work for several years. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that the NOS is referenced in the documentation because several of the modules are taught to both social workers and social care learners. However, the visitors considered that this could potentially be confusing for social work learners on the programmes and the visitors were unclear how the education provider would avoid this confusion. It is important that learners are equipped with accurate information, and the visitors considered it to be important that the programme documentation accurately reflects the HCPC, and its role in the regulation of the profession. The visitors therefore require the education provider to ensure that the resources to support learning in all settings is effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programmes.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how learners will be able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear how the education provider ensures that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.. At the visit, the visitors heard that there might be opportunities for shared teaching and shared learning with other HCPC-approved programmes at the education provider. However, the visitors were unclear how the education provider made the judgement on which professions are most relevant to the programme and most useful in preparing learners for practice. From the discussions with the programme team, the visitors noted that no formal plans have been put in place to ensure that learners could learn with and from other professionals and learners from relevant professions. Therefore, in order for the visitors to make a judgment about whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions on these programmes.

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

Condition: The education provider must update their documentation to ensure it clearly specifies the requirements for progression and achievement within the programmes.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were directed to the assessment criteria, course handbook and module specification. From a review of the documentation, the visitors understood that in order for a learner to progress on Integrated Masters in Social Work, they would need to achieve 60 per cent at the end of Year 3. However, at the visit, the education provider confirmed that they have decided to change the progression and achievement requirement within the programmes to 55 per cent at the end of Year 2. From this discussion, the visitors note that the documentation no longer correctly reflects the progression and achievement within the programmes. As such, the visitors require further evidence that the programme documentation clearly reflects the requirements for progression and achievement within the programmes and how this will be communicated to learners. In this way, the visitors can make determinations about whether the programmes meets this standard.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Lincoln
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	27 February 2018
Case reference	CAS-12225-M6Z0M9

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The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Kenneth Street	Paramedic
Anthony Hoswell	Paramedic
Diane Whitlock	Lay
Shaista Ahmad	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

Karin Crawford	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Lincoln
Carolyn Smith	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Lincoln
Paul Eyre	COP representative	College of Paramedics
Mark Carroll	COP representative	College of Paramedics

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01810

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes

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

Group	Met
Learners	Yes
Senior staff	Yes
Practice education providers	Yes
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes
Programme team	Yes
Facilities and resources	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 16 April 2018.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is an effective process to ensure that all learners have access to practice-based learning which meets their learning needs.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that ambulance practice-based learning will be provided by East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS). The education provider explained that practice-based learning opportunities are allocated for ambulance practice-based learning by identifying where learners live along with mentors available within the specific area. The available mentors are checked to ensure there are no conflicts of interest with learners on the programme. In discussions with the practice education providers and the programme team, the visitors learned that there was not a process in place for allocating non-ambulance practice-based learning. Therefore, the visitors were unable to see how the education provider would ensure the availability and capacity of non-ambulance practice-based learning. As such, the education provider must demonstrate there is an effective process in place to ensure all learners on the programme have access to non-ambulance practice-based learning that meets their learning needs.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is a thorough and effective system in place for approving and monitoring non-ambulance practice-based learning.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that ambulance practice-based learning will be provided by East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS). From the documentation, and from discussions at the visit, the visitors were satisfied that there was a process in place to approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning at EMAS. However, it was unclear from the discussions and the documentation

how the education provider would maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of non-ambulance practice-based learning. In discussions, the programme team provided verbal assurances that a system is in place to approve and ensure the quality of non-ambulance practice-based learning. However, the visitors noted that this process was not reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to determine that the education provider would approve and ensure the quality of all non-ambulance practice based learning. As such, the education provider must demonstrate that there is a well-defined, robust process for approving and ensuring the quality for non-ambulance placements.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they have a thorough and effective system in place for ensuring that the non-ambulance practice-based learning environment is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors were unclear what policies the education provider has in place to ensure that the non-ambulance practice-based learning environment is safe and supportive for learners and service users. During discussions with the programme team and practice educators, the visitors learned that a system was in place for ambulance placements. However, the education provider has not demonstrated what process was in place for non-ambulance placements. As the visitors were unable to determine that there is an effective system for approving and monitoring non-ambulance placements they were unable to establish whether there was a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users for non-ambulance practice based learning. As such, the education provider will need to demonstrate what systems they have in place in the non-ambulance setting that will ensure there is a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

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

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

Reason: As the visitors were unable to determine that there is an effective system for approving and monitoring non-ambulance placements, they were unable to determine whether there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff in the practice-based setting. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning in non-ambulance practice-based learning.

Reason: As the visitors were unable to determine that there is an effective system for approving and monitoring non-ambulance placements they were unable to determine that the practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning. In order for the visitors to be able to make a judgement on whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that practice educators are appropriately qualified to support safe and effective learning when learners are on a non-ambulance based placement.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they have a process in place to ensure that all practice educators in non-ambulance practice-based learning undertake appropriate initial and update training and that this is recorded and monitored.

Reason: In a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that practice educators from EMAS will complete a mentorship programme where they attend two days at the university focusing upon learning styles and the best ways of coaching in practice. This is available for ambulance placements. The visitors were satisfied that this element of the standard was met for ambulance placements. However, as the visitors were unable to determine that there is an effective system for approving and monitoring non-ambulance placements, they were unable to determine what training non-ambulance practice educators would receive. As such, the education provider must demonstrate that they have a process in place to ensure that all practice educators are receiving appropriate initial and update training and that this is recorded and monitored.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that learners and practice educators have the information they need in order to be prepared for practice-based learning in the non-ambulance setting.

Reason: As the visitors were unable to determine that there is an effective system for approving and monitoring non-ambulance placements, they were unable to determine how learners and practice educators will have the information they require to be prepared for non-ambulance placements. As such, the education provider must ensure that they provide learners and practice educators with all the information required in a timely manner to ensure that they are prepared for the non-ambulance placement on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the assessment strategy and design ensures those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for paramedics.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided, the visitors noted that there were certain competencies within the clinical assessment portfolio (CAP) that were assessed during practice-based learning and within the theory element of the programme. Each competency within the CAP was a list of requirements set out by the College of Paramedics (COP) with no explanation of what needs to be seen for each competency to be met. The visitors considered that this approach could cause a conflict of opinion between the education provider and the practice educators, and could result in learners being marked as not competent in something that they have previously passed. The visitors were also unclear how the education provider supports and enables practice educators to make pass / fail judgements about learner competence. The visitors were not provided with any information about the criteria that practice educators would use to make these judgements. Therefore, the education provider must demonstrate how their assessment strategy ensures all learners who complete the programme will meet the SOPs for paramedics.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how assessment of non-ambulance practice based learning ensures that learners are able to meet relevant standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPE's).

Reason: In a review of the documentation, the visitors identified that the CAP contained a list of competencies to be assessed in practice-based learning. However, each competency within the CAP was a list of requirements set out by the College of Paramedics (COP) with no explanation of what needs to be seen for each competency to be met. With this approach, the visitors considered that learners may not understand what is required of them to demonstrate they meet the expectations of professional behaviour, and were unclear how the education provider supports and enables practice educators to make pass / fail judgements about learner competence in these areas. The visitors noted that this could become a 'tick box' exercise rather than a true assessment of learner competence in meeting the expectations of professional behaviour. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how learners are assessed to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the SCPEs, by the time they complete the programme.

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

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

Reason: In a review of the documentation, the visitors identified that the CAP contained a list of competencies to be assessed in practice-based learning. However, each competency within the CAP was a list of requirements set out by the College of Paramedics (COP) with no explanation of what needs to be seen for each competency to be met. With this approach, the visitors considered that, it may be difficult for learners to demonstrate how they have achieved the learning outcomes, and were unclear how the education provider supports and enables practice educators to make pass / fail judgements about learner competence in these areas. Therefore, the education provider must demonstrate that their assessments, including any supporting criteria for those undertaking the programme, and those making pass / fail judgements, are clear and realistic, to ensure that learners' progression and achievement are objective, fair and reliable.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the assessment methods are appropriate in measuring the learning outcomes.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided, the visitors noted that there were certain competencies within the clinical assessment portfolio (CAP) that were assessed during practice-based learning and within the theory element of the programme. The visitors considered that this approach could cause a conflict of opinion between the education provider and the practice educators, and could result in learners being marked as not competent in something that they have previously passed. The

visitors also noted that some competencies were being assessed on placement that were not appropriate due to the nature of the competency. For example, In CAP year 1 domain 8, one criteria is “developing skills in effective literature searching”. The visitors considered that it is more appropriate to assess this competency in the academic setting, and could not see how it could be assessed on placement. In order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard is met, the education provider will need to ensure that the assessment strategy and design is appropriate to measure the learning outcomes.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should introduce a policy for safeguarding service users and carers when acting in the role of patients.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and service users and carers the visitors noted that there were effective processes in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners. However, the visitors noted from the discussions that written consent was not provided for physical assessments when the service user takes on the role of a patient. As such, the visitors recommend that the education provider introduces a policy for service users and carers when acting in the role of a patient.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Reading
Name of programme(s)	MSci Speech and Language Therapy, Full time
Approval visit date	06 February 2018
Case reference	CAS-12186-Y3F8N7

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How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Susanne Roff	Lay
Caroline Sykes	Speech and language therapist
Jenny Ford	Speech and language therapist
Niall Gooch	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

Matthew Almond	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Reading
Eve Davey	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Reading
Lorette Porter	Education representative	Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists – professional body

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSci Speech and Language Therapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Speech and language therapist
Proposed first intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 44
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01806

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

The proposed programme is a development of the existing HCPC-approved BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

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

Group	Met	Notes
Learners	Yes	The programme has not started yet so we met with learners from the existing HCPC-approved BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy programme
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers and educators	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 03 April 2018.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the following are clear to applicants:

- who pays for the Disclosure and Barring Service check
- the prerequisites for working as a speech and language therapist
- what kind of relevant experience is required of applicants

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme webpage, which the education provider had provided as evidence for the information available to applicants. The 'Additional requirements' section of this page gave applicants information about the requirement for

a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and also the requirement for them to have gained some relevant experience before admission to the programme. The page notes that a DBS check is “arranged through the University”, but the visitors considered that it might not be clear to applicants who would pay for this check, which might mean that applicants were not be able to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme. The visitors also noted that the programme website stated that “As a graduate of this course you can apply to work as a speech and language therapist”. They considered that this was potentially unclear to applicants as it did not mention the requirement for HCPC registration before working as a speech and language therapist, and so might prevent an applicant from making an informed choice. The visitors were not able to see how the phrasing of the requirement for relevant experience would be clear to applicants. The page states that “all candidates must show evidence of either having observed speech and language therapists (SLTs) in clinical settings or working with children or adults”. The visitors took this to mean that all applicants must have observed SLTs. However, in discussion at the visit they were informed that this was not the case, and that the requirement was for the applicant to have either observed an SLT in a clinical setting, or worked with children or adults in some kind of health or care-related context. As it can be difficult to arrange observations of SLTs, the visitors considered that applicants who understood the requirement as they had initially understood it might be prevented from making an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. They therefore require the education provider to ensure that all information available to applicants about DBS checking, and about the requirements for working as an SLT, is unambiguous, and that it is clear to applicants that their own health or care-related working with adults or children meets the requirements for admission.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme are appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors were able to view a “Programme Director Role Description” as part of the documentation. This was a generic University of Reading document, rather than one produced specifically for this programme. It did not specify what would be regarded as appropriate qualifications and experience for the director of a speech and language therapy programme, or describe whether, and under what circumstances, the education provider might ever waive the requirement for HCPC registration. The visitors were therefore unable to be clear that the process for appointing an appropriate person to the role of programme director was effective, and require further evidence demonstrating that an effective process is in place.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that service users and carers are formally and explicitly integrated into the programme, and that their involvement is sustainable.

Reason: The visitors were able to view evidence of service user and carer involvement, including minutes of meetings of an Experts by Experience panel, and to meet with service users and carers who had been involved with the existing BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy programme. The visitors noted that service users and carers were involved with the existing programme in a number of ways, for example in admissions and in giving talks to learners based on their own experiences. However, it was not clear to the visitors how service user and carer input would be formally integrated into this programme, or how it would be evaluated. This meant that they were not able to see how the education provider had processes in place to plan, monitor and evaluate service user and carer involvement. The visitors were also not clear how the education provider had selected the service users and carers to ensure that they were appropriate and relevant for the programme. They could not see what planning had taken place to ensure that the current level of service user and carer involvement was sustainable. For example, it was not clear what was being done to find new service users, or to broaden the skills, background and experience base of the Experts by Experience (EbE) group. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the education provider ensures that service user and carer involvement is appropriately evaluated, planned and monitored, and how they ensure that it is sustainable.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how it will ensure that applicants and learners understand that the step-off BSc does not provide eligibility to apply for registration as a speech and language therapist with the HCPC.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the information for applicants and learners made available on the website and in the programme specification, learner handbooks and placement documentation. They noted that all of the documentation stated that completion of this new MSci programme would result in eligibility to apply for HCPC registration. However, it was not clear to the visitors, either from their review or from discussions with the programme team, where the education provider had stated explicitly that the step-off BSc, which will be awarded if learners complete three years rather than four, would not provide such eligibility. They considered that this was especially important to state explicitly, in case learners did not understand that only successful completion of the approved MSci leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

4.3 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence provided under this standard, including the programme Business Plan, the university's curriculum framework, and the school mission statement. The programme documentation referred to a mapping to the updated curriculum guidance from the professional body, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT), but this did not appear in the standards of education and training (SETs) mapping document. This mapping exercise was also

mentioned in discussions with the programme team. The visitors were aware from these discussions, and the documentation, that adherence to the guidance was part of the education provider's curriculum design strategy for ensuring that learners who successfully complete the programme are able to practise safely and effectively as speech and language therapists. However, they were not able to see a copy of the mapping exercise. They were therefore unable to make a judgment about the effectiveness of the education provider's strategy for ensuring that future graduates would be able to practise in line with the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base of speech and language therapy.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: The visitors reviewed evidence of how learners on the existing BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy programme are prepared for interprofessional learning (IPL), and were able to discuss the issue with the programme team. They were told that at present speech and language therapy learners have the opportunity for IPL with learners on pharmacy and nursing programmes, and that learners are encouraged to seek opportunities for IPL during practice-based learning. The programme team also stated that the education provider is planning how to expand this IPL to other relevant professions. However, the visitors were not able to view evidence relating to these plans for expansion, so it was not clear how the education provider intended to bring other relevant professions into their IPL provision. They could not see how encouraging learners to gain IPL via practice-based learning would ensure consistent experience for all learners without a structured approach to ensuring that IPL took place in placement. They were also not clear about the reasons for the education provider's choice of which other professions to involve in IPL on the programme. They therefore require further evidence demonstrating how the education provider will ensure that learners on the programme are able to learn with and from professionals and learners in other relevant professions, and how they make judgments about which professions are most suitable.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that appropriate consent is obtained from service users when students work with service users as part of practice based learning.

Reason: The visitors reviewed a narrative provided by the education provider stating that all learners and placement educators understood the importance of consent, and that this was part of placement educators' professionalism and part of learners' responsibilities under the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics. They were also able to discuss consent with the programme team, who reiterated that learners and practice educators were well-prepared to obtain appropriate consent. However, it was not clear to the visitors whether there was a process in place through which the education provider could ensure that appropriate consent was being obtained when learners were on practice-based learning. They therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence demonstrating how they do this.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that attendance at taught sessions is effectively monitored, and how they ensure that learners who miss mandatory teaching and learning activities are enabled to cover the missed subject(s).

Reason: The visitors reviewed a narrative from the documentation explaining that attendance was compulsory in all the Clinical Studies modules across the programme, and that non-attendance would be followed up, and escalated to senior programme tutors if absences continue. In discussions with learners on the existing BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy, learners stated that attendance at teaching and learning activities was monitored through sign-up sheets, but that this appeared to them to be inconsistent. From this information, and from discussions with the programme team, the visitors were not clear that there was an effective monitoring process in place for attendance for those parts of the programme, or an effective process to ensure that learners who had missed mandatory teaching and learning activities would still be able to achieve the learning outcomes for those sessions. They therefore require further evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of monitoring processes.

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

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

Reason: The visitors reviewed the module descriptors for the programme, which the education provider had provided as evidence for this standard. They noted that expectations of professional behaviour were threaded through the curriculum, and the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics were referred to throughout the programme content. However, in the year four modules, it was not clear to the visitors how the assessment methods used would appropriately ensure that learners could meet the expectations of professional behaviour. The year four modules have a pass mark, rather than being pass/fail. The visitors could not see in any of the modules an explicit requirement that learners demonstrate that they are able to meet all the expectations of professional behaviour before the module can be passed. They therefore considered that it was possible that learners might complete the programme without having demonstrated that they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how their assessment strategy will ensure that learners demonstrate their ability to meet the expectations of professional behaviour.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that all programme documentation clearly specifies requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the module descriptors for Clinical Studies 2 and Clinical Studies 3, and noted that it appeared to be possible to carry over assessments from Year 2 in to Year 3. The programme team clarified in discussions that this was not correct and that learners would not be able to carry over any assessments between years of the programme. The visitors therefore require that any relevant programme documentation be reviewed to avoid similar potentially misleading errors concerning progression and achievement within the programme.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Ulster
Name of programme(s)	MSc Art Therapy, FT (Full time) MSc Art Therapy, PT (Part time)
Approval visit date	31 January – 1 February 2018
Case reference	CAS-12174-G7V8B8

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as ‘our standards’). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Janek Dubowski	Arts therapist - Art therapist
Elaine Streeter	Arts therapist - Music therapist
Diane Whitlock	Lay
Jasmine Oduro-Bonsrah	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

Heather Farley	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Ulster
Brian McArthur	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Ulster
Edel O'Neill	Internal validation panel member	University of Ulster

Hayley Berman	External validation panel member	University of Hertfordshire
Kirsty McTaggart	External validation panel member	University of Derby

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Art Therapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Arts therapist
Modality	Art therapist
First intake	September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01791

Programme name	MSc Art Therapy
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Profession	Arts therapist
Modality	Art therapist
First intake	September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 9
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01792

We undertook this assessment of new programmes proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted	Reason(s) for non-submission
Programme specification	Yes	
Module descriptor(s)	Yes	
Handbook for learners	Yes	
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes	
Completed education standards	Yes	

mapping document		
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes	
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes	
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Not Required	This is a new programme and therefore does not currently have external examiners.

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	The visitors met with learners from the HCPC approved BSc (Hons) Speech and Language therapy programme at the education provider.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers and educators	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	No	The education provider did not provide anyone for this meeting, as they could not identify any service users and carers appropriate for the programme.
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 01 May 2018.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there are plans in place to ensure the ongoing sustainability for the programme.

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the Definitive Programme Specification, Clinical Handbook for Practicums and the Ulster University business plan. From the documentation, the visitors noted that the learners will be fee paying. However, they were unclear whether the fees would cover all the costs of the programme. The visitors were not provided with the business plan referenced and therefore, could not determine whether that document would have demonstrated that the programme is and will be sustainable. In the senior team meeting, the visitors learnt that the programme will be delivered from the Belfast school of Art and will join the suite of new MSc programmes being developed for the school.

Additionally, in the senior team meeting, the visitors learnt that the Belfast School of Art was awarded a £5 million investment over a three-year period and that part of this investment has gone into the development of this programme. The visitors were however unsure how the investment has been used to develop this programme, if it will be used for the programme moving forward and how this programme will be sustained at the end of the three-year period. From the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine what the plans are for the programme or what commitment there was for the programme. The visitors therefore require evidence to demonstrate that this programme is sustainable and will continue to be sustainable.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must outline the roles and responsibilities of those who will be contributing to programme to ensure it is effectively managed,

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the Definitive Programme Specification and Contacts for the Belfast School of Art. At the visit the education provider highlighted a list of roles that will be dedicated to the programme, including a placement coordinator and module coordinators. At the visit, the visitors received documentation which briefly outlined what the responsibilities of these staff members will be. However, from the document provided, the visitors could not determine the full scope of what duties these members of staff will be carrying out. Furthermore, the visitors received no information which highlights whether these members of staff are currently in place, or what plans there are to ensure these staff members will be in place before the programme starts. The education provider must therefore outline the roles and responsibilities of those contributing to the programme to ensure it is effectively managed.

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

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

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the Definitive Programme Specification and Clinical handbook, which highlighted the programme structure and past placements, for a previously approved HCPC programme, at a different education provider in Belfast. At the visit were given a list of potential practice-based learning providers. In the practice education provider meeting, the practice educators informed the visitors that they will “be willing to offer” practice-based learning. The programme team explained that the practice education providers had all verbally agreed to provide

practice education opportunities for all learners on the programme. This standard requires that there is an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning. However, through the process the visitors were not shown a process, but were rather given verbal assurances that there would be practice learning available for learners. The education provider must therefore provide evidence to demonstrate there is an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that service users and carers are involved in the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions at the visit, the visitors could not determine how service users and carers will be involved in the programme. To evidence this standard, the visitors were directed to the client evaluation in the Student Handbook and Definitive Programme Specification. The programme team informed the visitors that the purpose of the client evaluation was to gain feedback from service users about the service provided by learners whilst out on their practice-based learning. The visitors were unclear how feedback from service users and carers on learners' performance will contribute to the programme or ensure service user involvement in the programme itself. When we use the term involvement, we mean that service users and carers must be able to contribute to the programme in a meaningful way.

The visitors were further informed that the practice-based learning areas have service user groups and therefore the 'clients' from these groups would be involved in the programme. The visitors however, were unclear how these groups would ensure service users and carers would be involved in the programme itself. There was no evidence to demonstrate who the service users and carers will be, how they will be involved, how they would be supported to be involved, or how they will be recruited to be part of the programme. The education provider must therefore provide evidence which demonstrates how service users and carers will be involved in the programme itself and how they will be prepared and supported.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver the programme effectively.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to two Staff CVs. At the visit, the visitors were informed that there will "probably be 2.5 full time equivalent (FTE) staff dedicated to the programme". From the CVs provided and discussions at the visit, the visitors noted that there will be 1.5 FTE staff members dedicated to the programme. The education provider further explained that the member of staff taking on the full time position, will be filled by the current course director of the BA Hons Art and Design [Foundation Year for Specialist Degrees] programme. The 0.5 FTE position is currently being recruited and that individual will have overall responsibility for the programme. The visitors did not receive any evidence to demonstrate that there will be more than 1.5 FTE members of staff dedicated to the programme. As this is contradictory to the

information provided in the documentary submission, the visitors were therefore unsure how many staff members will be dedicated to the programme.

Additionally, at the visit the visitors reviewed the CVs of casual part time lecturers. Some of the casual part time lecturers were represented in the programme team meeting. From the evidence provided and discussions, the visitors could not determine if and when part time lecturers would be used, or how often they would be used. The visitors saw no formal arrangements to ensure there will be adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver the programme effectively.

The education provider must therefore submit evidence which demonstrates that there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver this programme effectively.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users

Reason: From their review of the Information for Potential Placement Providers and Practice Educators, the visitors noted that “the placement will have a formal process of processing and managing any concerns raised by students about the welfare of clients”. Furthermore, the documentation states that learners must adhere to the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics, including reporting concerns about the safety of service users. At the visit, the visitors were informed that learners will be signposted to relevant safeguarding policies within their practice-based learning areas. The visitors however were unsure how the education provider will ensure the policies in place within the practice-based learning environment are appropriate to enable learners to raise these concerns. Furthermore, the visitors note that although there may be safeguarding policies in place, there was no evidence provided to demonstrate how learners will be supported to interact with these policies when it is appropriate to do so.

At the visit, the programme team informed the visitors that learners will have a designated person in the placement area to whom they will raise concerns about the wellbeing and safety of service users to. However, the visitors noted that this could be problematic, especially if the designated individual is the person that the learner is concerned about. The visitors note that the current processes in place may discourage learners from raising concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users. This standard is about helping learners to recognise situations where service users may be at risk, supporting them in raising these concerns and making sure action is taken in response to the concerns. The visitors saw no evidence of how learners will be supported to raise concerns, how these concerns will be considered and how they will be acted on. Additionally, the visitors did not know how learners will be supported to raise concerns about the safety of service users within aspects of the programme itself, and not just whilst out within their practice-based learning areas.

The education provider must therefore ensure that there are effective processes in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the learning outcomes ensure that learners meet the following standards of proficiency (SOP) for arts therapists:

- **13.1** understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction relevant to their profession
- **13.7** understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
- **13.15** know about:
 - human development
 - normal and abnormal psychology
 - normal and abnormal human communication and language development
 - mental illness, psychiatric assessment and treatment
 - congenital and acquired disability
 - disorders of social functioning
 - the principal psychotherapeutic interventions and their theoretical bases
 - the nature and application of other relevant interventions
- **13.16** recognise methods of distinguishing between health and sickness, including diagnosis, specifically mental health disorders and learning disabilities and be able to critique these systems of knowledge from different socio-cultural perspectives

Reason: In their review of the documentation and discussions, the visitors were unclear how the teaching and learning activities of the Working with Diversity module will enable learners to achieve the SOPs associated with the module. At the visit, the visitors learnt that some of SOP 13 will be covered during a learner's practice-based learning. The visitors however could not determine how the teaching activities of the programme activities of the programme will enable learners to adequately understand and demonstrate the SOPs listed in the condition above. From their reading of the learning outcomes, the visitors could not see how the achievement of SOPs associated with this module will be taught and achieved.

The education provider must therefore ensure the teaching activities associated with delivery of these SOPs are appropriate, to give the learners the appropriate understanding required for achieving the SOPs.

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

Condition: The education provider must communicate any changes to the programme learning outcomes, and demonstrate that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency for arts therapists.

Reason: During the informal feedback meeting at the visit, the internal validation panel required the programme team to change several learning outcomes. The visitors therefore require the education provider to communicate any changes to the learning outcomes once made, so they can make a judgement about whether those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for arts therapists, inclusive of modality.

4.8 The delivery of the programme must support and develop evidence-based practice.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the programme will equip, support and encourage learners to develop their critical analytical skills and evidence-based practice.

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the Definitive Programme Specification, Module learning outcomes and Clinical Handbook for Practicums. The visitors note that learners are required to demonstrate their evidence-based practice in Module E 'Praxis and Research'. However, the visitors could not see how the learning outcomes of this module in particular, would enable learners to develop their critical analytical and evaluative skills.

Furthermore, in the documentation the visitors noted that one of the Educational aims of the programmes is to "enable students to develop an evidence-based coherent integrative and pluralistic framework...informed by a range of Art Therapy models and wider theories". The visitors also note that the documentation states that "a Handbook covering the research project / dissertation will be provided". At the visit, the programme team stated that the programme will enable learners to develop an evidence-based practice. However, from the documentation and discussions at the visit, the visitors were not provided with any information on what the education provider's approach will be to 'enable' and encourage learners to develop their analytical and research skills.

The programme team must therefore provide evidence to demonstrate how the programme will equip, support and encourage learners to develop their critical analytical skills and evidence-based practice.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the programme will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions, and must define why these other professions are relevant to art therapy.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the Definitive programme Specification and Clinical handbook for Practicums. In the documentation and during discussions at the visit, the education provider highlighted a number of ways learners could learn with and from others:

- In the standards of education and training (SETs) mapping document submitted it states that there will be "Counselling / Psychotherapy input" in "Key Components of Modules".
- The SETs mapping document also states that learning with and from others will happen by "generally sharing learning with MDTs [Multidisciplinary teams] in placements, with art students in School & counselling students where possible".
- At the visit the visitors were told by the programme team mentioned that:
 - I. "something could be done across schools where learners have shared generic modules".

- II. Learners could learn from the guest lecturers, and that these lecturers would normally be psychiatrists, educational psychologists and psychoanalysts.
- III. Learners will be encouraged to be part of multidisciplinary teams within their practice-based learning areas.
- IV. Learners may also have “taster sessions for people in their placement areas, so they could tell these people about the arts therapy professions”

The visitors could not determine how any of the above is appropriate to ensure that the programme ensures that learners learn with and from others. There are currently no plans in place which outlines how the learning and teaching activities across schools will enable learners to learn with and from others, what these learner groups will be. The visitors were also unclear what the guest lecturers (who may be from other professions) will be delivering, to make a judgement about whether learners are learning from other professions in these settings. The programme team also did not define why these other professions will be appropriate to the programme.

Lastly, the visitors were unclear how the opportunities for learners to learn with and from others in their practice-based learning areas is appropriate for the programme. . Learning with and from others whilst on their practice-based learning may happen on an ad hoc basis rather than as a planned part of the programme.

The education provider must therefore provide evidence, which demonstrates how the programme will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions and must also define why these other professions are appropriate to the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure there is an effective process in place for obtaining consent from learners.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors agreed that the informed consent sought from service users and carers before interacting with learners in the practice-based setting was appropriate. The visitors noted in the student handbook that “protocols will be ensured for seeking student consent for any learning processes such as role plays in which they are invited to act as a ‘client’”. The visitors were however not given any information which outlined what these protocols would be. At the visit, the programme team informed the visitors that learners would have to sign a consent form prior to being involved in activities on the programme and “will have the right not to participate”. However, as the visitors were not given the consent form, they could not determine its appropriateness. The education provider must therefore provide evidence to demonstrate that there will be effective processes in place to obtain appropriate consent from learners.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the range of practice-based learning available to learners supports the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency for arts therapists.

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the Definitive Programme Specification and Clinical handbook, and at the visit were given a list of potential practice-based learning providers. The education provider also submitted a document which highlighted “Past MSc Art Therapy / MSc Art Psychotherapy placement sectors”. The list of past practice-based learning areas highlighted included “addiction, adult learning difficulty, cancer... young people”. Furthermore, in the practice education provider meeting, the visitors were informed that learners will experience a range of practice based learning opportunities. The visitors however did not receive any information which outlines the range of practice-based learning opportunities learners will have on this programme. The visitors could therefore not determine whether all learners will have access to an appropriate range of practice-based learning. In addition, linked to the condition for 3.6, there are currently no formal arrangements, which highlight what practice-based learning opportunities all learners will have in place between the practice education providers and the education provider. The visitors therefore, could not determine whether a range of practice-based learning has been secured for learners.

The education provider must demonstrate that the range of practice based learning opportunities provided for each learner will be appropriate to support learners to achieve the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency for arts therapists.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice educators will undertake appropriate regular training to successfully carry out their roles in supporting learners and delivery of the learning outcomes.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the visitors were directed to the Clinical Handbook and Definitive Programme Specification. The evidence provided states that “induction training, support and on-the-job coaching will be provided by programme staff, if needed and requested”. It also states that “the Allied Health Professions - School of Health Sciences (University of Ulster) can be contacted about potential general training in practice education”. From the evidence provided, the visitors note that the training may only occur ‘if needed and requested’.

Furthermore, the practice education providers mentioned that they “would welcome regular training” offered by the education provider. The programme team informed the visitors that practice education providers will have to undertake regular training before supervising learners. The visitors however, did not receive any information which outlines how often this training will be, or what this training will involve. The visitors were unclear how practice educators will be appropriately prepared to support learners without appropriate regular training. The education provider must therefore provide evidence which demonstrates that practice educators will undertake appropriate regular

training to successfully carry out their roles in supporting learners and delivery of the learning outcomes.

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

Condition: The programme team must outline where the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for the programme will be assessed and the assessments are appropriate to enable learners to meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for arts therapists.

Reason: The visitors could not identify where the SOPs for the programme will be assessed. The SOPs mapping document did not direct the visitors to the evidence of where the SOPs will be assessed. Therefore, they were unclear how the assessment will enable learners who successfully complete the programme to meet the SOPs for arts therapists.

Additionally, the visitors were informed that some of the SOPs not achieved by learners through the assessment of the theory, will have to be demonstrated during their practice-based learning. It was however not clear in the documentation how learners will be assessed to achieve the SOPs in the placements, if not achieved in their theory.

The education provider must therefore provide evidence which outlines where the SOPs for the programme will be assessed and that it is appropriate to enable learners to meet the standards of proficiency for arts therapists.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider how they tell learners about the requirements of attending teaching and learning activities at the weekend.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation that learners will be required to attend “additional intensives” at weekends. The documentation highlights that these sessions will ‘normally’ be 1-2 days per semester. From discussions, the visitors learnt that the education provider has not yet determined how many additional sessions learners will be required to attend at weekends. Although the documentation highlights to learners that they will be required to attend weekend sessions, the visitors note that without knowing how often they will be required to attend it could impact on their decision of taking up a place of offer on the programme. As such, the visitors recommend that the education provider informs learners about how often they will be required to attend weekend sessions.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the balance of learning and teaching methods used.

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussions with the programme team, it was clear the teaching and learning methods used to deliver the programme would be appropriate. However, the visitors noted that learners will be required to gain most of their theoretical knowledge through independent study. The visitors note that with the emphasis on independent study, learners may find it more difficult to fully gain the theoretical knowledge they may require as they may do if taught. The visitors therefore recommend that the education provider considers reviewing the learning and teaching activities of the programme, by placing a particular emphasis on the delivery of theoretical knowledge.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Worcester
Name of programme(s)	MA in Social Work, Full time
Approval visit date	21 February 2018
Case reference	CAS-11000-J9S5T3

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Mohammed Jeewa	Lay
Cathrine Clarke	Social worker
Anne Mackay	Social worker
Niall Gooch	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

Marie Stowell	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Worcester
Sara Gibbon	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Worcester
Steve Wood	Internal panel member	University of Derby – external member
Claire Wolfe	Internal panel member	University of Worcester

Charlie Russell	Internal panel member	University of Worcester – learner member
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Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MA in Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 November 2007
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01648

We undertook this assessment via the approval process, which involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme continues to meet our standards. We decided to assess the programme via the approval process due to the outcome of a previous assessment. A change notification was submitted by the education provider regarding changes to the curriculum, and a decision was made that the changes were large enough that a visit was required.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

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

Group	Met
Learners	Yes
Senior staff	Yes
Practice education providers	Yes
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes
Programme team	Yes
Facilities and resources	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 27 April 2018

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that learning with and from others on the programme is integrated into the curriculum, and how they have decided what other professions and learners are most relevant to their programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the module descriptors offered as evidence by the education provider, which laid out the education provider's plans to teach learners about how other health and care professions worked. They were aware from the documentary submission and from discussions with the programme team that there will be a "jointly delivered session" in which learners could "explore collaborative working" with physiotherapy and occupational therapy learners. However, the visitors could not see that learning about other professions and how they could work collaboratively met the standard, as learners would not be learning with and from the other professionals or learners. In discussions with visitors some existing learners said that they thought more inter-professional learning would be good. The visitors were also not clear that the single session with occupational therapists and physiotherapists would ensure that

learners were learning with and from professionals in other relevant professions. They could not see how the education provider had made decisions about which other professions were most appropriate, and how they had designed and would deliver inter-professional learning (IPL) to ensure relevance to this particular programme. They therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence showing the rationale for their IPL strategy, which is relevant to the programme, and how learning from and with other professionals and learners will be appropriately integrated into the curriculum.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an appropriate process in place for monitoring attendance of mandatory components of the programme, and ensuring that appropriate action is taken if learners do not attend.

Reason: The visitors reviewed attendance policies highlighted in the SETs mapping document. They noted that in the course handbook the education provider had identified and communicated where attendance is mandatory. However, they were not clear from this evidence, or from discussions with learners and the programme team, that a process was in place to monitor attendance, or what the next steps for action would be if learners had issues with attendance. In particular the learners did not seem to be aware of the follow-up process and / or sanctions if their attendance fell below the required level. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence showing that a monitoring process is in place for attendance on the mandatory parts of the programme. Additionally, the education provider must provide evidence to show how learners are made aware of any consequences associated with not meeting the mandatory attendance requirement.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should keep under review its process for ensuring that actions resulting from the implementation and monitoring of equality and diversity policies are appropriately communicated.

Reason: In their review of the Course Committee minutes from November 2017, the visitors noted that learners on that committee had mentioned that some learners from ethnic minority backgrounds were having difficulties on the programme. In discussions with the learners the visitors were made aware of concerns about learners with English as a second language (E2L) being disadvantaged in assessment. The programme team stated to the visitors that they were aware of these issues and were taking steps to address them. The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met at threshold, as there are equality and diversity policies in place that are monitored and action is taken when issues arise. There were not any major concerns among learners about equality

and diversity issues. However, the specific responses by the programme team to the issues mentioned above did not appear to have been communicated to learners. The visitors therefore suggest that the education provider should ensure that actions taken in response to learner input are communicated to learners, to maintain confidence in the equality and diversity policies and their implementation.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should keep under review the appropriateness of the chosen assessment method in the module SOWK4105 Practice Developing Capacity.

Reason: The visitors reviewed evidence relating to the new and amended modules on the programme. They noted that in the module SOWK4105, Practice Developing Capacity, the education provider had decided to assess learners' reflective practice through an entirely verbal test, with no written component. The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met at threshold, as they considered that an entirely verbal test could adequately assess reflective practice if administered appropriately. From discussions, they were aware that the programme team had carefully considered how best to assess reflective practice. However, as it is unusual to assess reflective practice in this way, the visitors suggest that the education provider keep under review how well the assessment is working.